



Tackboard

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President's Message

Since I wrote last, the VSTA has been engaged in many aspects of our relationship with the employer and in the important work of advocating for public education. As we pass by the middle of the school year and teachers are working hard in preparation for submitting Term 2 marks, so too begins another yearly rite, the VSB budget setting process for the next school year. Since September, I have tried to keep the tone of this message positive and representational of the difficult yet immensely rewarding work that is our core purpose - teaching high school students in Vancouver. It is with much frustration, however that we must now begin the brutal work of advocating for teachers and students in a process that needs to find up to \$24.38 million of shortfall in the 2016-17 budget. Since 2002, over \$550 million of costs for the VSB have been unfunded by the provincial government. The measures that have had to be enacted in the name of these budget cuts have touched all teachers, classrooms and students in Vancouver schools. It is with some anger and resignation that we must now undergo this process once again with \$24.38 million in reductions to the existing budget — one of the largest reductions since 2002. All initial indications point to this budget as one where the local employer will need to contemplate changes that will greatly affect our work in classrooms.

There are two very important public and stakeholder engagement processes currently underway at the VSB. The **Long Range Facilities Plan** is a provincially mandated document that defines the strategy of the School Board in how it deals with its communities and buildings. The VSB is currently meeting with the public and speaking about the first

iteration of the Plan which is inexorably linked to the Seismic Mitigation Program – funding from the province to replace or repair schools deemed unsafe in a seismic event. The initial interim LRFP document calls for the closure and/or repurposing of up to three secondary schools and twelve elementary schools over the next fifteen years. Clearly, the final version of the Plan, due in June, could set out giant changes for our system. The VSTA is very actively involved in bringing teachers' voices to this plan.

We are also speaking up and making submissions to the **Strategic Plan 2012**. This dialogue will ultimately set out the vision and direction of the VSB for staff to follow over the next five years. Through facilitated conversations in a series of meetings, the VSTA is bringing the perspectives and values of teachers to the process.

With only a few days left to work before Spring Break/District closure, I hope all of you can manage to complete the necessary tasks now that will allow you to have a good rest over the next few weeks.

Take care,

Rory

March Deadlines

Please check the dates carefully for the Spring Post and Fill transfer process.

Particularly important is Mar 15 deadline for employees who commit to a transfer (vacate card). **Last day in session is Mar 11 and there will be no blue bag delivery. Cards should be hand delivered to HR between Mar 6 and 15 to ensure the timeline is met.**

Mar 31 – by 4:30PM the deadline for applications of leave of one year or longer beginning Sept 2016 as well as teachers planning to return from leave in Sept. HR must be notified in writing.

Employees must be informed in writing of transfer due to surplus by June 1st.

March 15 for teachers wishing to submit a vacate card

March 31 for requesting and increase/ change of teaching time

March 31 to apply for leave of one year or longer beginning in September 2016



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2015-2016. Front:: Katharine Shipley, Nancy Palejko, Brett Gabelman, Sylvia Metzner, Diane Phillips. Back: Phil Lee, Leanne Hagglund, Michael-Don Borason, Trish Mugford, Sara McGarry, Peter McLenna, Katie Leung, Rory Brown, John Silver, Terry Stanway, Treena Goolieff. Camera shy: Phoebe MacMillan, Natalia Mayor.

AGM 2016 is just around the corner! This year's meeting will be held at the Hyatt in downtown Vancouver and anybody who wants to drop by and check it out should definitely do it! The sessions run from Saturday, March 12 at 2 PM and wrap up Tuesday, March 15 at 1:30 PM. The agenda can be found on the portal at <https://www.bctf.ca/myBCTF/agm.aspx>.

This year's delegates elected to represent Vancouver Secondary are: Michael-Don Borason, Madeline Brewster, Chas Desjarlais, Cindy Dudra, Richard Edge, Ryan Fullerton, Treena Goolieff, Leanne Hagglund, Katie Leung, Sara McGarry, Sylvia Metzner, Duane Mugford, Janet Nicol, Nancy Palejko, Katharine Shipley, John Silver, Terry Stanway and Local Reps Rory Brown, Phil Lee and Trish Mugford A BIG THANKS!

This year's election includes the following BCTF candidates: Glen Hansman for President, Teri Mooring for First Vice-President, Gail Chaddock-Costello, Clint Johnston and Kip Wood all running for Second Vice-President.

In addition there will be five members-at-large elected from what is currently a group of eight candidates. Their photos and candidates' statements are in Teacher magazine and at <https://www.bctf.ca/myBCTF/agm.aspx>.

In 2015 it was recommended that the Federation undertake a thorough consultation with members regarding possible plan design changes to the **Teachers' Pension Plan** in the 2015 in the 2015-16 school year, with recommendations to be brought to the 2016 AGM.

After extensive consultation and feedback the recommendation that will be coming is as follows:

That the Teachers' Pension Plan design change of the pension formula include:

1. **delinking from the Canada Pension Plan's Year's Maximum Pensionable Earnings (YMPE)**
2. **a single accrual rate of 1.85% be applied to Pensionable Service.**
3. **an Early Retirement Reduction Factor of 4.5% at age 61.**
4. **removal of the 35-year Pensionable Service cap.**
5. **an unreduced pension for those with 35 years of Contributory Service.**

A detailed explanation and supporting documents can be found in the Member's Portal at: <http://www.bctf.ca/PensionConsultations2015/>

Being asked about your use of Sick Leave and Medical Leave at work?

What are your rights?

If your administrator asks you to attend a meeting, you cannot refuse. However, you can find a mutually acceptable time for the meeting and you have the right to bring a Staff Rep to any meeting with the administration. If the meeting is scheduled during instructional time, release time must be provided for both you and your Staff Rep (Art. A.26).

At any meeting with an administrator, you need not speak or answer questions. You or your Staff Rep may take notes.

District-based management staff may not summon you to a meeting without your agreement (aside from disciplinary hearings/investigation meetings C.22.6). You are always entitled to have a Staff Rep attend any meeting with management.



At one time canaries were the only safeguard underground miners had against dangers in their workplaces. When the canary died it was time for the workers to evacuate the mine. Our sisters and brothers in CUPE have adopted the canary as the symbol for the Day of Mourning and the canary is recognized around the world.

You may have found this **BOOKMARK** in your box in February. This is important information for all members as we try to monitor the **employer's attempt to manage your use of sick time**. Let us know if your school could use extra and we'll be sure to send some out.

National Day of Mourning, April 28

The National Day of Mourning was officially recognized in Parliament in 1991 with the passing of the Mourning Act designating one day a year be set aside to commemorate those workers in Canada who were killed or injured on the job. The BCTF has partnered with the BC Labour Heritage Centre, along with the BC Federation of Labour and WorkSafeBC to develop a Day of Mourning (DOM) Schools project. The official launch of this project will take place at the 2016 BCTF Annual General Meeting this March.

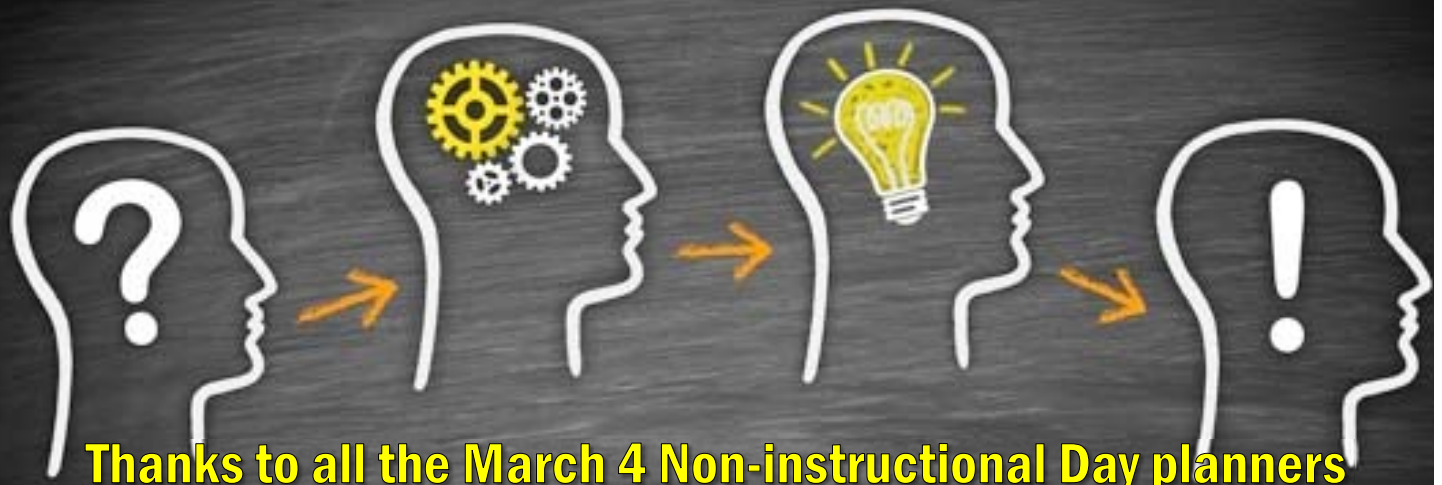
Day of Mourning BC Schools Project



The BC Labour Heritage Centre has developed a set of materials that teachers can use in schools throughout the province to raise the awareness of workplace safety with students (future workers) in our schools.

For a full description of the project, to register your school and to order materials, go to <http://www.labourheritagecentre.ca/> and click on the Day of Mourning: BC Schools link.





Thanks to all the March 4 Non-instructional Day planners

With little lead time and even fewer resources other than their professionalism, passion and support from VSB Senior Management, Vancouver secondary teachers collaboratively created a framework for our first NI day of the year. This was a great demonstration of what self-directed Professional Development can look like – a group of professionals forming a plan in an organic and genuine fashion around professional questions. Despite the Ministry of Education’s incomplete curriculum and its apparent inability to thoughtfully implement a complete overhaul of the K-12 curriculum, teachers have again demonstrated their commitment to teaching and to their colleagues.

Please fill out the VSTA survey on Curriculum Implementation and the Curriculum itself (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CurriclImplementation>). We will collate the information and send it on to the BCTF, who continues to lobby for a grade 10-12 curriculum and a relaxed timetable for its implementation.

Sanctuary Schools: working towards inclusivity for students with precarious immigration



In March 2014, the BCTF Executive Committee approved the following motion: “That the BCTF encourage locals to work with school boards to adopt a ‘Sanctuary School’ policy.”

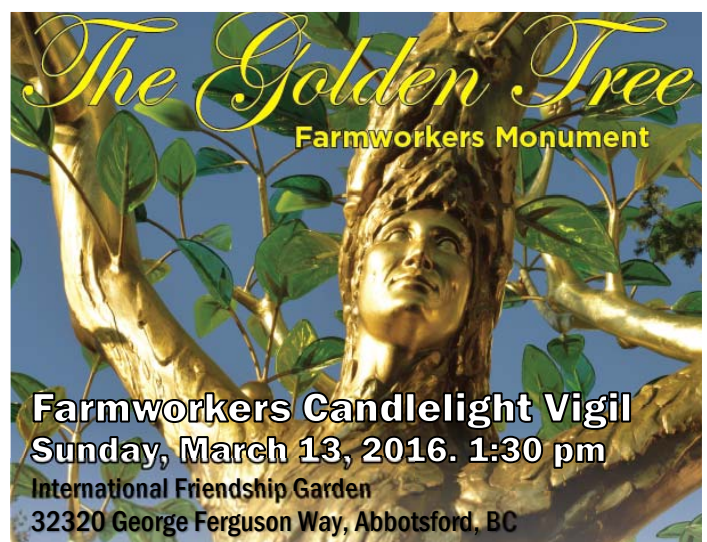
Over the past decade regressive Canadian immigration policies (not to mention climate change, military conflicts and occupations, and global poverty and inequality) have resulted in more and more people being forced to live with precarious immigration status. “Precarious immigration status” can refer to a person who has received a deportation order but is appealing it, somebody who has overstayed a work visa, a family with failed asylum claim but with Canadian-born children, etc. According to Harsha Walia from the migrant justice group No One Is Illegal, “enforcing flawed and discriminatory federal immigration policy and taking on the role of border agents should not be part of the teaching mandate. Teachers are at the forefront of protecting the safety, wellbeing and futures of children and youth.”

Of the myriad reasons to advocate for a Sanctuary School policy, many of them boil down to this: education is a basic human right for *all* children, regardless of their immigration status. According to Canadian federal law, all children must attend school between the ages of four to five, and continue to receive an education until the age of 15 or 16, depending on the province or territory in which the child lives (Canada, 2014). In addition, Canada has ratified the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. While international, federal, and provincial

law clearly states that all children have a right to be included in education, our local registration practices have created situations in which children – particularly those with precarious immigration status – may be excluded from accessing the public education system. A Sanctuary School policy would make explicit that all children are welcome in B.C. schools.

We encourage you to join us in advocating for this important policy. Please email nelbardouh@bctf.bc.ca or nwai@bctf.bc.ca if you would like to get involved.

Nassim Elbardouh is a member of the BCTF Committee for Action on Social Justice (CASJ)



Early Retirement Incentive Plan (ERIP) for 2016 June 30

Rules of Eligibility:

- be on a continuing appointment
- be retiring with a pension
- have a minimum of ten (10) FTE years' service with the Vancouver Board of Education.
- be at the maximum of their scale
- have been in active service for the previous four (4) years (from September 2010), during which there may be a maximum of one year leave not including leaves under Article G.21.30., and/or leaves granted due to disability (within the meaning of *The British Columbia Human Rights Code*)
- be a minimum age of 55, and a maximum age of 64 as of June 30th in the year of retirement
- submit request to retire, in writing, **on or before 2016 May 31** for a retirement date of 2016 June 30.

Based on the salary upon retirement, excluding allowances, the minimum salary to be PB(5), step 10, the maximum to be 6M, step 10, minus PB(5), step 3, and to be adjusted by the applicable earnings as at age upon retirement date:

Age	Pay Grades				Payout Percentage
	4PC	5PB	5PA	6PM	
55	\$19,750	\$19,750	\$26,041	\$27,153	100%
56	\$17,775	\$17,775	\$23,437	\$24,438	90%
57	\$15,800	\$15,800	\$20,833	\$21,722	80%
58	\$13,825	\$13,825	\$18,229	\$19,007	70%
59	\$11,850	\$11,850	\$15,624	\$16,292	60%
60	\$9,875	\$9,875	\$13,020	\$13,576	50%
61	\$7,900	\$7,900	\$10,416	\$10,861	40%
62	\$5,925	\$5,925	\$7,812	\$8,146	30%
63	\$3,950	\$3,950	\$5,208	\$5,431	20%
64	\$3,950	\$3,950	\$5,208	\$5,431	20%

Note: For more information on applying for the ERIP, please call the VSTA office or Human Resources.



A special thank you to **Terry Stanway** (VT) and **Trish Mugford** (Magee) for their invaluable assistance in the VSTA office over the last two months.

Factor 90 or 65 yrs of age? Don't Wait

You can save the long-term fee (approx. 1.2%) from the date you reach age 64 or Factor '88'.

Members are no longer entitled to long-term benefits under the Salary Indemnity Plan once they hit Factor 90 (age plus cumulative service) or age 65. As the BCTF does not have access to your personal pension information, it is up to you to apply to withdraw from LTD.

How and when to apply

A member who has attained age 64, or has reached factor '88' or is in receipt of a retirement pension under a registered pension plan, may **voluntarily** withdraw from the long-term portion of the Salary Indemnity Plan. In making application for withdrawal, you should ensure that in the event of serious illness or accident you have sufficient accumulated sick leave which, when combined with 120 days of benefit from SIP short-term, will protect your salary to the end of the month in which you reach factor "90" or the end of the month you attain age 65, whichever comes first.

Applications are available online at:

bctf.ca/uploadedFiles/Public/SalaryBenefits/SIP/LT-withdrawalForm.pdf or call the BCTF Income Security Division at 604-871-1921.

Upcoming Pension Seminars

YOUR PENSION, YOUR FUTURE.

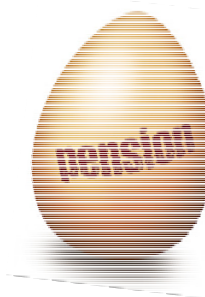
This free seminar is aimed towards new- and mid-career plan members. Join us as we explain your pension benefits and help you understand how decisions you make today can impact your future pension income, no matter how far into the future it may be.

Seminar Dates and Locations

APR 14 Vancouver

THINKING ABOUT RETIRING.

If you are within 5 years of retirement, then this free seminar is for you. Thinking about retiring and starting your pension may raise many questions for you. We can help you with this period of change.



Seminar Dates and Locations

MAR 10	Langley	MAY 3	Langley
APR 12	Vancouver	MAY 4	Burnaby
APR 26	Delta	MAY 10	Vancouver
APR 27	Coquitlam		

Pre-registration is required.

Dates and location are subject to change. To view the most current schedule and register online, visit tpp.pensionsbc.ca.