



VEAES WEEKLY

TOPICS WORTH TALKING ABOUT

PLEASE READ AND DISCUSS
WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES

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FSA Campaign Updates

Because this year's FSA test administration period starts on October 1st, VEAES is asking members to distribute the official withdrawal letters next week, September 22 – 26th in order to provide families enough time to withdraw their grade 4 & 7 students. **In order to comply with the protocol agreement between the BCTF and the province, please do not distribute materials at your site without first informing VEAES which day they will be sent home.** You can email francoise@veaes.ca or fill out **the form** using the QR code below. If you still haven't requested materials for your school, it is not too late! Talk to your Grade 4 & 7 colleagues to find out how many materials are needed and which day works best for distributing them, and get in touch ASAP.

If you have families at your school who require materials in other languages, the BCTF has versions of the letter in Chinese (Traditional & Simplified), Filipino (Tagalog), French, Persian, and Punjabi on their website [here](#). These have been approved for distribution by the Board, but **please do not print them out at your school sites.** If you require other languages, either reach out to VEAES (the best option) or print them yourself at home.



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As you know, the FSA test takes valuable classroom time away from regular learning activities, and it does not inform instruction. Assessment is a tool that teachers use to understand the unique learning needs of the individual students in their class. The standardized FSA tests are not part of the curriculum, and they cannot possibly align with every teacher's instructional plans. As well, we refute the claim that FSAs lead to more supports for students. The FSAs have been administered in BC since 2004, and we certainly have not seen an increase in support to students over the years as a result.

If you have any leftover campaign materials at your site, please put them in an envelope and return them to VEAES via the Blue Bag system. If you have any questions about this year's campaign, please reach out to francoise@veaes.ca.

The BCTF adds that “teachers believe the FSA is unreliable, unhelpful, and a distraction from the important learning and authentic individualized assessment happening in your child’s classroom. We support parents having the right to make decisions for their children, especially regarding activities that fall outside of provincial curriculum, such as the FSA. Many parents over the last several years have decided to withdraw their children from the FSA, and you can too. Please know you have the support of teachers from across the province.”

Additionally, the BCTF policy A.26 reads: That the Federation endorse the following principles regarding the impact of the proliferation of testing on Aboriginal children.

“ —
| **Please know you have the support of**
| **teachers from across the province.** |
— ”

**“Many parents over the last
several years have decided to
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**“Teachers believe the FSA is
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distraction from the important
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classroom.”**



**Your kid isn't standard—
Join us in opposing
standardized testing.**

Teachers around the province encourage you to withdraw your child from the Grades 4 and 7 Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA).

Why?

- It is not a required part of the BC curriculum.**
- It is not helpful to students, teachers, or parents.**
- It is making existing inequities worse.**
- It wastes valuable learning time and resources.**

For information on how to withdraw your child from the FSA, please visit bctf.ca/fsa



A message from the
Vancouver Elementary and Adult Educators' Society

“ —
| **We support parents having the right to make decisions for their children,**
| **especially regarding activities that fall outside of provincial curriculum,**
| **such as the FSA.** |
— ”

BCTF Aboriginal Education

Excerpt from the BCTF Members' Guide

1.A.26—That the Federation endorse the following principles regarding the impact of the proliferation of testing on Aboriginal children.

Professional Statement

As Aboriginal teachers:

- we believe the misuse and overuse of standardized testing further discriminates against Aboriginal children and reinforces negative stereotypes.
- we believe paper and pen testing does not acknowledge the gifts of our children.
- we believe this is a colonial tool that perpetuates negative feelings and undermines our children's ability to learn.
- we believe there is a problem and more testing will not address our children's needs.
- we believe our children are entitled to equal access to and appropriate support for their successful high school completion.
- we believe we need to focus on strategies and solutions to help Aboriginal children. (08 AGM, p. 9)

At the BCTF Annual General Meeting (AGM) in 2008, Aboriginal teachers working in BC's public schools put forward a significant resolution that voiced their concerns regarding standardized testing, particularly the Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA). This resolution highlighted the ways in which such testing fails to reflect the diverse cultural backgrounds, learning styles, and lived experiences of First Nations, Inuit and Metis students. In response, the teachers developed a professional statement that clearly outlined these concerns emphasizing the need for more culturally relevant and holistic approaches to student assessment. The statement called for a greater recognition of First Nations, Inuit and Metis ways of knowing and teaching, and urged the education system to move away from one-size-fits-all testing models that often marginalize First Nations, Inuit and Metis learners.

BCTF Health & Wellness

By Xander Graham

As the months begin to get colder and we begin to think more about self-care, considering the BCTF's Health and Wellness program can be a great benefit. The BCTF Health and Wellness Program is designed to support members in restoring their health, wellness, and productivity, enabling them to either return to or better sustain their teaching role. Funded by the BCTF Salary Indemnity Plan, which is entirely supported by member dues, this program connects teachers with professional rehabilitation consultants across the province. It is important to note that you do not have to be off of work to access the Health and Wellness plan. These consultants will help coordinate services aimed at improving your health and functional abilities in a collaborative and tailored fashion. For more information, please visit the BCTF webpage [here](#). Alternatively, if you are more comfortable applying by phone, call 1-800-663-9163.



Health & Wellness

RESOURCES

Available to
BCTF Members

Starling Minds (available to all BCTF members)

The Mental Fitness program is an online program designed to support teachers to monitor and maintain their mental health. Starling Minds delivers immediate, unlimited and personalized digital CBT modules-based learning to members so they can have the tools they need to support their mental health at no cost.

All Mental Fitness members can also access online webinars designed to work in tandem with the program. Upcoming webinars include:

Starling Updates: Webinar Edition - Tuesday, September 23rd from 4:00-5:00 pm (PT)

Mindfulness Advisor Tara Ackar and Mental Health and Wellness Specialist Emma-Tyme Mayrand provide real-time guidance through the newest updates and features.

Anxiety and Burnout: Tools to Reset and Recharge - October 14th and 21st from 4:00-5:00 pm (PT)

Mindfulness Expert Tara Achkar and Clinical Psychologist Dr. Kayleigh-Ann Clegg will provide strategies to restore balance, protect your energy, and build resilience that lasts.

Existing Starling Minds members can register for the webinars while signed into the program. Members new to the program can register at [members.starlingminds.com](https://starlingminds.com) and enter your access code: **BCTFMEMBER**. To register for the first time, you'll need your BCTF Member ID. You can find it:

- On the front of your BCTF Member Card
- In your BCTF Member Profile
- By calling BCTF's Member Records department at 1-800-663-9163

Well Teacher Groups (available to all BCTF members)

Based on the book written by Occupational Therapist and BCTF Health and Wellness Consultant Wade Repta the groups provide an opportunity for members to develop a wellness plan and connect with other educators. The groups are virtual and involve six two-hour sessions over six weeks. Group leaders are all consultants in the Health and Wellness program with backgrounds in mental health. This fall we are offering four groups beginning the week of October 13th:

The Well Teacher Group One

Presenters: Lara Williams and Kayleigh Hunter

Dates: Tuesdays, October 14–November 25, 2025 (*no session November 11*)

Time: 4:30–6:30 p.m. PT

The Well Teacher Group Two

Presenters: Lara Williams and Kayleigh Hunter

Dates: Wednesdays, October 15–November 19, 2025

Time: 4:30–6:30 p.m. PT

The Well Teacher Group Three

Presenter: Christy de Bulnes

Dates: Wednesdays, October 15–November 19, 2025

Time: 4:30–6:30 p.m. PT

The Well Teacher Group Four

Presenter: Darby Barnes

Dates: Mondays, October 20–November 24, 2025

Time: 4:30–6:30 p.m. PT

Interested members can find additional information on the BCTF website and register for the groups using the following [link](#)

BCTF Health and Wellness Program (Available to members with a contract who contribute to the Salary Indemnity Plan)

The BCTF Health and Wellness Program is a medically based program designed to assist members in regaining a state of wellness, health, and productivity to sustain or return to a teaching assignment. Once a referral is accepted an accredited rehabilitation consultant is assigned work with the member and their health care providers to develop a plan to support their unique medical vocational needs. The program is voluntary, and all information is confidential and only shared on a need-to-know basis.

Additional information is available on the [BCTF website](#). Members can self-refer to the program or be referred by their Local President using the following [link](#) or by calling 1-800-663-9163 and ask to speak to the Health and Wellness Program.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) – Call to Action #10

At each General Meeting & Staff Representative Assembly, a VEAES member presents one of the Truth & Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action. At Our September 16th meeting, Jody Polukoshko presented Call #10, which can be read below:

We call on the federal government to draft new Aboriginal education legislation with the full participation and informed consent of Aboriginal peoples. The new legislation would include a commitment to sufficient funding and would incorporate the following principles:

- i. Providing sufficient funding to close identified educational achievement gaps within one generation.
- ii. Improving education attainment levels and success rates.
- iii. Developing culturally appropriate curricula.
- iv. Protecting the right to Aboriginal languages, including the teaching of Aboriginal languages as credit courses.
- v. Enabling parental and community responsibility, control, and accountability, similar to what parents enjoy in public school systems.
- vi. Enabling parents to fully participate in the education of their children.
- vii. Respecting and honouring Treaty relationships.

Literacy Screeners

By Marjorie Dumont, C'tan and Françoise Raunet

The Ministry has revised its assessment mandate, now requiring only Kindergarten (K) screeners instead of K-3 for this year. Additionally, districts are permitted to use locally developed, non-standardized tools. In response, the VSB will adapt its existing and widely used Kindergarten Protocol, previously used by 70 schools, rather than adopt US-based standardized tools like DIBELS.

Although the late change (announced June 26th) was unexpected, it reflects the Ministry's responsiveness to district feedback; advocacy from teachers and school districts appears to have made a difference! The Ministry recognized the challenges of implementing K-3 literacy screening province-wide on their original short timeline, and they have also decided to develop their own screening tool rather than rely on tools made outside our province. This tool will align with the BC curriculum, be developed in consultation with teachers and the BCTF, and (hopefully) be culturally responsive and honour Indigenous ways of learning. Timelines are still a bit uncertain, but the goal is to have a single K-3 literacy screening tool for provincial use, starting in the 2026/2027 school year.

VEAES Response to Harmful Park Board Decisions

By Xander Graham

VEAES is deeply concerned by the Vancouver Park Board's decision to host to discard the previously run Bright Lights fundraising evenings in favour of a Harry Potter-themed event at Stanley Park. This choice by the Vancouver Park Board ignores the harmful impact that celebrating this franchise's creator has on trans students, families, and community members.

The Harry Potter brand is inextricably linked to its creator, JK Rowling, who has repeatedly used her platform to promote anti-trans rhetoric. The author has regularly used her wealth and influence to further bigoted, anti-trans programming and legislation both around the world. For many trans and non-binary youth, this rhetoric translates directly into feelings of exclusion, vulnerability, and harm. By choosing to elevate this franchise, the Park Board is sending a message that the voices and safety of trans students are not valued.

VEAES calls on the Park Board to:

- Cancel or reframe the event so that it does not center the Harry Potter franchise.
- Consult with trans students and advocacy organizations to develop programming that affirms and celebrates all identities.
- Commit to ongoing training and education for staff to better understand the lived realities of trans and non-binary community members.

Educators know that public spaces must be welcoming to everyone, especially students who already experience disproportionate levels of bullying, isolation, and discrimination. The Vancouver Parks Board needs to do better, and it needs that better to happen now.

Provincial Professional Specialist Associations (PSAs)

Excerpt from BCTF

There are 32 PSAs that offer professional development, support, and advocacy in a variety of specialist areas. They can provide valuable resources and a sense of community to your members, especially those who teach in subject areas where there may be only a handful of them per local. You can find a list of all the 2025 PSA day conferences at www.psaday.ca.

The October PSA Day is a longstanding, Province-wide professional development day. It is also the day that the majority of PSAs have their conferences. Per 30.A.14 in the BCTF Members' Guide, the PSA Day is the third Friday in October, except in years in which Thanksgiving Monday falls on the same week, at which point it switches to the fourth Friday to avoid a three-day school week for students.

The PSA Days for the next few years are:

- October 24, 2025 – this year
- October 23, 2026
- October 22, 2027
- October 20, 2028
- October 19, 2029

TQS Category Upgrade

By Vanessa Lefebvre

Members who consider that they have completed requirements for reclassification of salary category must not only make a TQS request, but must also apply to the Board. There are 3 times in the year that you can apply to ensure you get retroactive payment, and September 30th is the next deadline. **You need to submit the Change of Salary Category form by September 30th in order for it to be retroactive to September 1st.** Even if you are still waiting for your TQS request to process, it is important to submit this application before September 30th.

If the VSB does not receive the form prior to September 30th, the salary adjustment shall be effective the first day of the month following the filing of a successful application. To complete the application, you will need to submit your TQS change of category validation when you receive it. **It does not go automatically to the VSB.**

The procedure for change of salary category is outlined in Article B.25.4 (p. 55 in your Collective Agreement). The VSB has provided a detailed document that outlines the steps necessary to fill out the VSB Change of Category form. If you cannot locate the documents on the Employee Services SharePoint, you can obtain a copy of the entire package which includes the application form through your school's Admin Assistant, or by emailing humanresources@vsb.bc.ca.

Parenthood Leave (Without Pay)

Request for parenthood leaves commencing January 1 or February 1 must be submitted by September 30. You can request by emailing leaves@vsb.bc.ca.

SpacesEDU: 23 Schools Join the Pilot, Full Implementation Set for 2026-2027

By Marjorie Dumont, C'tan and Françoise Raunet

This school year, 23 new schools have been added to the pilot of the Board's new reporting tool, bringing the total number of participating schools to 35. The initial group of 12 schools, which began using SpacesEDU last year, have continued into this second phase of the pilot. The district Learning & Instruction leads supporting teachers with the implementation of SpacesEDU in the pilot schools are Karen Lirenman & Markus Beutel. Speak to your administrator if interested in their support.

SpacesEDU is set to be fully implemented district wide for the 2026-2027 school year. In the meantime, the phased pilot approach allows schools to explore and adapt to the tool with support and training. The Board is hoping to add another 10-15 schools to the pilot by January. Teachers who were part of the pilot last year and have since moved to a non-pilot school will still be able to use the tool this year, even if their new school is not currently participating in the pilot. Teachers who are not at a pilot school and who did not use SpacesEDU for reporting last year will still be using the CSL Tool to write their report cards in 2025/2026.

Seeking Feedback on Spring Transfer Process and ERIP LOU

By Greg Canning

In the spring of 2025, the Vancouver Teachers Federation (VTF) agreed to two Letters of Understanding around the Early Retirement Incentive Plan (ERIP) and the Posting Timelines, which affected the Spring Transfer Process (STP).

We are going to be reviewing the Spring Transfer Process this fall and will seek feedback from members. The LOU was for a one-year trial period; the usual seven-day posting period was compressed into three days, with two days for interviews before offering jobs to members.

The Spring Transfer Process (STP) included 5 rounds of postings, beginning in the last week of May 2025. The goal with these changes was to ensure that everyone knew their assignment by the end of the school year. The process was created to help the C candidates settle into new assignments in the first three or four rounds, while E and F candidates could be offered continuing work if vacancies remained in the final round. We hoped this would help retain those teachers and keep them in our district before they sought continuing work elsewhere. The Employer also indicated this process would help with their recruitment efforts of new teachers. We will review the data when we meet with the employer this fall.

The most important changes were those updates provided to teachers considering retirement. Previously, members qualifying for ERIP must have applied before May 31. As a trial, for the 24/25 school year, the deadline for applications for ERIP changed to March 31, 2025. This is so that those retiring can have their positions organized into the first round of postings. On average, we have between 80 to 110 teachers retire in a given year, and this includes secondary teachers. It is extremely important that members between the ages of 55 and 64 that are considering retirement are aware of this.

Retiring is a significant life decision and something we in the VEAES office take seriously. We understand that this change of date may have significantly impacted some of our members who were contemplating retirement this year. We are seeking feedback on the changes to the ERIP deadline and on the Spring Transfer Process (STP). Please send your feedback to greg@veaes.ca.



First 2025-26 Social Justice & Solidarity Committee Meeting

The Social Justice & Solidarity committee would like to remind members and interested parties that the first committee meeting of this school year will be taking place after school on October 7th at the VEAES office. Looking forward to seeing you there!

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation



© Andy Everson

September 30

A message from the Vancouver Elementary and Adult Educators' Society

***SPECIAL GUESTS FROM AMAZON FULFILLMENT
CENTER AND FUERZA MIGRANTE***

CODEVELOPMENT CANADA PRESENTS
***FROM HONDURAS TO CANADA
WORKERS' RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY***

2 OCTOBER 2025 - 7PM

Russian Hall, 600 Campbell Avenue, Vancouver

FREE PUBLIC EVENT REGISTER NOW!



If the world is globalized, so is the resistance!
Come learn how unions in Canada are building a
better world and how grassroots strategies are
winning real gains for workers.



VOICES OF JUSTICE: LISTEN FROM THE BEST ON HOW TO ORGANIZE!

World Teachers' Day

October 5, 2025

A counsellor in every school and an education assistant in every primary classroom: Invest in our students



BCTF

**BCTF**

Provincial PSA Day

Friday, October 24, 2025

www.psaday.ca

Professional Development
organized and delivered
by teachers, for teachers.

There's something
for everyone!



Ways for Teachers to Access PSA Memberships

There are many ways for teachers to access a PSA membership:

1. Purchase a PSA membership directly from the BCTF.
2. Participate in a PSA conference.
3. Participate in an induction ceremony or welcome event at their Local.
4. Participate in a BCTF workshop or SURT for TTOCs or new teachers.
5. Upload a resource to TeachBC.

Purchase a PSA membership directly from the BCTF.

The easiest way to handle this is to have the member purchase their PSA membership directly from the [BCTF Shopify store](#), and then reimburse the member for the purchase if your Pro-D language supports this.

Some locals prefer to avoid having the member pay up front and have previously submitted paper forms along with a cheque for payment of the fees. The Federation is phasing out paper forms, but the Shopify page does not allow for a Local to make direct purchases on someone else's behalf. If a local wishes to purchase PSA memberships directly for their members, please contact psa-coordinator@bctf.ca for the appropriate forms and instructions.

Participate in a PSA conference.

Many PSAs either provide a PSA membership as part of conference attendance or provide the option of purchasing one during the registration process. Most PSAs hold their conference on the October PSA day, but they may hold additional conferences later in the year or hold their main conference at an alternate time. Links to PSA websites and conference registration sites can be found at www.PSAday.ca.

Participate in a Local induction ceremony or welcome event.

The BCTF provides a free PSA membership to each new inductee who attends a Local induction ceremony or welcome event. Previously, these were done via paper form. The process has been streamlined, however. Now, Locals collect the first name, last name, and email address of the inductee, and the Local president has access to an [upload process](#) that will then automatically email each member on the list with a code. The member uses the code at the BCTF Shopify store to sign up for a free PSA membership. Inquiries regarding the process can be made to psa-coordinator@bctf.ca.

Participate in a BCTF workshop or SURT for TTOCs or new teachers.

Local organizers for BCTF Workshops or SURTs that are asked to provide an excel sheet containing the first and last names of attending members and an email address. Members will be emailed a code for the BCTF Shopify store that can be used to sign up for a free PSA membership.



RESISTANCE & HOPE

ART, ACTIVISM
& ALLYSHIP



ABORIGINAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION PSA CONFERENCE

Friday, October 24 2025
Langley School of Fine Arts

Keynote Speaker
Charlie Angus

Cultural Hands-On Workshops
Classroom Resources
Allyship
Decolonization
Métis History
and more...

Registration \$149

Conference Fee & PSA Annual Membership included



Registration Opens
Friday September 5th 2025

<https://www.aeaconference.ca/>



IMPORTANT DATE

September 19
Pro-D Flexible



2025-26



VEAES MEMBER PORTAL

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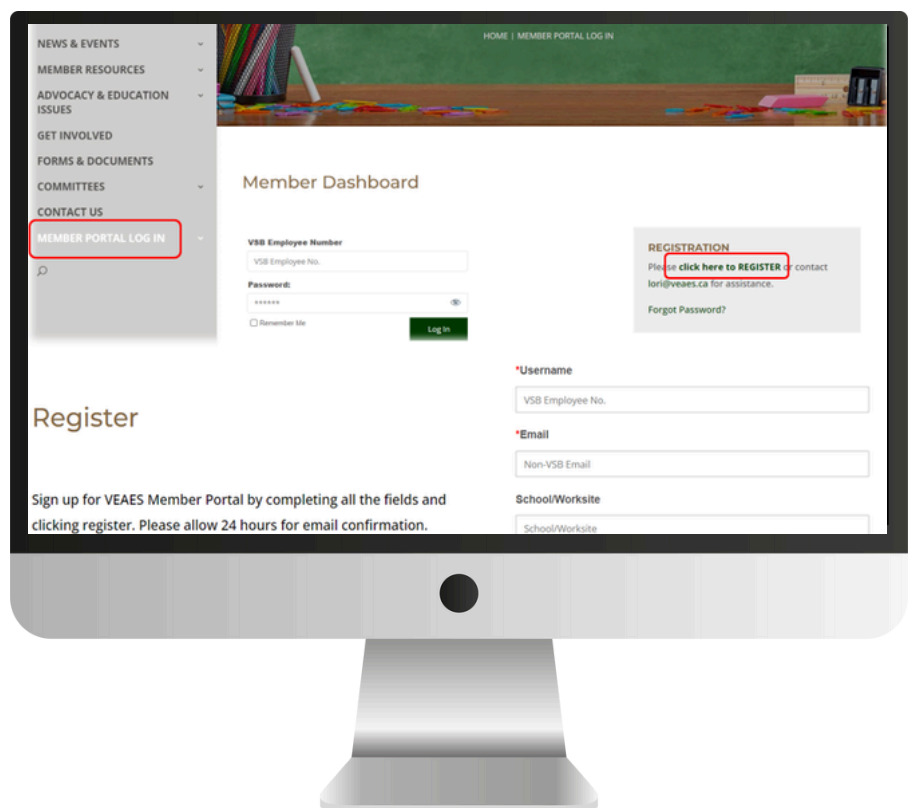
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To access the portal, go to the VEAES website. On the menu, scroll down to Member Portal Log In. When you click on it, there will be a prompt for you to register. After much consideration, we have chosen to use members' VSB employee numbers as the username, as it allows us to verify members. So, you will have to have your VSB employee number ready in order to register for the portal.

Once you are registered and verified, you can access the portal menu, which is located on the left sidebar, under Member Portal. We encourage all members to sign up. If you have any issues with your registration, please email support@veaes.ca.

Click image below to register.



VEAES

The Vancouver Elementary and Adult Educators' Society is the union representing elementary teachers and adult educators working in public schools in Vancouver.
Thank you all/ ċ-iθamə cən