STRONGER TOGETHER

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veaes weekly



WHAT'S INSIDE

2 Don't Stop Voting Yet! Provincial Election Oct 24th

4 Vancouver Votes: Progressive Policy Prevails
Inaugural Board Meeting

5 Teaching Certificates and Annual Fee Requirements
BCTF Pension Seminar

6 Did You Know? Understanding Our Collective Agreement
Basics of Robert's Rules (for Staff Committee Meetings)

7 Communicating to VSB

8 SURT 2026 – unfilled positions during the union release
VEAES Bursary – Is Your Child Taking the Next Step in their Educational Journey?
What does it mean to be a 'Radical Teacher'?

TOPICS WORTH TALKING ABOUT

PLEASE READ AND DISCUSS WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES

Don't Stop Voting Yet! Provincial Election Oct 24th

By IHTOs

We were thrilled with the results of the municipal election in Vancouver last weekend, and now it's time to make sure that our teacher voices are heard in the BC Legislature too. As you are probably aware, David Eby called a snap provincial election—two years ahead of schedule—because he needed a stronger mandate from voters. Prior to the election call, the NDP government had a very slim majority, and they are hoping to pick up more seats after the provincial general election on October 24th.

There are five main parties running candidates—the **BC NDP**, the **BC Green Party**, the **BC Conservatives**, **OneBC**, and **CentreBC**—though they are not all running candidates in every riding. Here are some things (both positive and negative) in the party platforms that will be of interest to teachers:

The **BC NDP promises** to (in **their platform**, they highlight achievements for public education since 2017 but don't include many new education promises):

- Invest in more affordable childcare spaces on school grounds
- Continue to build new and expanded hospitals, urgent primary care centres, and integrated community health and social services centres
- Double skilled trades training by 2028-2029
- Meet their goal of $200 million in major project investment by 2025
- Uphold the North Coast tanker ban, with a goal to protect 30% of BC's land and water by 2030
- Raise income tax for the top 3.88% of earners, starting with those earning over $190,405/year; asking the wealthy to pitch in a bit more in order to fund stronger healthcare, seniors care, cuts to gas and grocery costs, and continued investment in housing. This plan will raise almost $1 billion in new revenue every year.
- Creating a provincewide network of involuntary and compassionate care centres for individuals experiencing severe mental health and substance use challenges

The **BC Green Party** promises to:

- Close the $994.8 million inclusive education funding gap with a stable, needs-based funding model for school districts
- Reallocate private school funding to the public school system, in a phased approach to support students currently enrolled
- Increase the counsellor to student ratio, to ensure one for every 250 students
- Continue to support and expand the SOGI 123 initiative to create inclusive school environments that support 2SLGBTQQIA+ students and address the topics of gender identity and sexual orientation
- Enact a moratorium on the use of AI in classrooms from K-12 in order to develop a comprehensive response to AI in the classroom, and direction on safe, ethical use of AI with students. This includes protecting privacy, enforceable safeguards, digital literacy support for all educators, and working with the federal government to hold tech companies accountable for ensuring that systems are safe before they reach the classroom
- Protect and enhance access to harm reduction and voluntary care to ensure people who use drugs have the full range of support needed to survive the toxic drugs crisis

- Tax “wealth, not work” -- tax the wealth of BC residents with over $50 million in total assets (< 2500 households), generating over $22.2 billion in the first year and $5.4 billion for every year after that
- Use this $$ to fund universal childcare, free public transit, and affordable housing, while reducing the provincial debt and associated interest costs

The **BC Conservatives** promise to:

- Repeal SOGI (which isn’t even something they can do, since SOGI is not legislated curriculum, but rather a set of anti-bullying resources teachers use to foster inclusive classrooms)
- Invest $10 million in a fund to build school playgrounds, and expand school meal programs in high-need communities
- Develop a Future Mining Jobs Blueprint with industry so secondary schools, colleges and universities train British Columbians for the jobs mines will need
- Improve anti-drug education in schools
- Though they don’t mention it in their platform, on April 22nd, 2026, Conservative MLA Trevor Halford (running for re-election in Surrey-White Rock) first introduced their bill to repeal DRIPA, despite having voted for it unanimously in 2019
- “…Get education and teaching back to basics, empower parents to better participate in their children’s education, and give families greater choice, and better support, for diverse needs. We will bring back the singing of O Canada at the beginning of the school day and proudly fly our Canadian and BC flags at every school.”

CentreBC promises to:

- Open more permanent classrooms – create 25,000 new school seats by 2031 using standard designs and pre-fabricated additions
- Reach one counsellor for every 400 students and add 1,500 education assistants by 2030
- Extend early screening to math from K-3 by 2028, add about 250 literacy and numeracy coaches, and publish district results annually
- Bring back letter grades with written comments for Grades 4 to 9 from September 2028
- Expand school food programs to reach 40% of students by 2030
- Invest $100 million a year in family support and early intervention by 2030/31, delivered by communities and Indigenous organizations

OneBC promises to:

- Bring back standardized testing — Focus on reading, writing and mathematics
- Remove SOGI-123 and politicized content from classrooms
- Institute a Parental Bill of Rights guaranteeing informed consent and classroom transparency for parents of minor-age students
- Repeal DRIPA and end mandatory land acknowledgements
- Restore the “original names” (quotations ours) of public institutions and public places – Names must primarily be in English
- 25% tax cuts for every single tax bracket – including corporate
- Approve a northern pipeline to Prince Rupert or Kitimat

As you can see, there are significant differences between the five parties, with two of them (OneBC and the Conservatives) peddling hate towards our colleagues and lies about our classroom realities. Fortunately, the Conservatives have already dropped two of their candidates—in Vancouver-

Strathcona and Victoria-Beacon Hill—leaving those races a two-way contest between the NDP and the BC Greens. So at least we can count on two progressive voices to be elected... But if you want to send a clear message to the incoming government about what your key priorities are, it's never been more important to vote! Advance polls closed yesterday, so your last chance to cast your ballot to elect your next MLA will be this Saturday, October 24th. Visit **Election BC's Where to Vote app** to find your closest polling station.

Vancouver Votes: Progressive Policy Prevails

By Xander Graham

Vancouver voters turned out this past October 17th to elect former councillor Pete Fry as mayor, evicting Ken Sim and bringing a new and progressive mandate to City Hall. Green Party and COPE candidates made significant gains across City Council and the School Board, signalling a strong municipal appetite for a move leftward in the city's leadership. New Councillors include Green Party candidates Annette Reilly, Bridget Burns, Camil Dumont, Stephanie Smith and COPE candidates Chloe Leslie, Devyani Singh and Solomon Yi-Kieran. Councillors Sean Orr (COPE), Lucy Maloney (OneCity), and Mike Klassen (ABC) were re-elected.

Of vital importance to VEAES members, the election also determined the nine Vancouver School Board trustees, with COPE winning four seats, OneCity securing three, and the Greens rounding out the slate with two. The elected trustees are public school champion Suzie Mah (COPE), former DPAC chair Melanie Cheng (COPE), Gwen Giesbrecht (COPE), Derrick O'Keefe (COPE), Krista Sigurdson (OneCity), Rory Brown (OneCity), Steve Cardwell (OneCity), Julie Strilesky (Green), and Alisha Masongsong (Green). ABC was decisively shut out from the VSB. The new council and School Board are scheduled to begin their terms on November 2.

Voter turnout also increased this year, showcasing that Vancouverites are passionate about a progressive set of representatives. 43.4% of eligible voters cast their ballots this year, up from 36.3% in 2022. As the new leadership takes office, residents will be watching how campaign commitments translate into decisions affecting neighbourhoods, public spaces and Vancouver's schools.

VEAES heartily congratulates the progressive slate that has been elected, and we look forward to working with them to support our schools and students over the coming four years!

Inaugural VSB Board Meeting

By IHTOs

We encourage all members to attend the **Inaugural Board Meeting** on **November 9, 2026**, **5:00 pm** at the VSB Education Center on 1580 West Broadway, Vancouver. This is an opportunity to come together and celebrate the landslide victories of the COPE, OneCity, and Green trustee candidates while demonstrating our collective support and enthusiasm for the work ahead. Not only that, but a large audience will send a clear signal that the days of closed Board meetings and lack of transparency will hopefully soon be behind us!

Let's fill the boardroom and show our strength, unity and commitment!

Teaching Certificates and Annual Fee Requirements

Excerpt from BCTF

Earlier this year, a number of teachers across British Columbia experienced suspensions of their teaching certificates because they did not complete all required steps associated with their criminal record checks. In many cases, members were unaware that additional action, such as fingerprinting, was required because they had not received or seen the correspondence from the Teacher Regulation Branch (TRB).

We have also become aware of situations where members who were on leave from their employment when annual practice fee deductions were processed were unaware that their fee had not been remitted on their behalf. Annual practice fees are due by June 30. If fees and any applicable late fees remain unpaid beyond October 31, a certificate may be cancelled.

To help avoid interruptions in certification status, we encourage members to take the following steps:

Verify Your Contact Information

- Log in to your BCeID account and ensure that your email address and mailing address are current.

Check Your Criminal Record Check Status

- Review your account information to confirm when your next five-year criminal record check is due.
- Beginning in January of the year your criminal record check is scheduled, periodically check your BCeID account for updates and follow up with the TRB if necessary.
- Regularly review your junk or spam folders, as important notifications may be filtered by email providers. (Gmail appears to be particularly problematic for this).

Confirm Your Certificate Remains in Good Standing

- If you were on leave from your school district in May, verify that your annual practice fee was paid on your behalf.
- Each summer, particularly if you were on any form of leave during the spring, check the TRB online registry to confirm that your teaching certificate remains valid and in good standing.

Members are ultimately responsible for maintaining their certification and ensuring that all requirements associated with criminal record checks and annual fees are completed. Taking a few minutes to review your status can help avoid unexpected suspensions or cancellations

BCTF Pension Seminar

Excerpt from BCTF

Learn more about your financial future at the upcoming virtual BCTF Pension Seminar on Thursday, October 29, 2026, from 4:00 to 5:15 p.m. PCT via Zoom. This essential session for BC teachers covers how your pension is calculated, eligibility rules, and the step-by-step retirement application process. Whether you are nearing retirement or just planning ahead, you will gain critical insights into your pension options as well as important retirement considerations. Spaces are limited, so **register** online today.

Did You Know? Understanding Our Collective Agreement

By Marjorie Dumont, C'tan

Each year, a teacher shall have the opportunity to be elected or volunteer for the position of Teacher-In-Charge. If no teacher is elected and no volunteers come forward to fill the position, the admin retains the management right to appoint a **teacher** to serve as Teacher-In-Charge to ensure the position is filled and the necessary responsibilities are carried out. See Article E.35 below for the collective agreement language. If this role is filled by a non-VEAES member at your site, please contact VEAES immediately.

ARTICLE E.35: TEACHER-IN-CHARGE

1. When all Principals/Vice-Principals are absent from an elementary school or annex, and in each elementary school or annex which has a Senior Teacher he/she is also absent, the Principal/Vice-Principal shall designate an employee to act as Teacher-in-Charge and shall inform the staff of the identity of that person.

2. The Teacher-in-Charge shall strive to ensure that the safety of the students and the security of the school are maintained and shall deal with emergent matters.

3. A Teacher-in-Charge shall have no administrative responsibilities when a Principal/Vice-Principal is present at the school.

4. While acting as Teacher-in-Charge, the teacher is covered by all terms and conditions of this Agreement.

5. When deemed necessary by the Principal/Vice-Principal and after consultation with the Teacher-in-Charge, the Teacher-in-Charge shall be relieved of regular teaching duties and may be provided with a teacher teaching on call.

Basics of Robert's Rules (for Staff Committee Meetings)

By Françoise Raunet (adapted from *https://assembly.cornell.edu/sites/default/files/roberts_rules_simplified.pdf*)

At SURT last week, during the Staff Committee Chair training, many members asked for a Robert's Rules "cheat sheet" that they could use to help them chair meetings more effectively. It's important to note that there is no requirement to use Robert's Rules during meetings, but some people do find aspects of it can help to maintain order.

Here is a brief summary of the basics of Robert's Rules, based in part on the one-page document from Cornell University linked above:

Guiding Principles

- Everyone has the right to participate in the discussion once before anyone can speak a second time.
- Only urgent matters may interrupt when someone is speaking.
- Everyone has the right to know what is happening at all times, for example, knowing what motion

is currently being voted on.
- Only one thing (motion) can be discussed at a time.

Essential Elements

Motion: This is how people in the meeting can propose an action or make a decision about something, how they can bring up new ideas before the group. To introduce a motion, wait for the chair to recognize you and then say "**I move to...**". Another member must then second the motion by saying, "**I second the motion**". If no one seconds a motion, then it will not be considered by the group.

Amend a motion: This is how you change some of the wording of the motion under discussion. You can move to amend the motion by adding words, striking words, or striking and inserting words. If the meeting chairperson decides that the amendment changes the intent of the original motion too much, they can **rule** it **out of order** and ask you to submit yours as a new motion, once the one currently on the table is dealt with.

Commit: A **motion to commit** means that the meeting is going to transfer the motion to a committee. This can be very useful when the topic being discussed requires more thought or research before being voted on. Once the motion goes to a committee, the committee will meet and then report back to the meeting later. Just like other motions, these must be seconded and voted upon by the group.

Question: Members of the meeting can say, "**I call the question**" to end debate or discussion on a topic. A vote will be held on whether to call the question, and if a majority vote in favour then everyone must immediately vote on the motion that is on the floor.

Adjourn: Everyone's favourite motion, a **motion to adjourn** refers to ending the meeting. Like the other motions, this one must also be seconded. If the majority votes to adjourn, then the meeting is over.

Communicating to VSB

By Marjorie Dumont, C'tan

Members are kindly reminded to be mindful of the timing of all work-related emails and to ensure that emails are composed and sent before instructional hours begin, during breaks or prep time, or after school. Please be aware that all emails are time-stamped, and sending emails during instructional hours may raise concerns regarding the appropriate use of working time. To avoid misunderstanding, please send your emails in a manner that does not interfere with your instructional responsibilities. Sending personal or non-instructional emails during scheduled working hours may be viewed as theft of time. If you any concerns or questions regarding this advice, please contact us at the VEAES office.

SURT 2026 – unfilled positions during the union release

By IHTOs

If you were not provided a TTOC for the recent SURT or your monthly union leave, VEAES will still cover the cost for a TTOC and the funds will be put in your school Flex fund. Work with your staff committee to recommend how these funds can be used to bring in an additional TTOC to replace the lost service that was likely created by the failure to fill – having a second TL or Resource Teacher at your site for the day will help address this service gap.

VEAES Bursary – Is Your Child Taking the Next Step in their Educational Journey?

By Marjorie Dumont, C'tan

If your child graduated from a public secondary school or through adult education programmes and are now attending a post-secondary institution, you could be eligible for the VEAES $1000 Bursary.

A cherished tradition since 1991, this bursary celebrates and supports members whose children are pursuing higher education. If you meet the criteria the application process is quite simple. Just provide the name of the public secondary school your child attended and proof of their post-secondary registration.

Don't miss this opportunity to support your child's future!

Find the application form with additional information here. Applications can be blue bagged to the VEAES office or completed electronically and sent to our office manager Hitomi Maruyama-Prasad at hitomi@veaes.ca The deadline for applications November 30 with the draw being held at the December 8, 2026, General Meeting on. Best of luck!

What does it mean to be a 'Radical Teacher'?

By Xander Graham

In their article, "(Re)considering 'radical' for the teaching profession: a Global North-South reflection on teachers and teaching," Haira E. Gandolfi and Martin Mills invite us to reconsider the term radical and its relevance to the teaching profession. They argue, in a fashion that many VEAES members would agree with, that teaching should be about more than delivering curriculum and meeting performance targets. It should also involve questioning inequity, challenging unjust systems, and helping students to develop the critical thinking skills needed to shape a more just society. For VEAES members, it is inevitable that these ideas will resonate with the everyday realities of our classrooms and the challenges facing public education.

Our classrooms reflect a rich diversity of languages, cultures, abilities, and lived experiences. Supporting every learner requires us to consider whose knowledge is valued, whose voices are heard, and whether all students have meaningful opportunities to participate and succeed. But inclusion cannot rest on teachers' goodwill alone. Adequate staffing, manageable class sizes, and thoughtful

classroom supports are essential to meeting students' needs because, ultimately, our working conditions are our students' learning conditions. When these resources are lacking, teachers are often expected to compensate through additional work and personal sacrifice. The authors encourage us to look beyond our individual classrooms and question the systems that shape our work. Advocating for the resources students need is a vital expression of our professional responsibilities. It is through collective advocacy that VEAES connects these individual classrooms concerns to the systemic changes needed across our district.

Drawing on critical pedagogy, including the work of Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, Gandolfi and Mills present education as a potential force for social transformation. VEAES members know the importance of encouraging students to question assumptions, examine inequality, engage with diverse perspectives, and imagine alternatives to existing social structures. For us as educators, this can look like creating real space for Indigenous First Nations, Inuit and Metis perspectives and local histories, centring queer narratives, or challenging norms related to ability. Being a radical teacher does not mean turning every lesson into a political debate, but it does mean recognizing that teaching is never separate from questions of fairness, power, and whose experiences are being valued.

The authors remind us that teaching is not simply about helping students succeed within existing systems. It is also about asking whether those systems are just, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of our communities. As union members, we have an important role in that work. When we challenge inequitable practices and advocate for better learning conditions, we defend the promise of public education. This defence of public education is present through all of our collective work, be it at our general meetings or in our classrooms. This defence is present in our teaching, and it is present in our solidarity.

Perhaps the question is not whether we as teachers should challenge the status quo, but whether we can fully meet our responsibilities to students without doing so.



2026-27

veaes.ca

Marjorie Dumont
President
marjorie@veaes.ca

Françoise Raunet
Vice President
francoise@veaes.ca

Xander Graham
Vice President
xander@veaes.ca

Khaled Shawwash
Vice President
khaled@veaes.ca

Bernadette Milton
Vice President
bernadette@veaes.ca

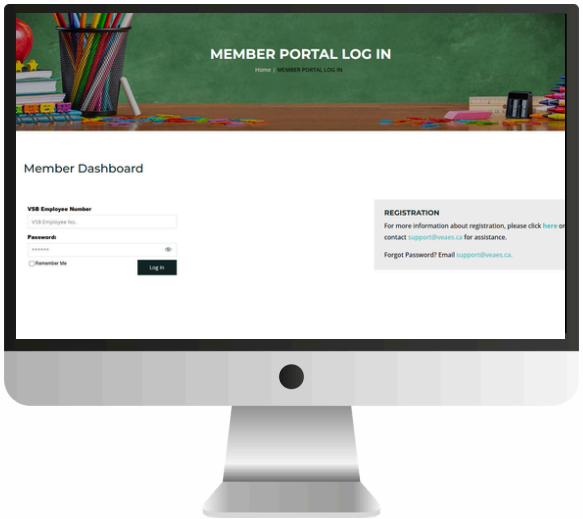
Rob McGowan
Adult Ed President
rob@veaes.ca

IMPORTANT DATE

October 27 | 4:00 pm | VEAES Office

WLC/B Meeting and Social Justice and Solidarity Meeting

VEAES MEMBER PORTAL



To access the portal, go to the **VEAES website**. 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/ ć·iθəmə cən