



# VEAES NEWS

VANCOUVER ELEMENTARY AND ADULT EDUCATORS' SOCIETY

VEAES gives thanks and recognizes that this meeting takes place on the stolen, unceded joint territory of the x̱m̱əθḵw̱əy̱əm (Musqueam), Səlilwətał (Tseil Waututh), and S̱ḵw̱x̱w̱ú7mesh (Squamish) Nations.

## ELECT YOUR 2025-2026 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

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Tuesday, May 13, 2025 at 4 pm

Van Dusen Botanical Garden  
BMO Hall and

Peggy Gunn Woodland Hall A & B  
5251 Oak St., Vancouver

Social to follow the AGM

Please RSVP to [hitomi@veaes.ca](mailto:hitomi@veaes.ca)

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# AGM AGENDA

**4:00 PM**

**1. Acknowledgement - Chair**

VEAES gives thanks and recognizes that this meeting takes place on the stolen, unceded joint territory of the x̱w̱məθḵw̱əy̱əm (Musqueam), Seḻíḻw̱iṯuḻh (Tsleil Waututh), and Sḵw̱x̱w̱ú7mesh (Squamish) Nations.

**2. Truth and Reconciliation Commission Witness Ceremony Calls to Action - N. Burditt**

**3. Adoption of Agenda - Chair**

**4. Approval of Minutes | May 14, 2024 - Chair**

**5. VEAES' President's Report - M. Dumont**

**6. Finance Report | Secretary Treasurer - J. Polukoshko**

**7. EC Financial Recommendations:**

**a)** That the VEAES EC recommend to the AGM that Achieve CPA Chartered Accountants be retained as the auditor for 2025 /2026.

**b)** That the VEAES EC recommend to the AGM that the audited financial statements for the years ending July 2024 be accepted.

**c)** That the VEAES EC recommend to the AGM that the staffing allocation for the VEAES office in 2025 / 2026 be:

- President..... (11 months)
- Vice-President ..... (11 months)
- Vice-President / Grievance Officer..... (10.5 months)
- Vice-President ..... (10.5 months)
- Vice-President ..... (10.5 months)
- Adult Educators Sub-Local President (up to 0.25 FTE)

**d)** That the VEAES EC recommend to the AGM that the fee for the contract members be 0.88%.

**e)** That the VEAES EC recommend to the AGM that the fee for the TTOCs be 0.71%.

**f)** That the VEAES EC recommend to the AGM that the 2024 / 2025 budget in the amount of \$1,876,763.00.

**8. Election of Executive Committees & Alternate Local Reps for 2025-2026**

Please refer to the VEAES NEWS for nominees list.

**9. Recognition of Executive Committee Members**

**10. Announcements**

**11. Adjournment**

**Social Following the AGM**



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**Marjorie Dumont**  
**VEAES President**



Let us raise our hands in honour and respect for the incredible work done by all. To Committee Chairs and Members; Thank you for your continued advocacy and dedication. To Staff Reps; Your support for VEAES members at schools and sites does not go unnoticed. We see you, we hear you, and we appreciate you. To Executive Committee (EC); Thank you for your ongoing commitment and for attending numerous meetings throughout the year.

We recognize the exhaustion from VEAES members of continually doing more with less. Your persistent advocacy for meaningful support for students is deeply valued. This responsibility should not rest on your shoulders alone, but be shared by both members and the employer.

Addressing violence in the workplace remains a top priority. This concern has been raised with the Board multiple times. We urge all VEAES members to report incidents through the Health and Safety platform, OurHealth, to ensure accountability and transparency. Please also take advantage of the Health and Wellness Program.

Between November 5, 2024, and February 28, 2025, the VEAES Local Bargaining Team engaged in 10 sessions. We raise our hands in respect for the team:

Marjorie Dumont, C'tan (VEAES LP), Greg Canning (VEAES VP), Elsa Medina (VEAES WLC/B Chair), Liam Patterson-Morris (VEAES Member), Francoise Raunet (VEAES Member), Carmen Schaedeli (VSTA LP), Rod Ofreneo (VSTA Member), Gregory Henderson (VSTA WLC/B Chair), Nicole Duy (VSTA Member), and Jesse Taylor (VSTA Member).

The team began meeting in October 2024 to draft proposals aligned with member priorities. From the outset, the bargaining process was guided by a commitment to Truth and Reconciliation. A protocol agreement was signed, embedding Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing into the process. This included, but was not limited to:

- Land acknowledgements and welcomes
- Timeless introductions
- Talking circle processes
- Honouring oral history
- Ceremony and cultural practices

Each session opened with meaningful land acknowledgements. We honoured the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations, and in the first session, paid tribute to the late Honourable Murray Sinclair, incorporating the Seven Sacred Teachings—love, respect, courage, honesty, wisdom, humility, and truth—throughout the process.

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*continued*

The following statement was an example from bargaining dialogue:

*"As we begin our conversation, let us reflect on the teaching of bravery, represented by the bear. Like the mother bear, we must show strength and courage to face life's challenges—standing firm in what is right, even when it's difficult."*

The bargaining team successfully signed off on eight proposals, including:

- LOU on Printing and Access to the Collective Agreement
- Health and Safety
- Staff Meetings
- Posting and Filling Vacancies
- School-Based/District Program Assignments
- Orientation of New Employees
- LOU on Job Shares (Secondary)
- LOU on Secondary Teachers Working at Two Sites (Post and Fill)

In April 2025, school reps attended SURT, divided into sessions on Post & Fill and Local Bargaining. Reps were tasked with presenting the Local Matters Agreement at their sites. For schools without a rep present, we followed up with a Zoom invitation.

On April 23, 2025, a final VTF meeting was held to review the Local Matters Agreement before ratification. Voting was conducted via Simply Voting, with ballots sent at 11:00 p.m. on April 23. Polls opened at 7:00 a.m. on April 24 and closed at 7:00 p.m. on April 25. The results:

**Turnout:** 903 (22.1%) of 4094 electors voted in this ballot  
**Note:** 903 (22.1%) of 4094 weighted votes were cast in this ballot.  
**Yes:** 846 (93.7%)  
**No:** 57 (6.3%)  
**Total:** 903

The Adult Educators are in the initial stages of local bargaining. The team consists of Rob McGowan (LP, Adult Educators' sub-local), Vanessa Lefebvre (VEAES Grievance Officer/VP) and Keeley Ryan (VEAES Member). We look forward to receiving updates and extend our support and good thoughts for a successful round of bargaining.

In closing, we are deeply grateful to each of you for the trust you've placed in the In-House Table Officers this year. Your strength, resilience, and commitment continue to inspire.

In solidarity,

Marjorie Dumont, C'tan

# 2025-2026 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE NOMINEES



## **Marjorie Dumont, C'tan**

President (11 months @ 1.0 FTE)

The protocol of introducing oneself to others is vital to my cultural teachings and so, I share this with you. Dini ze, ts'ake ze, skiy ze, (Male chiefs, Female chiefs and their children) Hadih, So'endzin. (Greetings/hello, how are you?) jeen Tabi honzoo. (This is a beautiful day) C'tan sozi (My name is C'tan, also known as Marjorie Dumont) Sne Ts'ake ze Wila'at endzin (My mother's name is Wila'at also known as Sue Alfred) Sbeb tsitni'in Dini ze Wah tah ghet endzin (My late father's name was Wah tah ghet, also known as Henry Alfred). N'iwh Dini ze' Na'Moks endzin (My house chief's name is Na'Moks, also known as John Ridsdale). I belong to the Tsayu (Beaver) clan. My late father's clan is Laksilyu (Small frog). I am from the Wet'suwet'en First Nation and my roots are also Gitxsan.

I would like to acknowledge I am a visitor on the ancestral, unceded/stolen territory of the SkWawu7mesh, Saiilwata?/Selilwitulh and xwma0kwayam nations. I am grateful and blessed to live and work on their beautiful yintah that they have been stewards of since time immemorial. I am humbled and honoured to once again put my name forward for the role of President. I raise my hands to you in deep respect and gratitude for the trust you placed in me as your Local President over the past year. I am here because of you, and for that, I am profoundly thankful.

Your stories continue to inspire me, giving me the strength and courage to advocate for meaningful improvements in our public education system. I also want to acknowledge and celebrate the important work each of you is doing to decolonize our worksites and our union.

My unwavering dedication to the teaching profession—and to my responsibilities as a representative for VEAES—is deeply rooted in values that have been shaped by both lived experience and the enduring guidance of my Elders. Their teachings have helped me recognize and nurture my ability to foster connection, to hold space for others with empathy and respect, and to speak with intention when the moment calls for it. These qualities are not just personal strengths—they are reflections of the collective spirit of VEAES and its steadfast commitment to advancing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action in meaningful, ongoing ways.

Educators across the province continue to grapple with serious challenges: a persistent shortage of qualified teachers, overwhelming workloads, and the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health and classroom dynamics. These pressures have tested our resilience, and I want to extend my deepest gratitude to all of you who show up each day for your students and for each other.

As we continue to move through these complex times, I humbly ask for your continued trust and support in allowing me to carry forward this important work with VEAES. I believe that the perspective I bring—shaped by experience, culture, and a deep commitment to equity—has already made a positive impact, and I remain hopeful and determined to contribute to a future where teachers feel valued, supported, and empowered to thrive.



## **Xander Graham**

Vice-President (11 months @ 1.0 FTE)

The past year serving VEAES membership as Vice-President has been a truly wonderful opportunity to support, lift up, and learn alongside VEAES members, students, schools, and the Vancouver community as a whole.

This year I have had the great opportunity to support Professional Development as part of my portfolio, helping to strengthen the standards and protections for the Professional Development of members throughout the district. I have also been fortunate enough to enjoy responsibilities around facilitating our general & staff-representative assemblies, managing communications, and building upon our political action. An additional highlight this year has been the exciting opportunity to support the work of the Grievance Officer, aiding in the important advocacy work undertaken through the Grievance Process. I strongly believe that actively being in touch with teachers, with schools, and with the realities of everyday workers are vital aspects of the In-House role, and that a social justice and equity-based lens allows for the meaningful support of those teachers, students, and schools. It is with just such a mindset that, in the upcoming year, I look to continue the work of VEAES being the most supportive organization that it can be.

I am committed to diligence and care as key pillars of the Vice-President role, and I am immensely excited for the opportunity to continue to support VEAES members in the future.

# 2025-2026 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE NOMINEES



**Françoise Raunet**

Vice-President (11 months @ 1.0 FTE)

The job of a teacher has always been hard, but lately it seems like it has gotten even harder. I want to be a member of the VEAES executive so that I can advocate for more direct supports being provided to teachers (and their students) at the classroom/school level. For the last 4 years I have worked as a district support teacher on the CAM/Learning & Instruction Team. This experience has given me a great deal of insight into the challenges faced in a large and diverse district like ours. I believe that I have the skills and background to bring people together in common cause, focusing on the dire need for across-the-board improvements to teaching and learning conditions in our district. My experience as a teacher who worked alongside Directors of Instruction and District Principals on a variety of educational initiatives (including pro-d planning and assessment and reporting guidelines) really helped me to understand some of the complexities and challenges facing our district. I believe that I would be an excellent advocate for our members as a result.



**Vanessa Lefebvre**

Vice-President/Grievance Officer  
(10.5 months @ 1.0 FTE)

I am putting my name forward one more time for Grievance Officer to continue to do the work to uphold our Collective Agreement rights and support members through the grievance process. While we continue to see the erosion of our working conditions and our students' learning conditions, it is imperative that we push back and protect the rights we do have as we call on the district for more supports, more transparency, more accountability, and to advocate for more funding for public education.

This work is done not only at the VEAES office, but at your sites, every day. I believe it is important that we empower our members to use the structures outlined in the Collective Agreement and will continue to support members as they push for more supports for their students, increased transparency in district processes, and call for accountability of district decisions impacting your site. And through that work, we will find our future grievance officers – it could even be you!

As we move through this round of provincial bargaining, we need to increase solidarity within our union, make space for difficult conversations, and work together to push for the change we need to see in our schools.



**Greg Canning**

Vice-President (10.5 months @ 1.0 FTE)

Public education is an important service that teachers provide. We work with all students providing them with the fundamentals to become thoughtful and caring citizens. While I recognize the important service we provide to children and families it's equally important that we take time to care for ourselves. I will be the first to say I love my career but I have to admit teaching is not an easy job. The demands placed on teachers today are far greater than when I started my career some 30 years ago. I want to see the number of teachers working in Vancouver grow and I'll do whatever it takes to have early career teachers remain in the profession while also supporting all teachers with any challenges that come their way. I have worked closely with the Health and Wellness programme at the BCTF and know there are supports and services that our union provides to assist teachers in keeping a healthy work life balance. I'm gaining a better understanding of District Health and Safety and how best to support teachers in unsafe situations. With local bargaining coming to a conclusion it's time to start thinking provincially and what we can do to make this profession sustainable for teacher in the long run. I'd very much like to continue the work I started this year and build on the knowledge I've gained. I hope I can count on your support to serve you for another year.

# 2025-2026 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE NOMINEES



**Jody Polukoshko**

Secretary Treasurer

It has been a pleasure to work as a member of the VEAES Finance Committee, stewarding our organization's finances through such a financially unpredictable and challenging period, and creating a balanced budget in each of those two years that saw no reduction in service or support to members. I have really loved working with the finances of our organization through the lens of our values. Like bargaining, finance wasn't something I ever imagined to find exciting, but I believe this is one important way that I can continue to support the organization's sustainability and renewal in the year ahead. I would be proud to continue this work in conjunction with the Finance Committee and the In House Table Officers, should I be elected.



**Deanna Brady**

Local Rep to the BCTF

My name is Deanna Brady (she/they), and I am a first-year teacher at Osler Elementary. My dad grew up in Belfast, Northern Ireland and my mother grew up in Richmond, her ancestors coming from Norway, Scotland, and Wales. I am a settler on the stolen lands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations and am thankful for the stewardship these nations have given this land since time immemorial. Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Being have become interconnected to who I am, both as an educator and person. I firmly believe in decolonization, which is more crucial than ever given the state of the current climate crisis.

During my first year in teaching, I've made a consistent effort to be a part of the local union and it's been such a rewarding experience. It's been one of the highlights of my first year, as it's given me a way to advocate to change the systemic issues within public education. This year I've attended and participated in multiple VEAES general assembly meetings, attended the BCTF AGM where I motivated a motion, and taken on the role of Anti-Racism lead, SOGI lead, and Social Justice Rep for my school. I feel very grateful that there are opportunities within this career where I can practice my advocacy, passion for helping others, and desire for enacting change.

In my previous career, I worked as a community support worker for adults with developmental disabilities. The overview of my role was to support people in their day-to-day, in whichever ways needed, with an emphasis on connecting them with their communities. This experience taught me how to advocate for vulnerable individuals both within the workplace and community, and solidified my passion in supporting others. If elected as LR, I would bring my passion, advocacy skills, and communication skills to the two provincial meetings where I promise to amplify the voices of VEAES members.

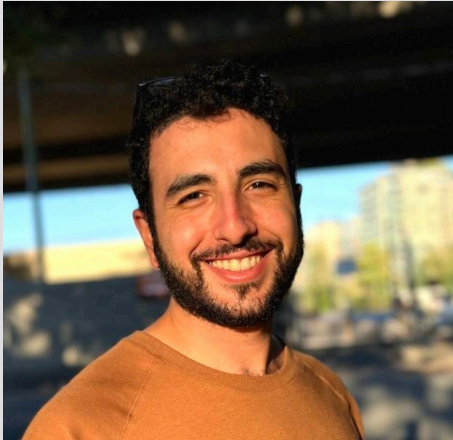


**Bernadette Milton**

Local Rep to the BCTF

I believe that members are heard with respect and represented with equality. I would like to continue my commitment as a LR for the year 2025-2026 to support teachers and help VEAES relevant, connected to members at large, and respond to VSB and broader issues in public education.

# 2025-2026 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE NOMINEES



**Khaled Shawwash**

Local Rep to the BCTF

I'm excited to be running once again to serve as your local representative. Now in my sixth year of teaching on the unceded lands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations, I've taught a range of grades and have a deep understanding of the systemic challenges we face as educators. It would be an honour to continue advocating for VEAS at the provincial level, pushing for meaningful solutions to the long-standing issues impacting our classrooms and education system.

If re-elected, I will continue to strengthen the inter-union network I've built while bringing forward a broad range of our local's concerns to the BCTF. Over the past year, I've introduced motions to address pressing problems, fostered solidarity with members from other locals, and worked to build mutual understanding with those members so we can support each other more effectively. These connections have led to increased support for our motions at both Representative Assemblies and AGMs, and I'm committed to growing this momentum. This year, I'm especially focused on connecting more deeply with VEAS members to better understand and amplify the issues that matter most to us.

I bring to this work a strong lens rooted in unionism, intersectional feminism, and decolonization. I'm committed to representing and uplifting those with marginalized identities and remain unwavering in my core principles. Still, I approach this role with both open-mindedness and humility, always eager to learn and grow through dialogue.

It's hard to express how much this role means to me. I am deeply passionate about this work and grateful for the opportunity to represent you. I also feel fortunate to work alongside such a collaborative and effective VEAS Executive Committee, which has made me a stronger advocate. I would be honoured to continue serving you to build deeper relationships and support across locals, champion your voices, and help make VEAS a leading voice at the provincial table.



**Japleen Gill**

Member-at-Large

I would be delighted to serve on the VEAS EC again this year as a Member at Large. My passion is amplifying the voices of those who are marginalized, whether they are students or staff. I am committed to learn how best to support members as they navigate our colonial structures. My work with the union has led me to chair staff committee, become staff rep at our school and lead VEAS meetings.

# 2025-2026 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE NOMINEES



**Deborah Tin Tun**

Member-at-Large

As member-at-large on the Executive Committee, I bring my perspective as a music teacher to the table. As a non-enrolling teacher, and staff rep for my school, I am always learning by listening to my colleagues, and supporting them when that is needed. I keep these learnings in mind when I am serving on a committee or a group where it is required that I represent the interests of all VEAES members. Our local is quite diverse when it comes to all the different roles members have, and there are many unique factors to keep in mind when one tries to represent the whole fairly. Like anything important in life, it's important to do one's best, and aim high, but not to be discouraged from trying for fear of failure. I'm still on the long path of building these skills in union work, and I hope to continue this next year on EC.

I'm interested in pension divestment and environmental issues; as we face the climate emergency, I look for ways that I, as an ordinary citizen, can contribute. I hope that union work is one way to do this, and try to find the places where these intersect.



**Karine Ng**

Communications Chair

Our strength lies in our solidarity, our commitment to equity, and our unwavering stance against oppression in all its forms

Solidarity is the cornerstone of our union. It binds us together, amplifies our voices, and empowers us to achieve meaningful change through collective action. In this spirit, I pledge to continue to build capacity by inviting and mentoring interested members into union work.

My practice is anchored in the firm belief that change is possible through education and reflection. Driven by our passion for justice, VEAES has decolonized our own policies and practices, as well as some terms in the collective agreement. I aspire to continue this honourable legacy of justice and anti-oppression.

As a member of VEAES, I hold myself to a high standard of integrity and accountability. I recognize that our actions have far-reaching implications for the future of our union and the well-being of our members. Therefore, I commit to upholding these values of solidarity, equity, and anti-oppression in all aspects of my work.

Together, we will strive to grow a union that reflects the diversity of our membership, honors the principles of justice, and serves as a beacon of hope and progress. Thank you for your dedication to our shared values and vision.



**Elsa Medina**

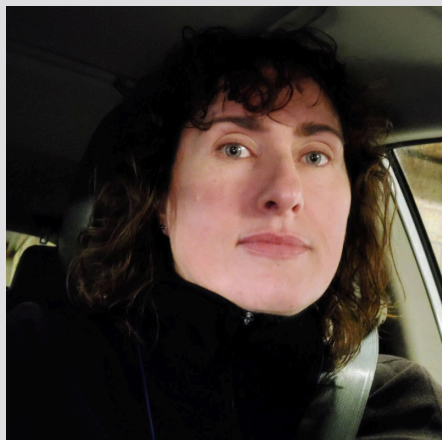
WLCB Chair

Serving as an executive council member for my teacher union is a chance to make a significant impact on the education system and advocate for teachers' rights. My passion for education and commitment to improving the teaching profession drive me to take on this leadership role.

As an executive council member, I would work to ensure teachers have a strong voice and are educated in decision-making processes, promoting policies that enhance their working conditions and professional development. By supporting teachers, we can create a positive environment for students, leading to more equitable educational outcomes. Additionally, I aim to foster a sense of community among educators, facilitating open communication and sharing best practices. My goal is to build a united teaching community that can effectively advocate for its interests.

In summary, I am eager to contribute my skills and passion to advance the teaching profession and make a positive difference in the lives of educators and students alike.

# 2025-2026 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE NOMINEES



**Danielle Durant**

Healthy and Safety Chair

Health and safety is an aspect of our work that greatly interests me. Our sector has some significant challenges that need to be addressed. Our working conditions are more challenging than ever and violence in schools is on the rise. I would like to continue to represent VEES members at both the District Health & Safety and Emergency Management Committees, to continue to share the important issues and challenges our members face on a daily basis. I have learned a lot since I began to participate in these committees since September 2019 and would like to continue learning in this role.



**Genevieve Larose-Farmer**

Professional Issues  
Committee Chair

I am interested to continue to advocate for members' equitable access to pro-d opportunities. I am passionate about professional autonomy. I would appreciate the chance to continue supporting all members and specifically pro-d chairs and committee members who are doing important work in their sites.



**Madalene Wong**

Social Justice & Solidarity Chair

Social justice has always been a passion of mine, and I'm eager to continue learning, sharing my perspectives, and collaborating with like-minded educators to make our schools more inclusive and equitable spaces. It's been a wonderful experience serving as a Social Justice & Solidarity co-chair these past few years. I've truly enjoyed connecting with members, hearing your stories and ideas, and gaining a deeper understanding of union work. This past year, the SJ&S Committee launched new initiatives and hosted some exciting events, and I'm hoping to keep the momentum going!



**Elaine Ong**

Social Justice & Solidarity Chair

I continue to strive to push our Social Justice agenda and promote inclusion and acceptance of all. This year, we created and hosted a SURT for SJ Reps at schools, and we would like to continue this project next year.