



VEAES WEEKLY

**TOPICS WORTH
TALKING ABOUT**

**PLEASE READ AND DISCUSS
WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES**

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Welcome to the 2025-26 VEAES Executive Committee!

by VEAES Office

Your 2025 Executive Committee was elected at the May 2025 VEAES AGM, and convened their first meeting September 16th. The Executive Committee works closely with the In-House Table Officers to provide valuable insights and guidance, focusing on advocating for VEAES members and engaging with key priorities for the year ahead. The Executive also works in conjunction with bodies such as our General Meetings, Staff Representative Assemblies, and the BCTF, on issues of policy, governance, and advocacy for VEAES members across the district.



Pictured (from L to R): Khaled Shawwash, Deanna Brady, Danielle Durant, Elsa Medina, Deb Tin Tun, Rob McGowan, Karine Ng, Xander Graham, Jody Polukoshko, Bernadette Milton, Elaine Ong, Marjorie Dumont, Françoise Raunet, Madalene Wong, Vanessa Lefebvre.

Introducing the VEAES Local Reps to the BCTF

by Françoise Raunet

Bernadette Milton, Khaled Shawwash, and Deanna Brady are the three members of the VEAES Executive Committee who serve as our local reps to the BCTF. In this role, they serve as a conduit between the BCTF and our local members. They attend BCTF meetings in order to share what is being discussed provincially with Vancouver teachers, they help the BCTF executive understand the perspective of VSB teachers, and they also can bring forward motions from VEAES to the BCTF.

It's a big job that they, along with all the other members of the VEAES EC, do in addition to all of their regular classroom responsibilities. If you have specific questions about the BCTF, or if you wish to know more about the connections between the VEAES executive and BCTF representation, they are a valuable resource.

They can be reached at bernadette@veaes.ca, khaled@veaes.ca, and deanna@veaes.ca.



L to R clockwise: Bernadette Milton, Khaled Shawwash, Deanna Brady

BC teachers rally for a good deal at Fund the Frontlines Rally

by BCTF

On Wednesday, October 1, the BC Teachers' Federation was proud to march alongside thousands of trade unionists from the public and private sector in support of our fellow public workers in the BC General Employees' Union (BCGEU) and the Professional Employees Association (PEA).

The cost of housing, groceries, and other necessities of life continues to soar, but the government isn't offering the BCGEU and PEA workers anything close to what's needed. Whether they are firefighters, care workers, liquor store employees, or other lower-waged workers on the front lines, they have all identified salary as their number one concern.

BCTF President Carole Gordon spoke at the rally on Wednesday, saying: "Teachers across this province are hard workers. They come with passion, caring, and a deep sense of purpose to their schools and their classrooms every day. And we know that members of the GEU and PEA do the very same. We stand with you, beside you, shoulder to shoulder, hand in hand, so that all workers in British Columbia can be treated fairly."

School Union Rep Training

by Xander Graham

This week sees the initial two, of four, Staff Union Representative Training days over the course of two weeks! School union teams from across sites in our district are coming together to share knowledge, collaborate, and learn new skills to support their school communities.



Teachers know first-hand the challenges that our education system is facing, and the need to support, empower, and lift up their schools. From Staff Reps to Pro-D Chairs, from Staff Committee leads to Health & Safety Reps, union activists play a significant role in making sure that the rights of workers are respected, supported, and cared for.

We've already seen a plethora of new faces at SURT this week, and as we continue through a season of provincial bargaining, and a national context of workers rising up to support each other, being prepared is all the more essential. Thank you to everyone attending over these two weeks of training: for your commitment, for your care, and for your passion for the essential work that union activists do.

In Solidarity: What the Alberta Teachers' Strike Means for BC teachers

by Xander Graham

As our colleagues in Alberta begin their historic province-wide strike, teachers in BC extend their solidarity and support. While the provincial contexts differ, the issues that have driven 51,000 Alberta teachers off the job are deeply familiar to us here in British Columbia. The fight for fair wages, smaller classes, and more support is our fight, too.

Standing up for fair compensation

Just as we advocated fiercely for fair wages in our own last round of bargaining, our Alberta colleagues are fighting for salaries that reflect the rising cost of living. While our own provincial agreement made some amount of progress, the economic pressures facing all educators across Canada remain intense. The Alberta government's offer of a 12% wage increase over 4 years was overwhelmingly rejected by teachers (89.5% voting NO) who know it's not enough to bridge the gap and respect their contributions to schools, students, and communities.

The fight for class size and composition continues

The stories coming out of Alberta of overcrowded classrooms and a lack of support for students with complex needs are sadly not unique. Thanks to our Supreme Court victory in 2016, class size and composition are embedded in our collective agreement, providing a defence for students' learning conditions. However, this legal protection doesn't solve the underlying problem of underfunding. We continue to see resource shortages and a need for more support for our students. The struggle in Alberta is a powerful reminder that we must remain vigilant in protecting and advocating for the resources that make our classrooms—and our profession—sustainable.

Lessons in solidarity and advocacy

BCTF President Carol Gordon has spoken on the importance of this moment for all of us: “We are in solidarity with the Alberta teachers. We know how difficult it can be at the bargaining table. We know how difficult it can be with a government that is scheming against you to not support the work that you are trying to do on behalf of children,” The Alberta teachers’ strike underscores the need for constant advocacy, strong union representation, and the power of public support.”

In Alberta, the government's bad-faith tactics have included attempts to shift public opinion with parent payments and online learning tools. This highlights why our ongoing public advocacy is so critical. We must ensure the public understands that when teachers fight for better working conditions, they are fighting for better learning conditions for students.

The strike in Alberta also reminds us that investing in teachers is essential for addressing the nationwide teacher shortage. Governments that fail to offer fair wages and sustainable working conditions will not attract or retain the skilled educators our students need.

The fight for properly funded public education is a national one. While we face our own challenges in B.C., our solidarity with the Alberta teachers strengthens us all. Their walkout is a powerful message to governments everywhere: educators will not accept the erosion of public education. Their stand is for all of us and for the future of our schools, our students, and our communities.

FSA Update

by Marjorie Dumont, C'tan and Françoise Raunet

We raise our hands in honour and respect to you all for the work you have done to prepare for the Anti-FSA Campaign.

This year, the process for sending the withdrawal letters was different from past practice. As you are aware, the BC Public Schools Employers' Association (BCPSEA) and BCTF meets annually to review the FSA material and sign a protocol agreement. This agreement outlines the procedures for distributing the letters to parents, which is why there were additional steps – such as including specific dates and informing administration before sending the letters home. The process went smoothly overall, with only a few challenges. Despite the additional workload, we sincerely thank you for everything you've done to make this process successful.

We will continue to take a stand against standardized testing! It is important to note that the FSA is not a mandatory part of the BC curriculum. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from the test.

We oppose the FSA for two key reasons: it offers little benefit to students, teachers, or families, and it exacerbates existing inequities. We want to ensure all grade 4 and grade 7 teachers that we stand united with you as we continue with our opposition to the FSA campaign.

Please direct parents/guardians to BCTF website for the withdrawal form, How to Withdraw your Child from the FSA:

<https://www.bctf.ca/topics/services-information/research-and-education-issues/fsa>

Contact VEAES when administrators are persuading parents to reconsider withdrawing their child from the test. We would like to track these conversations to compare how many parents initially choose to withdraw versus how many ultimately allow their child to write the test, in order to understand the extent to which parents are persuaded to change their decision.

Deadlines for Porting Seniority, Teaching Experience, and Sick Leave

by Vanessa Lefebvre

Reminder to members who have recently signed a continuing contract, that you should have received forms to fill out to ensure your seniority, teaching experience, and sick leave is ported. You have 120 days from accepting a continuing contract to port those days. There are forms that you need to submit to your previous district.

In terms of seniority, you can port up to 20 years. In terms of sick leave, you can port up to 60 days. In terms of teaching experience, the VSB's practice does not count your TTOC experience when porting from another district, which can impact your placement on the salary grid in comparison to your previous district. Please email EmployeeServices@vsb.bc.ca to check that your forms have been processed well in advance of your 120-day limit.

Union Leave

by Marjorie Dumont, C'tan and Françoise Raunet

All reps, please remember that there are two essential steps for taking any union leave. Please submit your absence information at least **one week** in advance for approval. Once approved, book your absence in SFE **using code 182 (VEAES Business)**. We will communicate with you via your **personal (non-VSB) email address**. Please check your inbox regularly. All correspondence will come from accounting@veaes.ca or hitomi@veaes.ca. The VEAES office will submit your leave of absence request to the Vancouver School Board for processing. VEAES covers the TTOC costs directly with the Board.

When members neglect to submit the union rep leave form, it creates additional workload and hinders our ability to focus on other important tasks. Additionally, it may raise flags with the Board regarding unauthorized leave. We appreciate your cooperation in completing these steps. If you do not receive a TTOC for the 2025 fall SURT or your monthly union leave, please note that VEAES still pays for the cost of the TTOC, and those funds will be available in your school's Flex fund. Consider using the Staff Committee to recommend how to best utilize these funds, such as bringing in an additional TTOC to replace any lost service to students that was likely created by the failure to fill. Having a second Teacher Librarian or Resource Teacher in the school for the day can make a significant difference!

Half Day Union Leave Policy

Each school is entitled to one half day of union rep leave for one Staff Rep per school per month, with the exception of October, February, and May. During these months, we allocate these half days to provide a full day of training for School Union Reps. Your school can choose to rotate the half day leave among your union team members (such as Pro-D, Health and Safety, Staff Committee Chair, and Staff Rep), but it's essential to forward the paperwork listing the names and roles of those taking the leave to the union office. This is important as we verify leave usage against our Senior Staff Rep lists. Any unexpected names using union leave without proper documentation may be flagged as unauthorized by the Board.

Union reps may also choose to "save up" two months' worth of leave (eg. September and November) to take a full day. However, it's crucial to indicate this on the form and submit it to the union office. Without this documentation, we spend so much time tracking down leaves, which takes away from other important union responsibilities.

Other Leave Requests

- VSB-related leave is coordinated between VSTA (Vancouver Secondary Teachers' Association) and VSB (SFE **Code 183**)
- BCTF-related leave is coordinated between the member, BCTF, and VSB. (SFE **Code 184**)
- VSB-related leave is coordinated directly between the member and VSB.

The release for Staff Reps is authorized through our budget-setting process and funded by member dues. We have the responsibility to our members to ensure that this leave is used appropriately and for its intended purpose. Our provision of this leave to reps is somewhat unique in the province.

We appreciate your help by following the steps so that we can effectively support you in your vital work

**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 DATES

GM/SRA at Tupper
Secondary on **October 14**
at **4:00 pm**

School Union Rep Training
at the Holiday Inn Vancouver
Centre on **October 15-16**

2025-26



VEAES MEMBER PORTAL

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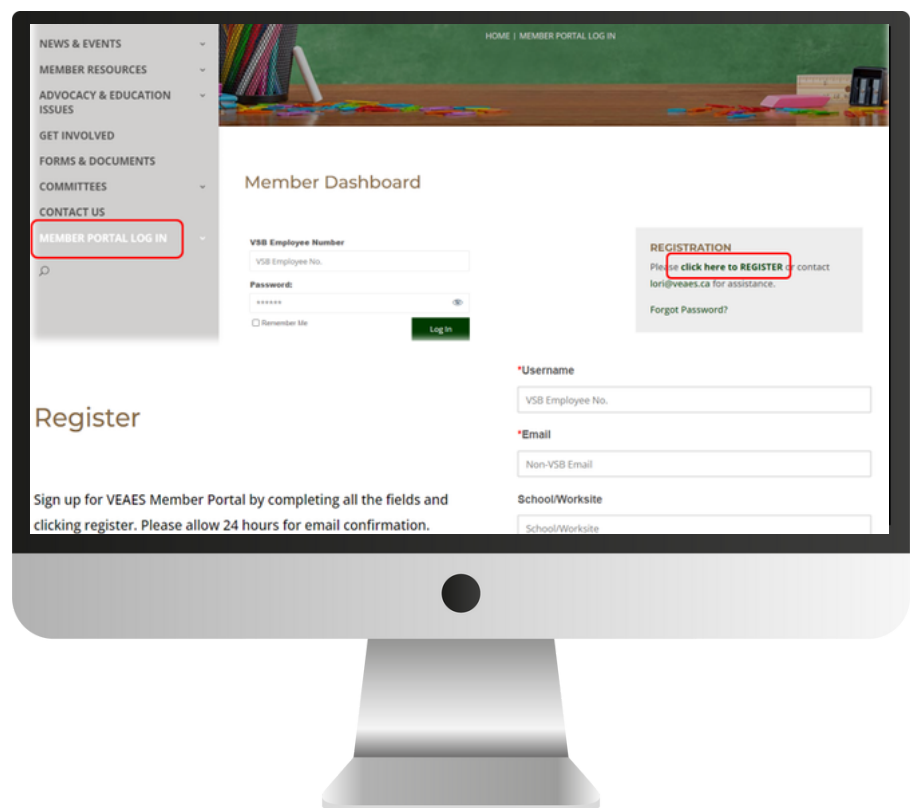
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To access the portal, go to the VEAES website. On the menu, scroll down to Member Portal Log In. When you click on it, there will be a prompt for you to register. After much consideration, we have chosen to use members' VSB employee numbers as the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