



Tackboard

Vancouver Secondary Teachers' Association

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VSTA SALARY INDEMNITY FUND 2016-17 Fees WAIVED

At the VSTA AGM, on May 17, 2016, a motion was passed to waive the fees for continuing members for the school year 2016-17 due to the ongoing good health of the fund. Continuing members of the SIF are **NOT** required to pay membership fees this year.

As well, the VSTA Executive Committee passed a motion on September 8, 2016, to **suspend** new membership in the VSTA Salary Indemnity Fund for the 2016-17 school year.

Should you have any questions regarding your membership please contact Kim at the VSTA office directly, kim@vsta.ca.

Tackboard

is a newsletter produced and distributed to all secondary teachers on a monthly basis from September to June. It is designed to meet the needs of the VSTA members and contains information on an array of subjects, ranging from the VTF Collective Agreement to the President's Message to current news about the state of public education and its implications for Local 39.

In addition to our usual paper copies distributed to members, you will be emailed a link to the latest issue of Tackboard via Campaigner.

Current and past issues of Tackboard are also available on the VSTA website at <http://vsta.ca/publications/tackboard/>.

President's Message

Welcome back! The start-up of the 2016-17 school year has been busy and tumultuous to say the least for teachers in Vancouver secondary schools. We at the VSTA office have been fielding calls and enquiries on a multitude of issues from teachers in every school. As a backdrop to the usual hubbub of school start-up, teachers are experiencing likely the most difficult timetable situations encountered in many years, a direct result of the School Board budget that was not passed but nonetheless enacted. Of chief concern in this budget was the proposal to intentionally build classes in secondary that exceeded the maximum class size regulations in the School Act of 30 students. Although efforts have been made to keep the number of these classes to a minimum, at this writing it seems that there could be as many as 130 non-exempt classes that will exist with more than 30 students. It is of small comfort that the School Act regulations outline a process for teachers to be compensated for these overages. Teachers know that the educational efficacy of such large classes is greatly compromised as they exceed 30 students. The VSTA will be in direct communication to members on this issue in the coming weeks as reliable class data becomes available.

As an additional backdrop to the start of the year, 12 schools in the district have had to live under the shadow of a potential closure of their school. Much of our time at the VSTA this September as well as in May and June of last year, have been in efforts to advocate for a fair and judicious examination of the



Rory Brown, Katharine Shipley and Trish Mugford

root causes of this process. Although further blurred to obscurity with last week's government press conference on a rescindment of the 95% capacity utilization target, and then the subsequent letter from government to VBE staff urging the amalgamation of schools, it is clear that a dangerous game of political chicken is being played with students, families and school communities in Vancouver. At the Board meeting of September 26 at Tupper Secondary, Trustees debated moving schools to the next stage, public consultation, in the closure process. Gladstone Secondary was moved forward and details on the consultation process are forthcoming. VSTA table officers have been and will continue to visit Gladstone often over the next few months.

Despite all the challenges of the year thus far and those that are no doubt on the horizon, we hope that you will take the opportunity as you must, to close the door of your classroom and enjoy the purity of our collective purpose — the energized and joyful education of Vancouver students. As always please do not hesitate to contact us in the office.

Take care,

Rory



This year the BC Teachers' Federation is proudly celebrating our 100th anniversary. We invite you to explore and discover the rich history of our movement to build a strong public school system, the foundation of any democracy, and to build a strong federation to act as the voice of the profession.

The Museum is an interactive archive of 100 years of BCTF History with electronic copies of BC Teacher dating back to 1919. Of general interest to all BCTF members as well as those who are teaching BC History. <http://bctf.ca/history/welcome.aspx>

THE EMPHASIS HAS CHANGED

MUCH HAS BEEN SAID of the explosion of knowledge, how both the amount and the nature of mankind's store of information is changing dramatically. Things are changing so rapidly that today's fancy is tomorrow's fact. Few people 'outside' education, however, have yet sensed the impact the explosion will have on the schools.

Teachers have traditionally attempted to 'cover' courses—that is, to transmit to their students a given body of knowledge. The knowledge explosion has not merely rendered this concept of teaching obsolete; it has made 'coverage' impossible.

Because we cannot know what particular knowledge our students will need in the future, we shall have to produce graduates who have been taught how to learn on their own, who will be able to learn whatever they need to learn in their adult life. The teacher's role will become that of increasing the efficiency with which students educate themselves.

The subject-centered school is no longer adequate. The emphasis today is on developing each child as an individual. No longer are schools merely talking about developing each child to the maximum of his potential; they are now starting to do something about it.

The experiments with new teaching techniques and electronic teaching aids, the emphasis on having students accept more responsibility for learning, the varied attempts to remove the hurdles imposed by grade levels so that each child may progress at his own rate, and the decline of final formal examinations all

Plus ça change ...

From BC Teacher Magazine,
September 1966

attest to the fact that the schools are becoming increasingly child-centered.

The stress on developing *every* child is a result, at least in part, of the requirements of our technological society. Skills are needed today which were not even dreamed of a short time ago, and society needs the special skills of *all* its citizens on a much higher level than ever before.

So far, Canada has been able to attract enough skilled immigrants to keep her economy moving. More and more, however, we shall have to produce our own skilled people. The schools cannot be expected to teach the thousands of different skills required, but they can be expected to develop students who can learn the skills efficiently. Hence the emphasis on individual *learning* rather than group *instruction*.

Teachers in tomorrow's school will be diagnosticians, experts in learning and experts in finding their way on the ever-changing sea of knowledge. They will diagnose the learning requirements of each student and will prescribe the appropriate materials and experiences to provide the proper learning environment for each child. Moreover, no diagnosis or prescription will be considered 'right' unless it leaves the student with a desire to learn more, for this he must do for the rest of his life.

Yes, today's schools are beginning to change. Teaching has always been a challenging profession; it now shows every promise of becoming the most challenging of them all. □

Our **SPECIAL ISSUE** this year will be devoted to the topic 'Mental Health in the Schools.'

We invite manuscripts of 1500-2000 words on any aspect of the topic. They should arrive at the BCTF office by **December 31, 1966**.



SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1966



VSTA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2016-2017

Front (L-R): Leanne Hagglund, Trish Mugford, Sylvia Metzner, Katharine Shipley, Nancy Palejko, Brett Gabelman, Sara McGarry, Natalia Mayor Back (L-R): Michael-Don Borason, John Silver, Peter McLennan, Phil Lee, Rory Brown, Scott McKeen, Ryan Fullerton, Treena Goolieff, Peter Halim. Camera shy: Diane Phillips, Terry Stanway.

NEW CURRICULUM UPDATE

Use of K–9 curriculum in the 2016–17 school year

The finalized version of the K–9 curriculum being implemented starting September 2016 is posted here: <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/curriculum-info>

While it is important to note that the revised curriculum for K–9 is mandated for the 2016–17 school year, all partners recognize that the process of curriculum implementation takes time. To that end, partners agreed to the following wording when working on the curriculum framework documents to support curriculum implementation:

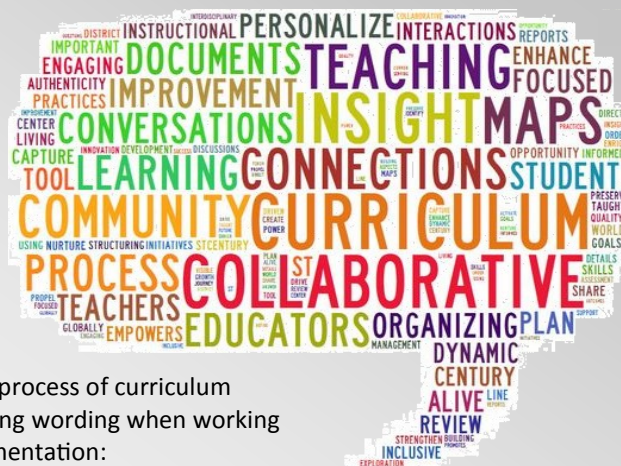
The process should ensure that the focus is strength-based rather than deficit-based, and should allow for multiple entry points to engage in the dialogue around curriculum. It is therefore critical and cannot be overemphasized that the implementation of the curricula be viewed as an ongoing, long-term process, rather than an event. With this in mind, we understand it will take time for teachers as they begin implementing the redesigned K–9 curriculum in September 2016. Rather, curriculum implementation is an ongoing process built around cumulative, reflective practice supported by all learning partners.

For the complete text see the curriculum framework documents (<https://www.bctf.ca/IssuesInEducation.aspx?id=38416>).


Use of 10–12 curriculum in the 2016–17 school year

Updated proposals for revised 10–12 curriculum are now posted on the Ministry's website: <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/curriculum/10-12>

The 10–12 curriculum for 2016–17 is voluntary. Teachers are free to explore the revised curriculum, but no one is required to use the 10–12 curriculum in 2016–17 and no one should feel pressured to do so. As with all other changes in our day-to-day working lives, teachers are encouraged to use school-based union meetings and staff committee meetings to discuss the issues arising from these significant curriculum changes.

**PROVINCIAL ELECTION 2017**

Education must be a priority!

- Vancouver district funding is shrinking. New ratios are resulting in fewer classes on timetables, less space for students, vanishing flexibility to deal with timetable conflicts, changing needs and interests of students and fluctuating enrollment numbers.
 - “Highest funding ever” may equal more dollars allocated to districts BUT does not address “Highest costs ever”. The fact is that costs are growing more than funding is.
 - The Provincial requirement that 95% capacity utilization be reached before seismic mitigation funding is released is absurd and destructive. Children are being held hostage in unsafe schools.
 - As yet, there are no tangible supports in schools to effectively implement the new curricula.
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CONTACT YOUR MLA!



3	Professional Development Committee Meeting
4	Social & Environmental Justice Committee Meeting
5	New Teachers' Induction
6	Executive Committee Meeting
18	School Union Rep Training
20	Executive Committee Meeting
21	District Pro-D Day
28	Council Meeting

Application Process:

Change of Salary Category for Teachers

Teachers are reminded that Human Resources has distributed copies of the document, *Information Regarding Teacher Salary*, including Application for Change of Category for Teachers" to all school sites. Teachers are advised to consult the document to gain an awareness of the procedure in place and the application form required to get retroactive pay when they apply for a new TQS card for salary change. All applicants must apply through TQS, the Teacher Qualification Service. Go to the TQS website at www.tqs.bc.ca for further information or call TQS at 604-736-5484.

Provincial Specialist Associations

PSAs are run by teachers, for teachers, through the BCTF. Through PSAs, members exchange ideas on research, teaching strategies, curriculum development, and other shared interests. By joining one or more PSAs, you gain an opportunity to share expertise and to obtain information and experience.

Many PSAs will be holding conferences this October 21st. For more information and registration for conferences or to join or renew your membership, check out <https://bctf.ca/PSAs.aspx>

You are also encouraged to get involved in a PSA. Many hands make light work.

TTOCs: Reminders for a new year

The BCTF has a myriad of resources available to TTOCs. Check out <https://www.bctf.ca/TeachersOnCall.aspx?id=5022> where the latest TTOC Alert is available.

Please remember that there is a **TTOC email listserv** that is available through the BCTF website. There are lots of tips and ideas that are shared through the list, and you are able to connect with other people from around the province. <http://bctf.ca/cgi-bin/maillinglistssub.pl>

TeachBC.bctf.ca is a relatively new website that is full of lesson plans for a single day, or a range of days. If you are called out into a subject area that you are not familiar with, please check out the web page for ideas and extra help. You can also upload any of your lesson plans that you wish to share.

Don't forget that you are part of the teaching force, and safety/security is part of your job as well. Please remember to ask the principal or secretary for any pressing information you may need to know before starting the day. Also, ensure you have a set of keys for the day to keep yourself and the students safe at all times. **If you are unsure about an issue or situation, contact the VSTA immediately.**

Educational Leave

Continuing contract teachers with the VBE are eligible for a variety of educational leaves (G.9.):

Teachers with a continuing contract for at least five (5) consecutive school years immediately preceding the date of requested leave may apply for a paid (60% of annual salary and allowances) education leave of one (1) year. Teachers applying for an education leave of one school year must apply in writing to the Associate-Superintendent-Human Resources on or before December 15 for a leave commencing in September 2016.

- Teachers with a continuing contract of not less than one (1) year immediately preceding the date of the requested leave may apply for a paid (60% of annual salary and allowances) education leave of less than one (1) school year, but longer than ten (10) school days. Teachers must apply in writing to the Associate-Superintendent-Human Resources at least three (3) months prior to the commencement of the leave.
- Teachers with a continuing contract of not less than one (1) year immediately preceding the date of the requested leave may apply for a paid (100% of annual salary and allowances) education leave for ten (10) school days or less. Teachers must apply in writing to the Associate-Superintendent-Human Resources at least four (4) weeks prior to the date of the commencement of the leave.

Application forms are available from the VBE.

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 (SIP) once they hit "Factor 90" (age plus contributory 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 long-term disability.

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 SIP. In making application for withdrawal, 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: tinyurl.com/7qrrnxx or call the BCTF Income Security Division at 604-871-1921.

Professional Boundaries and the Use of Electronic Communication and Social Media

The presence of technology has grown exponentially in our schools and all aspects of our daily lives. Electronic communication and social media have become integral to our personal and professional lives. While the use of technology has changed dramatically over time, the standards of professionalism have not changed. Regardless of the delivery method, all professional interactions must be respectful and courteous, and appropriate boundaries must be maintained. We need to be aware that all digital communication has the potential to be public beyond the intended recipients and creates a permanent record. A careless electronic communication may have unintended, but grave professional consequences.

Some tips:

1. Communication with parents, students and other members of the education community is best done verbally or face to face in a professional and structured manner.
2. Maintain exemplary professional standards when sending email messages to students, parents, colleagues, and administrators and send your messages during appropriate times of the day. Casual, off hand, joking remarks or expressions of support via electronic media are easily misconstrued.
3. Reflect on your electronic postings. Advise friends and family not to post pictures of you on social media sites without first asking for your consent. Pictures of you, chat discussions you initiate or participate in, and email or text messages between you and others create a permanent record.
4. Slow down. Don't press "send" until you evaluate whether or not your postings, texts, emails will be considered professional and appropriate in the education community. And don't press "reply all" if your intent is only for one person to receive the communication.
5. You are not your students' "friend." You are their teacher and must maintain a professionally appropriate relationship.

Here is a list of activities that could result in disciplinary action for a teacher:

- Visiting inappropriate websites (i.e., adult content, racist, pornographic)
- Sending or forwarding offensive jokes and pictures via e-mail
- Online gambling using school board equipment
- Downloading audio, video or text-based materials in violation of copyright laws
- Using board/employer equipment to engage in activities related to a second occupation
- Constant text messaging, instant messaging and/or e-mailing during school time
- Posting pictures of yourself and sharing them over the Net, especially if they are suggestive or inappropriate
- Posting comments about students, parents, fellow colleagues, or administrators online
- Engaging in personal e-mail exchange with students
- Engaging in inappropriate conversations about fellow colleagues through e-mails or social networking sites
- Criticizing principals, superintendents, school trustees or school boards, personally or professionally, online
- Sharing confidential board information through the board e-mail system or a social networking site.

(Compiled from the BCTF workshop Understanding the Professional Relationship: Social Networking-Ethical Conduct Online and Cyber tips for Teachers, Canadian Teachers' Federation)

2013-04-25