



# VEAES WEEKLY

## TOPICS WORTH TALKING ABOUT

**PLEASE READ AND DISCUSS  
WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES**

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## Honouring the Legacy of Justice Murray Sinclair, One Year On



Image from nctr.ca

Today, we honour Murray Sinclair for his lifelong dedication to justice, truth, and reconciliation. We are deeply grateful for all he has done for First Nations, Inuit, and Metis peoples across Turtle Island. Through his leadership with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, he helped bring to light the painful truths of residential schools, giving voice to the children who never made it home and to the survivors whose courage and stories guide our shared path toward healing. His work reminds us of our responsibility to remember, to listen, and to continue the journey of reconciliation with compassion and respect. Our hands are raised in honour and respect to the Honourable Murray Sinclair. We send good thoughts to his family as they remember him.

## National Indigenous Veterans Day – November 8

### NATIONAL INDIGENOUS VETERANS DAY

#### COMMUNITY CELEBRATION - CEREMONY PROTOCOL

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2025, 9:00 AM**

Open Ceremony - 312 Main Street (sign in at 8:30 AM)

Honour March at 10:00 AM to Victory Square Cenotaph-Wreath Lay Service, 10:45 AM - 1:30 PM.

Host drum: Buffalo Spirit. Reception, Veteran tributes: Aboriginal Friendship Centre - 1607 E Hastings Street, 2:00 - 3:30 PM

Traditional Dress.

Open to public participation.

For more information about National Indigenous Veterans Day: [Link](#)



Sponsors: BCGEU, CUPE BC, CUPE 15, 312 Main, Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre. UBCIC, Squamish Peacekeepers, COV, VPD, Musqueam, Squamish, Tsleil-Waututh First Nations, BC Ambulance, Poppy by Andy Everson  
For further information:  
Kelly White 604-565-4927

## L'École Polytechnique Memorial

By Elaine Ong



By Each year, VEAES Social Justice and Solidarity Committee hosts a memorial gathering on **December 6th** at Thornton Park to remember the 14 women who were murdered at L'École Polytechnique in Montreal in 1989 in a senseless act of misogynistic violence.

December 6th is on Saturday this year, and we will be meeting at 11 AM. If you are interested in joining us, please RSVP to [elaine@veaes.ca](mailto:elaine@veaes.ca) The memorial will be about 30-45 minutes. We are also hoping that you can join us for coffee after the memorial. Please dress for the weather.

# BDS Statement for VEAES Membership

By VEAES Executive Committee



Dear VEAES Members,

We are writing to share a development in the work of our Executive Committee, one that speaks to our identity not only as education professionals in Vancouver, but as union activists grounded in social justice, international solidarity, and human rights.

At its recent meeting, the VEAES Executive Committee passed a motion to **endorse and support the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) campaign**. While this action reflects careful deliberation within our union structures, it also marks a moment of moral clarity: our understanding of “solidarity” encompasses both our local struggle for quality public education and global struggles for justice.

The Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) campaign, launched in 2005 by Palestinian civil society organizations, calls for non-violent economic and cultural pressure on Israel until it complies with international law by ending the occupation of Palestinian territories, ensuring equal rights for Palestinian citizens, and upholding the right of return for refugees. For unions in British Columbia, this campaign echoes earlier traditions of labour-based international solidarity, including the powerful role that BC unions, teachers included, played in helping to end apartheid in South Africa. In the 1970s and 1980s, BC educators, through their unions and the BC Federation of Labour, supported boycotts of South African goods, divested from companies profiting from apartheid, and educated students and members about global human rights. Many in the labour movement see BDS as a continuation of that legacy: a peaceful, principled tactic through which working people use collective power to oppose injustice and promote equity worldwide.

In passing this motion, VEAES is signalling that as educators and union members we are willing to locate our professional commitments within a broader ethical horizon. We recognise that teaching is never just about course content or classroom routines: it is about equipping learners (and ourselves) to ask what kind of world we want, how we participate in it, and how institutional decisions reflect our values.

The VEAES Executive Committee encourages members to explore both the official BDS movement website, [here](#), and the Canadian BDS Coalition, available [here](#), in order to further understand how they can take part in and engage with these campaigns.

By supporting the BDS campaign, VEAES joins many other labour unions and public organizations that have already publicly declared their support for BDS, including, but not limited to, the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW), the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC), The Canadian Union of Public Employees BC (CUPE BC), the Nanaimo District Teachers' Association, and the SFU Faculty Association.

As we proceed, we do so with humility, openness, and respect for the diversity of member views. We trust the strength of our union lies in democratic practice, in rigorous discussion, and in shared commitment to equity, both locally and globally.

Thank you for your attention, your care, and your ongoing engagement in making VEAES a union of conscience as well as action.

*As this relates to organizational purchasing and procurement, feedback can be directed to Secretary-Treasurer Jody Polukoshko at [jody@veaes.ca](mailto:jody@veaes.ca). Thank you.*

# BCTF's Let's Talk About Literacy Report

Compiled from BCTF information by Françoise Raunet



In Spring 2025, BCTF Research held focus groups with teachers from across the province to discuss literacy in BC schools. Their insights, experiences, and suggestions for how the K-12 education system can endeavour to meet all students' literacy needs were incorporated into the **Let's Talk About Literacy** report. Here is some of what they heard:

## What teachers told the BCTF

**New teachers can feel unprepared to teach reading** when they enter the classroom, and attribute this to critical gaps in their pre-service teacher preparation programs pertaining to literacy instruction.

**Teachers are often left to learn about literacy on their own**, spending a considerable amount of personal time and funds to build knowledge and capacity in literacy instruction to better address their students' needs.

**Sourcing and purchasing classroom literacy resources often falls on teachers**, as funding for curricular supports and resources can vary by district. This adds to teachers' workload and results in inequitable financial burden.

**Inadequate staffing and insufficient budgets impact literacy instruction, interventions and support** as teachers try to meet students' needs with fewer human and material resources.

## What teachers say they need

Teachers described multiple systemic changes to supporting literacy instruction and improving students' learning conditions.

**Strengthen pre-service teacher literacy preparation** by providing teacher candidates with a deeper understanding of foundational literacy concepts and opportunities to develop robust instructional strategies.

**Fund ongoing and accessible professional learning opportunities** so any teacher may deepen their literacy knowledge and practice throughout their career.

**Provide universal access to vetted literacy resources** to reduce individual teachers' workload and out of pocket spending while ensuring the resources used for professional and student learning meet place- and research-based standards for BC classrooms.

**Increase prep, collaboration, and administrative time provisions**, so that teachers have the time to plan for and respond to their students' diverse literacy needs in collaboration with colleagues.

**Invite critical conversations about teachers' professional autonomy** in the context of literacy policy and practice, ensuring teachers have opportunities to inform system decision-making, access professional learning, and engage in collegial dialogue.

**Practice collaborative leadership and transparent communication** at school, district, and union levels to provide guidelines and meaningful supports that navigate teachers' deeply-held perspectives and commitments about literacy pedagogies.

# Literacy Screeners and the BCTF

Compiled from BCTF information by Françoise Raunet

The BCTF has raised concerns over the Ministry of Education and Child Care's K-12 Literacy Initiative, including: the mandatory nature of the screening, the recommended screening tools, and the sudden changes in Ministry directions to school districts. The MOE says that mandatory early literacy screening is one of the ways the government will make meaningful progress on literacy outcomes for BC students. However, it is not planning for any additional government funding to provide the essential staffing and resources to support students identified as in need of assistance. In fact, the [FAQ document](#) they released in August clearly indicates that "school districts are responsible for the associated costs related to the early literacy screening tool selected for their district."

At their September 2025 meeting, the BCTF EC made the following governance decision:

*That the Federation express its concerns to the Minister of Education and Child Care about the new mandatory requirement for a Kindergarten literacy screener including the consultation process and timeline of communication, workload and data collection, and list of recommended screeners; and lobby the government to address downloading of costs to school districts by providing additional funding, in-service, and time beyond the existing literacy grants.*

## BCTF Women's Institute, February 19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>, 2026

Compiled from BCTF information by Françoise Raunet

The 2026 BCTF Women's Institute will take place on February 19–21, 2026, at the Coast Coal Harbour Hotel in Vancouver. VEAES is able to send one member as a delegate who meets the criteria listed below. All costs relating to leaves, travel, accommodation, and additional childcare expenses will be covered by the BCTF for this event. If you are interested, please complete

[this CV](#) and forward it to [francoise@veaes.ca](mailto:francoise@veaes.ca) before Nov. 17<sup>th</sup> so that the EC has time to review applications and nominate someone prior to the deadline.



This event is open to members with equity-deserving gender identities, including cis and trans women, and non-binary and gender non-conforming people who are comfortable in a space that centres the experiences of women. In addition, delegates must meet the following criteria:

- has not attended a Women's Institute in the past five years
- is available and committed to attending all three days in February 2026.

Additionally, for those not selected by the VEAES EC, there will be an opportunity for members to apply directly to the BCTF to attend as an additional delegate. Watch the ["News & Opportunities" section of the BCTF website](#) for more information on how to apply directly. Preference will be given to members of equity-seeking groups, and teachers in their first five years of teaching.



# Queering Outdoor Education

By VEAES Office

*If ... we can see and appreciate the growth and change of a leaf, or a seed, or the relationship between plants in an ecosystem, why not appreciate and respect the fact that humans also change and grow?*

The above is excerpted from VEAES Secretary-Treasurer Jody Polukosho's new article, Queering Outdoor Education, that is

featured in the November/December issue of the BCTF's Teacher Magazine. The article is a beautiful meditation on the impact that a queer, intersectional lens on outdoor education can provide for students, teachers, and communities. The VEAES office invites members to not only read the article, but to engage with the important themes and ideals that the piece provides. As the article notes, "...the opportunity to deconstruct our relationships with nature and the way we engage with students is always valuable," and we look forward to educators having the opportunity to add this vital perspective to their toolkit. The article can be read [here](#).



## TTOC Experience Transfer

By Xander Graham

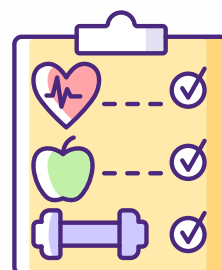


If you work as a teacher teaching on call (TTOC), you will accumulate your experience credit in your TTOC silo. If you also work in a contract, temporary, or continuing position, you will also earn experience credit in your contract silo. You can move your TTOC experience credit into your contract silo two times a year. You must make the request to move the experience credit by June 30 to be effective by August 31, or by November 15 to be effective by December 31. To learn more about how to move your TTOC credit to your contract silo, when it is best to move your TTOC credit, or when to keep your TTOC credit in your TTOC silo, click [here](#).

## Health and Wellness Program

By Xander Graham

As the months 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, 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.



# IMPORTANT DATES

**Fall Representative Assembly** on  
**November 7-8** at the  
**Victoria Conference Centre**

**Staff Rep Assembly and General Meeting** on  
**November 12** at **Tupper Secondary** at **4:00 pm**

**2025-26**  
 [veaes.ca](http://veaes.ca)

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**HAPPY HALLOWEEN**

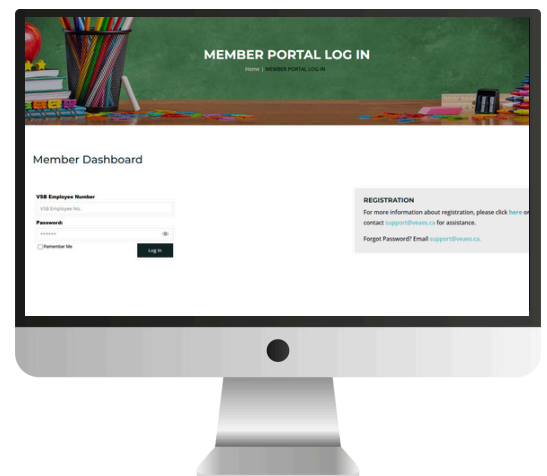
**WE HOPE YOUR HALLOWEEN WAS FULL OF TREATS (AND NO TRICKS)!**



## VEAES MEMBER PORTAL

To access the portal, go to the VEAES website. On the menu, scroll down to "Member Portal Log In". 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 login to the portal.

To receive your temporary password, please email [support@veaes.ca](mailto:support@veaes.ca). Support staff will send you your temporary password and you can reset it under "My Account" then "Profile Details."



### 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/ é-iθamə cən