



veaes weekly

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TOPICS WORTH TALKING ABOUT

PLEASE READ AND DISCUSS
WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES

Update on FSAs

By IHTOs

The office has received numerous calls over the last week and a half regarding the FSAs. Members have informed us that their administrators have been contacting parents who signed the opt-out letter, telling them that their child must write the FSA regardless, with some administrators directing their teachers to administer the assessment. Ultimately, it seems administrators have received this directive from VSB management.

Not only is this a blatant violation of the protocol agreement between the BCTF and BCPSEA, but it has put our members in an extremely stressful situation where they are faced with two conflicting obligations: respecting parents' right to exclude their child from the FSA and following the directives of administration so as not to be disciplined for insubordination.

VEAES has been actively pushing back against this from the beginning, and it is something we will be bringing to Grievance Committee for review. Additionally, we are preparing to connect with parents and the community about this issue.

Moving forward:

1. The FSA is **not** a compulsory assessment. If a parent has signed the opt-out form, their child **should not** write the FSA, even if the administrator told them that they have to. Additionally, the reasoning behind signing the opt-out letter is confidential; an administrator cannot reject a letter on that basis.

If parents ask you about this interaction, you can say something along the lines of: the administrator should respect parents' wishes concerning the test, and because you signed an opt-out letter, they should be excusing your child. If you have concerns, please take them to the principal.
2. If your administrator has told you that the student(s) must write it regardless, ask them: *are you directing me to administer the FSAs to students whose parents have opted them out? If so, may I have this directive in writing?* Then, send an email to VEAES (using your non-work email) as soon as possible with a brief explanation of what happened.
3. If your administrator has directed you, unfortunately, you must administer the FSAs, but again, please send an email to VEAES so we can document it. If parents inquire about their child being required to write the FSA, you can tell them—without criticizing the VSB—that this was the directive you received from your administrator, and thus you have to follow it; if they have an issue, they should connect with that administrator and express their concerns.

We understand how frustrating this process has been. We are committed to ensuring that the protocol agreement is respected and complied with, and, more broadly, pushing back against the FSAs. Because of your steadfastness, VEAES is a leader in the province in fighting against the FSAs. We are immensely grateful for your continued solidarity.

Physical Contact with Students -- "Hands-Off"!

By Françoise Raunet

Many school districts around the province have a specific "hands-off" policy, letting employees know to avoid all physical contact with students. Here in Vancouver, we have [AP 354 – Physical Restraint of Students](#). This policy refers to "Physical Escort" as times when teachers may use "temporary touching or holding of a student's hand, wrist, arm, shoulder or back for the purpose of accompanying and inducing a student who is acting out to walk to a safe location." However, there have been incidents of teachers being disciplined by Labour Relations at the VSB for placing hands on a student in this way, so VEAES recommends that teachers avoid all physical contact with students at all times, just to be on the safe side. If you have any questions about this, please don't hesitate to reach out to the VEAES office, or check in with your administrator for clarification.

VEAES Professional Issues Committee 2026-2027 Meeting Dates

By Khaled Shawwash

We are excited to announce the dates that we will be holding the Professional Issues Committee for the 2026-2027 school year. This committee meets approximately once a month to discuss issues related to Pro-D. It makes recommendations to the VEAES EC, helping guide how these issues can/should be addressed. They also guide the IHTOs in taking stances and pushing for certain decisions to be made at the Joint District Pro-D Committee meetings. Any member is welcome to attend, but if you would like to be a voting member, please submit your [application here](#). The dates for the upcoming meetings are below, all taking place at 4 PM:

1. Oct 29 (in-person, VEAES office)
2. November 26 (online)
3. Jan 28 (online)
4. Feb 25 (online)
5. Apr 22 (online)
6. May 27 (online)
7. June 10 (in-person, VEAES office)

If you have questions about Pro-D, please refer to the [Professional Development Handbook](#) (an updated version is coming soon!).

Please contact khaled@veaes.ca if you would like to submit an agenda item or if you have any questions.

Thank you and we look forward to seeing you soon!

Reimbursements for PSA Conferences

By Khaled Shawwash

The Joint District Pro D met on Monday to review applications and discuss Pro D related issues. A communication was sent to school administrators and Pro D chairs regarding reimbursements for PSA conferences, as many applicants had not accessed the surplus of their school-based funds to cover the cost of attending them. This is a kind reminder that members should first use their school funds (8114) to cover the cost of attending PSA conferences—including registration, travel, and meals—prior to applying for temporary supplemental (temp supp) funding. Not doing so results in a rejected application.

Administrators and Pro D chairs at schools with surplus 8120 funds—which can also be used to cover PSA conference costs—were encouraged to connect with the school Pro D committee to consider increasing the annual allowance for individual staff members.

If you have any questions, please reach out to me at khaled@veaes.ca.

After-school Pro-D Info Session

By Khaled Shawwash

On October 21st at 3:15 PM, the Joint District Pro D Committee will be hosting an online information session for new Pro D chairs and administrators. Here is the full information:

New pro d chairs and Principals/Vice-Principals are invited to join members of the Joint District Pro D Committee for an online session focused on:

- providing an overview of pro d funding
- information on accessing district pro d funds
- suggestions for site-based pro d planning
- question and answer period.

This meeting is optional and is intended to provide valuable information to support the good work of pro d committees in schools.

Link to meeting: [Pro D FAQ Optional Session | Meeting-Join | Microsoft Teams](#)

2027 New Teachers' Conference

By BCTF

The BCTF will host its New Teachers' Conference on **February 27, 2027**, at the Coast Coal Harbour Hotel in Vancouver. Designed for teachers and teachers teaching on call (TTOCs) in their first five years of teaching, as well as teacher candidates, this year's conference theme is **"The Unwritten Curriculum: Navigating the Realities of BC Classrooms."**

The BCTF are now accepting workshop proposals for the conference. Workshops are 75 minutes in length and may explore a wide range of topics, including literacy, social justice, technology, Indigenous education, work-life balance, assessment, and inclusive education.

[Submit your workshop proposal by October 30.](#)

You can also [sign up for the notification list](#) to be among the first to know when registration opens for the New Teachers' Conference. If you have any questions, please email ntc@bctf.ca.

Deadlines for Porting Seniority, Teaching Experience, and Sick Leave

By IHTOs

Have you recently signed a continuing contract after moving to the VSB from another District? If so, you should have received forms to fill out to ensure that your seniority, teaching experience, and sick leave are "ported" (transferred from your previous district).

You have 120 days from accepting a continuing contract to port those days. There are also forms that you need to submit to your previous district. Teachers can port up to 20 years of seniority, and they can also port up to 60 days of sick leave.

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.

Literacy Screeners, Part 2

By Françoise Raunet

Last week's article about the Literacy Screeners described concerns that were raised by VEAES members at the September General Meeting at Tupper. However, following the publication of the article, we heard from a few members who wanted to provide a different perspective on the DIBELS and Acadience Literacy Screeners. These members agreed with a lot of the points in the article—such as the need for teachers to receive training, time for marking, and adequate resources to support the students who are identified as needing more support.

These teachers disagreed with the article's claim that the screeners were "inappropriate tools that many teachers would not have selected themselves if given the choice." They strongly believe that evidence-based best practice should include well-implemented universal screening assessments (= who is at risk in reading?), along with diagnostic assessments (= what do they know/what can they do? Where are the gaps?), progress monitoring (= is my instruction proving to be effective in moving my students forward?) and summative evaluation (= where have we ended up?).

On the other hand, VEAES keeps hearing from teachers across the VSB who are telling us that the screening requirement is adding significantly to their workload. In order to complete the DIBELS assessments, teachers are not provided with the materials ready-to-go; they are expected to make all the copies themselves, in addition to the significant time it takes to assess each student one-on-one and score their results.

The fact that there is such a strong difference of opinion regarding the usefulness of these screeners shows how important it is to protect teacher autonomy and professional judgment. Teachers should be trusted to use their expertise to assess students and determine what support they need.

What all sides agree on is that identifying students who are struggling is only useful if schools have the time, staffing, and resources to respond. As this new Ministry requirement is implemented, VEAES will continue to advocate for adequate support, manageable workloads, and respect for teachers' professional expertise. Our shared goal remains the same: ensuring every student receives the support they need to become a successful reader.

2026-27



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IMPORTANT DATES

Marjorie Dumont
President
marjorie@veaes.ca

Françoise Raunet
Vice President
francoise@veaes.ca

Xander Graham
Vice President
xander@veaes.ca

Khaled Shawwash
Vice President
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Bernadette Milton
Vice President
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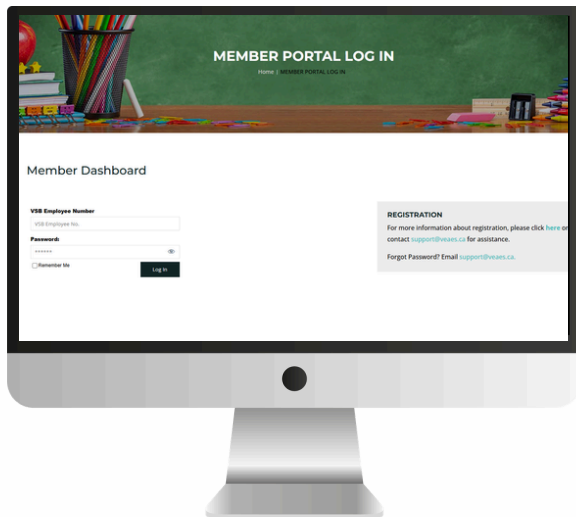
Rob McGowan
Adult Ed President
rob@veaes.ca

October 12
Thanksgiving

October 13 | 4:00 pm
GM/SRA at Tupper Secondary

October 14 & 15
SURT at the Holiday Inn Centre
(Broadway)

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/           