



Tackboard

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President's Message

No doubt T.S. Elliot was looking into the future and seeing the Vancouver School Board budget process when he wrote that April is the cruelest month...

This year's VBE budget process, that which contemplates and establishes the financial reality for the district for the '16-'17 school year, was the most difficult in recent memory and sets forth a plan that will change many aspects of the system. The budget proposals, due to go to a vote on April 28 are 68 items in total. They outline cuts across the system that deeply affect the ability of teachers to continue doing the work we care about. From cancelling programs, restricting access to translation, cutting teacher time to the Gifted, squeezing supplies budgets, abandoning some maintenance of schools, eliminating district support for field trips, restricting and slashing supports for teachers in difficult classes, further treating fee-paying international students like bank machines and reducing service to them, decimating support staff in schools, abandoning curricular support teachers in the midst of a curriculum transformation, walking away from the idea of an Anti-Racism Mentor and an Anti-Homophobia Mentor, reducing service to blind, deaf and home-bound students, entirely eliminating career information staff in secondary schools, eliminating teacher peer support for technology, eroding teaching support for students who can't read, reducing the number of Special Education workers, eroding school libraries and finally: to set in motion a process whereby some secondary class sizes will exceed the insufficient class size regulation of 30 students, is indeed

a sea-change and an educationally unsound financial plan for the Board. It is very clear where the burden of responsibility lies for this misfortune, directly at the feet of the Provincial Government. Years of government underfunding by not providing enough dollars to even cover inflation and provincially imposed cost increases have come home to roost in this budget. By the time most teachers read this message, the decision will have been made that sets forth these changes. Even if the budget fails on its final vote at the VSB on April 28, the provincial government has not been shy to appoint a special administrative Trustee in other jurisdictions that fail to pass a balanced budget.

Nonetheless, teachers soldier forward with the joys and tribulations that the end of year brings. We encourage teachers to engage fully with the staffing and timetable process at their school by attending Staffing and Timetable and Staff Committee meetings and by discussing fully with their departments the topics of load setting and class size and composition. This year, as in all years, it is vitally important that teachers have a high degree of democratic scrutiny and participation in these processes. As we get closer to the end of June, please take care of each other and remember to pause and find the intangible rewards that make our profession a calling.

Rory

VSTA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday, May 17, 2016

4pm at Tupper Auditorium

Members will receive financial reports ended July 31, 2015, vote to approve the Association's operating budget 2016-17, elect the VSTA Executive Committee for 2016-17 and vote to approve Constitutional changes. Door prizes will be presented at the end of the meeting, followed by a social hour in the staffroom. We look forward to seeing you at the meeting!

Please note:

The VSTA audited financial statements, list of candidates running for election and their candidate statements, and annual reports are available at www.vsta.ca.



**CODEVELOPMENT CANADA
ANNUAL
SOLIDARITY DINNER**

JUNE 4, 2016

TICKETS: \$65 / \$25 LOW INCOME
WWW.CODEVSOLDINNER2016.EVENTBRITE.CA
604.708.1495
CODEV@CODEV.ORG
DOORS OPEN AT 5:30PM

 MARITIME LABOUR CENTRE
1880 TRIUMPH ST.
CUPE/1004

Curriculum Feedback Survey

THANK YOU to the 188 respondents to our Curriculum Feedback Survey. The responses were thoughtful, articulate and passionate. There was mostly positive feedback to the question **What are the positive aspects of the curriculum and what are you looking forward to in education change?** and, not surprisingly, mostly negative responses to **What are the concerns?** and **What supports are needed from government, school boards, and your union in terms of implementation of the new Curriculum?**

Teachers are largely positive about inquiry based learning, about approaching curriculum from a conceptual perspective - the so called "Big Ideas" - and the freedom to follow both their passions and student interest. Many teachers like the idea of working with and incorporating the Core Competencies. The Aboriginal focus and the attention to the First People's Principles of Learning of the curriculum redesign are of great interest and a welcome shift to colleagues as well. For some teachers, the curriculum is nothing new at all and they view it as Year 2000 Redux.

In terms of concerns, resources topped the list with comments about funding in particular and sustainability of the public education system in general. We heard from teachers across the curricular areas. The largest number of curricular specific responses was from Social Studies teachers who expressed concerns about the changes to the content of the new curriculum. PE teacher respondents are concerned about

the Health Education component for two reasons: it takes away from physically active time and resources and training are not in place to teach this part of the new curriculum. Language

teachers of languages other than French are concerned that there is as of yet no curriculum at all. A number of teachers, especially after the second non-instructional day where they had more time to examine the curriculum in depth, expressed concerns about what they perceive as a "dumbing down" of the curriculum. We saw in the comments and have heard, in person, from some of our colleagues that they feel that any feedback

they have provided online to the Ministry has been ignored.

The missing Grade 10-12 program and the lack of assessment piece are of huge concern to teachers. Many questions were posed about electives, scheduling and the decision to create a curriculum from k-9, instead of 12-k, given the focus on "Backwards Design". Numerous requests for dedicated Pro-D and Collaborative Time were submitted.

To that end, we invite you to copy the BCTF at curriculumfeedback@bctf.ca when you submit feedback to the Ministry so that the Federation can also see the feedback. We will be submitting all the comments on our VSTA survey to the BCTF. If you would like to have a copy of the Executive Summary of VSTA Curriculum Feedback, please let us know and we will send it to you.

Katharine Shipley, VSTA Vice-President



School Union Team Elections

As per established practice, elections for members of the VSTA School Union Team take place in the spring, or in the case of a school that expects significant staff changes, in the following September. Elections should take place at a Staff Organization Meeting and contested positions must be determined by secret ballot. Even if only one person is nominated or has volunteered for a position, it is important that s/he be openly acclaimed by the meeting.

The School Union Team consists of:

- One (1) **Staff Rep** for every 25 teachers or fraction thereof on staff
- **Professional Development** Chairperson *
- Up to two (2) **Reps** to the VSTA

Working and Learning Conditions/ Bargaining Committee *

- One (1) Rep to the **VSTA Health and Safety Committee** *
- One (1) Rep to the **VSTA Social & Eco Justice Committee** *
- One (1) Rep to the **VSTA Technology Committee** *
- One (1) **Parent Liaison Rep** who attends PAC meetings and reports back to Staff Committee (or as per your School Constitution)
- **Staff Committee Chairperson** (unless a school's Staff Committee Constitution specifies that Staff Committee elects its own Chair. In either case, the Staff Committee Chairperson is a member of the School Union Team).

- One (1) **Local Election Contact** Of particular note for 2016-17, the School Union Team should include one person to fill the role of Election Contact. This person will receive and distribute materials as part of our Provincial Election Strategy next year. Co-ordination will be through a designated VSTA Local Election Contact to the BCTF.

*Note: This position will also represent the school a the corresponding VSTA Standing Committee)

Members of the VSTA Executive (from the school) are also considered to be members of the School Union Team.



BCTF Recommendations for Graduation Requirements Review: March 2016

The BCTF first provided a Graduation Requirements Review brief to the Ministry of Education in December 2012. At that time the BCTF encouraged discussion and input from all members and specifically requested teachers who sit on BCTF committees and provincial specialist associations (PSAs) to provide advice. Now, **four years later**, it was felt that a subsequent review and revision was appropriate in order to provide the Ministry with feedback based on the current context and progress to date.

It has always been a goal of Public Education in BC to foster the growth and development of every individual, to the end that she or he will become a self-reliant, self-disciplined, participating citizen with a sense of social and environmental responsibility within a democratic, pluralistic society. This is the sacred trust of public education, which prepares all students to engage in a world each generation will shape and build. As such, Public Education plays a pivotal role in providing opportunities for those students who are disadvantaged in their wider, general communities. This includes children who live in poverty, who are marginalized because of physical or mental challenges, or who are not of the dominant culture.

With that goal in mind here are some

highlights of the 29 recommendations made in the full BCTF Updated Graduation Requirements Review submitted to the Ministry of Education this past March, 2016.

- That any changes include support systems to mitigate the inequities of society to provide all students with the opportunity to graduate from secondary school.
- That the Ministry ensure that all students, no matter their life circumstance, geographic location, socio-economic status, or language of instruction, have **equitable access to all core and elective courses** offered within the province.
- That students throughout the province be able to graduate with a **proficiency in a second language**.
- That the graduation requirements include the successful completion of **at least one fine arts and one applied skills secondary course**.
- That the Ministry remove its arbitrary five-year funding cap on support for English language learner students.
- That Grade 10 be removed from the graduation program, and be restored to pre-2004 status.
- That the Ministry **restore the**

number of credits required for the Dogwood Diploma to the pre-2004 number, and include fine arts and applied skills credits in the graduation years.

- That the Ministry commit to funding public schools adequately to provide a full-range of Electives.
- That the Ministry fully fund public schools to ensure staffing and resources are in place for successful implementation of the proposed curriculum.
- That the Ministry ensure every school has the **necessary specialist-support teachers** to help every child meet their potential, and that the students are supported by appropriate professional support team, e.g., a teacher-librarian, a learning-assistance teacher, a resource teacher, a counsellor, an educational psychologist, a speech and language therapist, a hospital-homebound teacher, an English language learner teacher, and other specialist teachers.
- That the curriculum and graduation requirements be delivered by certified teachers.

The full document of the BCTF Updated Graduation Requirements Review Brief March 2016 can be accessed on the BCTF and VSTA websites.



THANK YOU to all the hard working Staff Reps for a great Post & Fill training day. Lots of good questions and discussion. 2016-APR-21

Retiring This Year?

CHECK LIST

Contact the Teachers' Pension Plan at 1-800-665-6770 for a Retirement Application Package. Send the completed application form to the TPP no later than the end of the month in which the pension is to start (preferably at least two months earlier) to ensure prompt pension payment.

Contact VBE payroll to find out when your current health benefits end to ensure you have continuous coverage until the benefits associated with the Teachers' Pension Plan begin.

Consider converting your current group life insurance to an individual life insurance policy.

Join the BC Retired Teachers' Association. Contact the BCRTA re: starting/continuing Medoc travel health insurance. Tel: 604-871-2260 or go to www.bcrta.ca.

Apply to the BCTF for Associate Membership.

Contact the Teacher Regulation Branch of the Ministry of Education to see your options regarding maintaining your BC Teacher's certificate if you intend to teach after retirement. www.bcteacherregulation.ca

At age 60, if you are not working, consider applying for your Canada Pension Plan pension. For an application kit, visit the CPP website at www.esdc.gc.ca/en/pension/cpp/index.page.

At age 65, apply for Old Age Security (OAS). For an application kit, visit the OAS web site at www.esdc.gc.ca/en/pension/oas/index.page.

Contact the BCTF Income Security staff if you have questions related to any of the above. Tel: 604-871-1921.

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.

Vancouver & District Labour Council & BC Federation of Labour

INTERNATIONAL WORKERS' DAY

MAYDAY

SUNDAY, MAY 1, 2016

"Jobs yes, but with dignity."

March

with Carnival Band
Gather - 1:30 pm

Commercial Dr. & 14th
(Clark Park Entrance)

Rally

and speakers
2:00 pm

Grandview Park
(Commercial Dr. & Charles St.)

Speakers & Music

Lillian Howard, First Nations' Welcome
Irene Lanzinger, BC Federation of Labour
Representative, Migrant Workers' Dignity Assoc.
Erie Maestro, Migrant
Left Coast Labour Chorus

MC

Joey Hartman, VDLC

Bring your banners & flags



Petr Pospisil, Doug Smith (KITS) & Shannon Less, Anne Sander (BRIT)
Post & Fill School Union Team Training, 2016-APR-21