

STRONGER TOGETHER



veaes weekly

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TOPICS WORTH TALKING ABOUT

PLEASE READ AND DISCUSS
WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES

President's Back-to-School Welcome

By Marjorie Dumont, C'tan

One Canoe, Many Paddles: Pulling Together for a New School Year

As we welcome the new school year, we want to take a moment to recognize and honour each and every one of you for all that you do.

On behalf of VEAES, we raise our hands in honour and respect for the care, commitment, strength, and dedication you bring to our school communities each day. Your work matters deeply.

The past year brought its share of challenges. Like the ocean during stormy weather, there were times when the waves came in high and strong. We continued our efforts to learn and adapt to SpacesEDU, worked through the kinks and complexities of the literacy screener reviews, and, perhaps most difficult of all, navigated the painful moments surrounding surplus and program cuts. Through it all, you weathered the storm with courage, integrity, and respect.

VEAES deeply appreciates everyone's patience, understanding, and commitment as we worked through new timelines for the Early Retirement Incentive Program (ERIP) and the Spring Transfer Process (STP). We also appreciate your understanding and patience regarding the updates and process surrounding the signed Letter of Understanding (LOU) for the Unused Remedy for 2024-25. The second year of the Letter of Understanding for ERIP and STP was a success, and that success reflects the patience, collaboration, and trust demonstrated by members throughout the process.

As we embark on another new journey together, we are reminded that education is about much more than what happens in a classroom. Students and families see and appreciate the many ways you contribute to making our sites safe, fair, welcoming, and ensuring Vancouver schools are places of belonging--places where people can learn, unlearn, ask questions, discover, and grow.

For the First Peoples of this land--the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil Waututh--the canoe is a powerful representation of the journeys we travel. It reminds us that we do not journey alone. We pull together, supporting one another, navigating changing waters, learning from what lies behind us, and looking toward what is ahead.

Just as each of us travels our own individual journey, we are also travelling a collective journey: the journey to make public education better for all.

The Seven Sacred Teachings remind us of the values that can guide us on that journey: Love, Respect, Courage, Honesty, Wisdom, Humility, and Truth. These teachings call us to care for one another, to stand with courage when the waters become difficult, to act with integrity, and to remain grounded in what is right and just.



Image: Troy Roberts, Kwakiutl, Pacific Northwest Native Art – Paddles, Changing Tide Creations

As we begin this school year, may we paddle together with purpose, compassion, courage, and respect. May we remember the strength of those who have journeyed before us, honour those traveling alongside us, and remain mindful of the generations who will follow.

Thank you for all you do. We raise our hands to you in honour and respect, and we look forward to travelling this next journey together.

Welcome back. May we pull forward with courage, respect, wisdom, and purpose--for our students, our families, our communities, and for all of us.

In solidarity,



Marjorie Dumont, C'tan
President

School Board Elections are Coming October 17th!

By Françoise Raunet

As you have probably heard, on October 17th municipal elections will be held all across BC, which means that Vancouver will be electing a new mayor, city council, park board, and school board. Any VSB teachers who live in Vancouver will therefore have a unique opportunity to vote for their own employer when they cast their ballots for school board.

Although school district senior management across BC have been known to tell newly elected trustees to avoid talking directly to the public, or to school board employees, the fact is that trustees are elected to oversee the functioning of the entire school district. How would this be possible without public consultation? Trustees are responsible for hiring the Superintendent and Secretary-Treasurer and approving budgets, so they actually have real power to influence District decisions. To learn more about the role of trustees, on September 17th the BCTF & UBC will be co-hosting a webinar, "Big Ideas, Bold Conversations: Public Education on the Ballot." Register [here](#) if you are interested in attending.

VEAES has been working with other VSB unions and the Vancouver District Labour Council to ensure that the new Board of school trustees will be staunch defenders of public education—we can't handle any more funding cuts or program closures. We need trustees that will be transparent and accountable to the public, who understand how district funding allocations affect class sizes and the supports available to schools, and who will ensure safe and inclusive schools for all students, regardless of their background or identity. Unfortunately, in Vancouver there are currently only two parties on School Board with a track record that demonstrates all of this—COPE and OneCity Vancouver.

In June, the VEAES EC passed a motion in June endorsing Trustee Suzie Mah, who is running for re-election with COPE, and there will be more information coming if you want it to help guide your vote choices. Leading up to the election, you can help Trustee Mah and other progressive candidates by making sure that your friends and family understand the importance of casting their vote for School Board on October 17th. Also, if you want to volunteer your time or donate, you can do so [here for COPE](#) and [here for OneCity](#). Stay tuned for more to come!

Upcoming Election Events:

- Wednesday, September 16th—[Our City Hall Forum Council Candidates Debate](#)
- Tuesday, September 29th—[Park Board All Candidates Meeting](#)
- Thursday, October 1st—[Your Voice, Your Vote: Mayoral Candidates Dialogue](#)

Volunteers needed for VSB Committees

By VEAES IHTOs

Interested in getting involved as an advocate to the school board for changes for teachers and students? We encourage you to put your name forward to be a representative to a committee that you are interested in! VSB committees discuss issues and provide information and updates. Those committees then make recommendations to the Vancouver School Board.

This opportunity is a fantastic way to bring specific issues forward and suggest changes for VEAES members. Every 2-3 months, you will attend an online meeting after school, take notes and discuss problems, and send a brief report back to a VEAES in-house table officer.

If you are interested, please fill out the CV in the link below and mail it to francoise@veaes.ca. Note that the Executive Committee reads through the applications and votes on who to appoint; you will be notified if you have been appointed to be a representative to a committee.

Here are some examples of VSB committees:

- Administrative Procedures Working Group
- Advocacy
- Diversity Advisory
- Emergency Management
- Equity and Anti-Oppression Working Group
- Framework for Enhancing Student Learning Working Group
- Inclusive Education Advisory Committee

Links:

1. [CV for Representative to VSB Committees or Other External Organizations](#)
2. [More information on committees](#)
3. [VSB calendar with meeting dates and times](#)

VEAES Executive Committee Vacancies

By Khaled Shawwash

We still have several positions open on our Executive Committee! These roles offer not just the opportunity to bring forward issues to our local union, but to also drive change; you'll be able to discuss solutions to issues that members are facing, bring forward motions, and vote on resolutions. EC meetings are held roughly twice a month, typically on Tuesdays from 4-7. Dinner is provided. Any VEAES member can [submit a CV application](#). Please note that applicants are appointed by the current EC and you cannot hold more than one position on the committee. You will be notified if you have been selected. The following are the positions that are open:

1. Member-at-Large (x3)
2. Adult Education Local Representative (LR) to the BCTF
3. Local Representative (LR) to the BCTF Alternate
4. VEAES Standing Committee Chairs:
 - Communications
 - Professional Issues
 - Social Justice and Solidarity (x2)
 - TTOC

If you are interested, please fill out and submit the CV application in the link above, and contact francoise@veaes.ca.

Article E.3 - Violence Prevention

By Khaled Shawwash

In an effort to address the longstanding, systemic issue of violence in our schools, the BCTF negotiated a new article into our collective agreement. *Article E.3 -- Violence Prevention in the Workplace* mandates a variety of actions to be taken by school boards and union locals. This includes: the maintenance of a [violence prevention toolkit](#); the communication to staff by the Board/administrators, every September, of both violence prevention materials and resources as well as violent incident/threat responses; and the annual review of violence prevention and response resources in a staff meeting held prior to Oct. 31.

Staff Reps, please expect a one-pager in your upcoming package detailing your next steps regarding passing violence prevention information along to your colleagues. Please direct questions about violence prevention and response to your school administrator. The following is the new collective agreement language in its entirety:

ARTICLE E.3 1. VIOLENCE PREVENTION IN THE WORKPLACE

1. *The provincial parties will maintain a Violence Prevention Toolkit, to be shared annually and made available on an ongoing basis to boards of education and local teachers' unions.*

2. *Annually, the employer and the local union will provide and post a joint communication of their commitment to violence prevention in the workplace for all employees of the school district.*
3. *In September of each school year, the employer shall communicate to staff:*
 - a. *the location of violence prevention and response materials; and*
 - b. *the appropriate procedures and forms to complete in response to a violent incident or threat.*
4. *Prior to October 31 of each school year, a review of violence prevention and response resources will be included in the agenda of a regularly scheduled staff meeting.*

FSA_s

By VEAES IHTOs

Despite our deep concerns and best efforts to prevent it, the Ministry of Education and the District are continuing to require the Foundational Skills Assessment (FSA) for grade 4 and 7 students. Because this year's FSA test administration period runs from September 28 -- November 6, VEAES would like members to distribute the official withdrawal letters from September 21 – 25 to ensure families have enough time to withdraw their children.

Please **do not print or copy FSA materials at your school** site this year. VEAES will coordinate the campaign

according to the protocol agreement between the BCPSEA and the BCTF, and we will print the materials here at the office and provide them to Staff Reps for distribution at your school sites.

Staff reps, please talk to your Grade 4 & 7 colleagues as soon as possible to find out how many FSA withdrawal letters are needed, as well as which day works best for distributing them. Once you have the information, please fill out the form using the QR code below to request materials and let us know your school's distribution dates.

If you have families at your school who require materials in other languages, the BCTF also has versions of the letter in Chinese (Traditional & Simplified), Filipino (Tagalog), French, Persian, and Punjabi. If you require other languages, use the form to request what you need and they will be mailed to you in the Blue Bag with the other materials.

As you know, the FSA test takes valuable classroom time away from regular learning activities, and it does not inform instruction. Assessment should be a tool that teachers use to understand the unique learning needs of the individual students in their class. However, the standardized FSA tests are not part of the curriculum, and they do not align with every teacher's instructional plans. As well, VEAES refutes the frequently cited claim that greater FSA participation leads 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.

Request for FSA Withdrawal
Letters -- 2026-2027



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 and we will dispose of them. If you have any questions about this year's campaign, please reach out to hitomi@veaes.ca.

Also, remember that our Grade 4 & 7 colleagues receive a great deal of pressure over the administration of these tests. Please support them however you can at your worksite. Remember, teachers continue to be the most trusted source of information for parents and guardians about their child's education. You may speak directly to parents about your concerns with the FSA, but there are protocols that limit such communication with students. Your efforts at school sites and your relationship with parents have made the FSA opt-out campaign quite effective in our district. We look forward to another successful campaign this year!

Volunteers Needed! TRC Calls to Action at Staff Rep Assemblies

By Françoise Raunet

Teachers who have attended any of the monthly Staff Rep Assemblies that VEAES has held at Tupper Secondary in the past few years will probably have noticed Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing infused within the meeting. Specifically, we are dedicated to understanding the protocols and teachings of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil Waututh regarding the witness ceremony, as well as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action.

VEAES is looking for teachers who would be interested in helping with the witness ceremonies at the monthly meetings. We need teachers to:

Present one of the TRC's 94 calls to action to the meeting—explain what it is and offer a personal reflection (How is it going? Achieved? Close? Why is this important? What made you choose this one? Etc.)

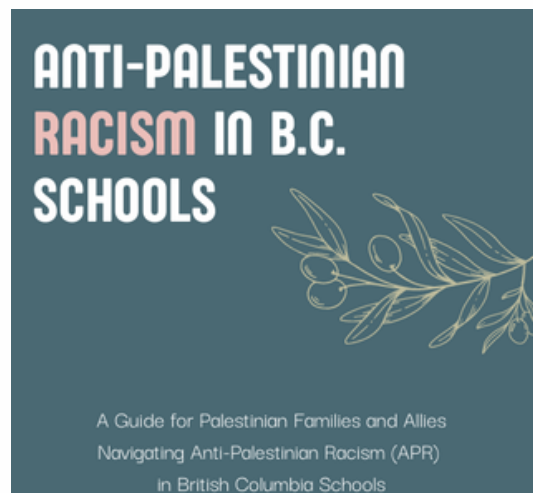
Witness the presentation—remember what was said and share some thoughts about what you heard.

If you would like to help as a presenter or a witness, please email francoise@veaes.ca so she can add your name on your preferred meeting date. There is often a last-minute scramble to find volunteers at the meeting itself, and we are really hoping to be more organized in advance this year. Thanks for your assistance!

Anti-Palestinian Racism in Schools Guide

By VEAES IHTOs

Parents for Palestine YVR, a group of "Palestinian and Jewish parents, alongside parents of Palestinian children, and parents and caregivers from several ethnic, racial and cultural backgrounds", has released their [Anti-Palestinian Racism in B.C. Schools guide](#). The guide describes what anti-Palestinian racism (APR) is, how it has manifested in B.C. schools, and how people can address it, with plenty of additional resources provided. Folx are encouraged to use this as a resource to help identify and respond to cases/instances of APR in schools. As the BCTF and VEAES have recently hosted APR workshops, you are welcome to reach out to VEAES for further support/questions.



The following is an excerpt from the introduction of the guide:

Over the last two years, attempts to silence Palestinian voices and their allies have increased as a genocide unfolds in historic Palestine. Here in B.C., the occupied lands of over 200 First Nations territories, students, families, and community members have endured attempts to silence discussion of Palestinian human rights in the classroom, in our schools communities and in the community at large.

This guide is intended as a resource for Palestinian families and their allies to challenge and report anti-Palestinian racism (APR) experienced in our schools. It also provides ideas and resources to advocate for learning about Palestine in the education system. This guide is based on our own experiences of APR in schools and the wisdom of countless others who organize in solidarity with Palestine and Palestinians.

The following is the motion passed at the 2025 BCTF Spring Representative Assembly:

That the Federation:

- 1. incorporate anti-Palestinian racism (APR) into its anti-racism policies, practices, and procedures.*
- 2. work with the Ministry and school boards to acknowledge APR and incorporate it into their anti-racism policies, practices, and procedures, including codes of conduct.*
- 3. acknowledge APR and commit to addressing and protecting students and members from it.*

BCTF Opportunity: 17th Trinational Conference in Defense of Public Education

Formed in 1993, the Trinational Coalition unites teacher union activists from Canada, Mexico, and the USA to defend public education from neo-liberal economic policies calling for privatization, less teacher autonomy, standardized testing, and the systemic underfunding of public schools. The biennial Trinational Conference in Defense of Public Education brings together researchers, teachers, and students from all three countries to plan common actions over the next two years. This year the conference will be held in Toronto from November 12-15th, and the theme is "United to Defend Public Education & our Rights, for a Future of Peace and Social Justice".

The **BCTF is looking for seven (7) teachers** from the general membership to be part of the union's delegation to this year's conference. The delegation will be traveling to Toronto from Nov 11-15, 2026. To apply, you must be an active BCTF member (e.g. not on leave). Priority will be given to first-time participants, and consideration will be given to the following criteria:

- knowledge of key socio-political and economic issues relevant to the conference
- alignment with the BCTF's International Solidarity approach
- union leadership and involvement
- geographic representation
- representation of members from equity-deserving groups
- commitment to sharing learning and participating in actions after the conference.

Important message from BCTF: An international delegation is a unique opportunity to learn from the experiences and expertise of partner unions as well as fellow delegates. There are many opportunities for rich dialogue and exchange, but this is not a guided trip or tourist experience. The days can be long and tiring, and there may not be much “free” time. At meetings with exclusively BCTF members, the union uses our Commitment to Solidarity to guide our work and our relationships. On international delegations, we are a group of BCTF members who have been invited as guests to engage with partners and community groups and will continue to use these principles to guide our work together. All participants will be expected to actively participate in all delegation activities (where active participation also includes listening and holding space for diverse views) and respond to changes and challenges with flexibility. Delegates will also be asked to recognize and critically reflect on power dynamics and imbalances in their own positions and relationships and engage in cultural humility by reflecting on their own backgrounds and how these impact beliefs and practices.

To apply please send an application to international@bctf.ca by Sunday, September 20, at 5:00 p.m. PT.

All costs associated with participating in the delegation, including release time and travel costs, will be covered by the BCTF.



WorkSafe BC Seeking Feedback from Workers

From the BCTF

WorkSafeBC is accepting feedback on the proposed new language pertaining to Part 4.1 of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation relating to Harassment and Violence, and Psychological Health and Safety. Feedback will be accepted until October 9, 2026.

All workers are invited to review the proposed regulatory amendments and then provide online feedback on the proposed new regulations to WorkSafeBC. VEAES members are encouraged to make submissions on their own behalf as BC workers. The links below provide access to the online feedback forms for each topic:

[Harassment and Violence](#)

[Psychological Health and Safety](#)

This is an opportunity for teachers to let WorkSafeBC know if the new regulations will address their concerns about harassment and violence in schools and other public education workplaces. Feedback can include the impact of harassment and violence on teachers, including mental health injuries, and to what degree the new regulations address these concerns.

Please take this opportunity to provide feedback and forward the links to your colleagues. It is important that the education sector take this opportunity to let WorkSafeBC know the mental and physical health impacts of harassment and violence from students and other non-workers and our ideas for strengthening the proposed regulations.

VEAES Pride Survey

By Xander Graham

At the end of last school year, The VEAES Office was made aware of a number of discrepancies, roadblocks, and pushbacks in the way that Pride was supported across VSB schools. This has resulted in the need for our advocacy at the school level, the district level, and the inclusion of the grievance process as well. We are hoping to remind membership of the survey released in June, so that any VEAES members who did not get a chance to submit their experiences and input have the opportunity to do so now. We very much appreciate your contributions to the survey, as firsthand member responses provide the clearest understanding of just how prevalent these often-harmful issues can be. Please find the survey [here](#), and if you have any further follow-up information, or wish to provide further perspective, you can direct your e-mails to xander@veaes.ca. Thank you for all you do!

2026-27



veaes.ca

IMPORTANT DATE

Marjorie Dumont
President
marjorie@veaes.ca

Françoise Raunet
Vice President
francoise@veaes.ca

- **EC Meeting at the VEAES Office on September 15 at 4:00 pm**

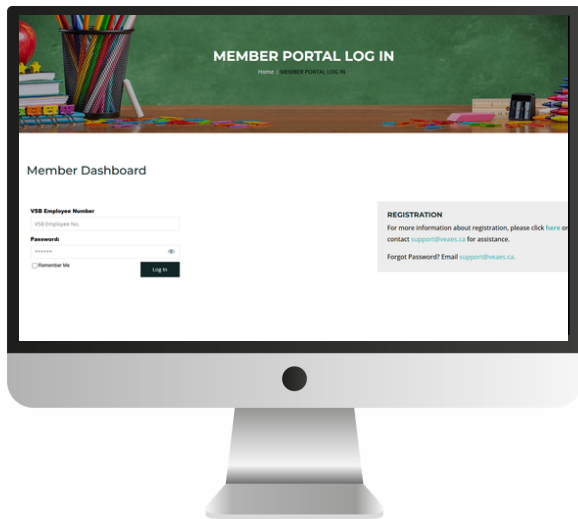
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VEAES MEMBER PORTAL



To access the portal, go to the [VEAES website](https://veaes.ca). From the menu, scroll down and select **Member Portal Log In**.

When you become a VEAES member, your Member Portal profile is created for you. After careful consideration, we have chosen to use members' VSB employee numbers as the usernames, as this allows us to verify members. You will need your VSB employee number ready in order to login to the portal.

To set your password, click [here](#).

If you have any questions, please contact support@veaes.ca.

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/           