



What does MOA E09 mean for Vancouver?

By the time you are reading this, the Interim Funding timelines and process will be well underway. Vancouver teachers participated in school-based consultation meetings all last week culminating in the submission of templates to Employee Services by site-based admin on Friday, January 20. After the priority lists have been reviewed and agreed to in consensus by a district Committee made up of VSTA table officers and VBE staff and, barring any unforeseen complications, schools should be receiving their allocations by Friday, January 27. On Wednesday, February 1, postings must be submitted to Employee Services – NO EXCEPTIONS. The first round of interim measures postings will open on Tuesday, February 7 and close on Monday, February 13.

In anticipation of teacher recruitment challenges, VSTA, VESTA and the VBE have reached a temporary agreement whereby site based part-time teachers wishing to increase their FTE will be able to do this on a continuing basis with a portion of this one-time interim funding. If two or more teachers wish to increase their FTE, are qualified and/or experienced and sufficient FTE is not available, seniority will determine the successful applicant.

Although the restored language is not yet in force, the Interim Funding Measure will slightly improve the worst of the issues that relate to class size and composition and non-enrolling specialist ratios for the rest of this school year.

We MUST see restoration funding in the February 21 budget to address full scope restoration of our Collective Agreement. Schools are beginning to plan for next year and teachers, students and parents deserve the peace of mind of stable, predictable and adequate funding for education sooner, not later.



President's Message



Happy New Year! Teachers in Vancouver and around the province were encouraged that talks between provincial representatives

of the employer and the BCTF resulted in \$50 million being allocated from the province to be immediately implemented into staff organizations. This allocation will begin the process of making good on some of the worst situations currently occurring in our classrooms due to chronic underfunding of the public education system. It is very important to remember that this funding is only the start and does not implement the restored language. In rough math, the \$4.4 million that Vancouver will receive to put immediately into classrooms represents about 25-30% of what would be needed to satisfy the requirements of restoration dictated by our Supreme Court win on November 10, and further, that class size and composition, along with non-enrolling ratios are but one spoke in the wheel of public education cuts the system has undergone in the last 15 years under successive BC Liberal governments. It remains vital that adequate funding and a commitment to re-invest in public schools feature large in the provincial budget announcements of Feb. 21. As you are aware, secondary teachers in Vancouver went through a process over the last two weeks to develop lists of their schools' needs. Contemplating the restoration of our stripped language

during this stop-gap measure has underscored the imperative that full scope contract language must be in place for next year. These contract provisions, signed into our contract in the 1990s, afforded us the ability to do much more with our students than we possibly can accomplish in today's reality.

The fact that the provincial government was forced to provide this funding by the highest court in the land underlines the importance of all teachers in the province to fully engage with their friends and family on making public education a vote-determining issue during the election campaign. The VSTA's Local Election Committee, chaired by VSTA Executive member Sara McGarry, is up and running and looking for motivated VSTA members to become involved in what will be, and already is, a crucial campaign. VSTA Table Officers visited schools in the second week of January and met with teachers to bring news on the details of the language restoration and the plans for the months ahead. In addition, we shared news on the nature of working with an appointed as opposed to elected Vancouver School Board, a process that has thus far been challenging. With Spring Break seven weeks away and our knowledge as teachers that January and February are months of high productivity in schools, please remember to pace yourselves and keep healthy while enjoying the independence and joy that our profession affords.

Cheers,

Rory



As a TTOC you may be eligible to apply for **EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE**. If you plan to apply, you may wish to begin keeping a detailed account of your weekly earnings.

- Many TTOCs apply for EI over the summer, but EI may also
- cover non-teaching breaks
- cover “slow periods”
- provide sick leave to TTOCs
- cover sick days under regular benefits and up to an additional 15 weeks under sickness benefits

To be eligible a TTOC must have enough hours

- one public school teaching day equals 9.1 insurable hours
- currently in Vancouver 700 insurable hours are required to qualify for regular EI benefits

Before you apply you will need to work out:

- your average weekly earnings over the last 53 weeks
- your best 22 weeks over the last 53 weeks if your rate was variable
- separate hours for contract and TTOC, separate ROEs.

A powerpoint EI seminar can be found on the BCTF website <https://bctf.ca/uploadedFiles/Public/TTOC/TTOC-EI-Seminar.pdf>

EI rules are subject to change and eligibility is reviewed case by case. Please contact ServiceCanada to verify information, and for any specific questions about your situation.

Stay tuned for an EI workshop at VSTA in the late spring.

Vancouver Extended Health Benefits Plan

Vancouver teachers have been voting annually since 2014 on whether to retain our local benefits plan or sign on with the provincial plan. So far, we have stuck with our locally bargained plan as members have decided it is superior. This year we are looking at more substantive changes provincially, so we are encouraging members to have a very close look at the comparison chart and decide for themselves as to the plan with which they would like to proceed. If we switch, we cannot go back to the old plan.

We will be holding an information meeting in March before the Spring Break (time and place TBA) and then teachers will be able to vote in their schools during the week after the break.

Link to Comparison Chart—<http://vsta.ca/2017/01/vancouver-extended-health-benefits-plan/>



Indigenous Perspectives – Alliance and Practice

The VSTA Social and Environmental Justice Committee will be hosting **two Professional Development workshops at the VSTA office on February 24, a District Pro-D day.**

9AM-12PM PROJECT OF HEART Carol Arnold, BCTF Facilitator

This workshop examines the teaching resource available to all teachers and is an inquiry-based, hands-on, collaborative, intergenerational, artistic journey for seeking truth about the history of Aboriginal people in Canada. The workshop will examine the history and legacy of Indian residential schools in order to commemorate the lives of the thousands of Indigenous children who died as a result, and to prepare students to engage in social justice activities that contribute to the developing truth and reconciliation movement.

12PM-1PM Lunch provided

1PM-3PM WORKSHOPS – Choose from a two hour session

A. Illuminating Identity: A Necessary Condition for Reconciliation

Presented by Anna Gilcher, PhD and Rachelle Adams, Education Consultant
OR

B. Native and Introduced Plants

Presented by Lori Snyder (Indigenous Herbalist)

REGISTRATION: Kim Pereira at the VSTA office, kim@vsta.ca or 604-873-5570 by **February 20.**



General Meeting Report – JANUARY 24, 2017

Endorsing candidate for provincial election

THAT the VSTA formally endorse candidates in Vancouver for the May 9, 2017 provincial election who support a progressive education platform to restore funding to public education and indicate that they will work respectfully with unionized workers in the education sector.

We will be thoroughly vetting candidates using a questionnaire comprised of tough questions Vancouver teachers want answers to before deciding which, if any, candidates we will endorse. Stay tuned.

As you all know May 9 will be your opportunity to get out and vote – check the Elections BC site and MAKE SURE you are registered. Your school Local Election Contacts will be attending a workshop at the VSTA office on February 16 and will keep you informed on the VSTA plan to engage teachers in voting and volunteering for the 2017 election – a day many of us have been waiting for since 2013.

Also important is the February 21 provincial budget. We expect to see funding to cover the full scope restoration of our stripped language for the next school year. The \$50M band-aid may have helped the hemorrhaging but it hasn't healed the wound.

School-based "All Candidates Meetings" are a great way to get students and teachers engaged in the election process. It also provides an opportunity to ask candidates who attend what their party platforms are on issues that matter – education and beyond.

BCTF AGM

In addition to our three Local Reps we elected eighteen delegates who will attend the BCTF AGM this Mar 18-21 and represent Vancouver Secondary teachers' voice at the provincial table. A HUGE thank you to the dedicated teachers who were willing to put their names forward and volunteer their time in the middle of this year's spring break to participate in arguably the most democratic event in existence.

Thanks Delegates!

Michael-Don Borason, Madeline Brewster, Lindsay Donaldson, Cindy Dudra, Ryan Fullerton, Peter Halim, Kathy Hartman, Alita Krickan, Sara McGarry, Scott McKeen, Sylvia Metzner, Duane Mugford, Trish Mugford, Nancy Palejko, Nigel Reedman, Katharine Shipley, John Silver, Terry Stanway. LRs: Rory Brown, Treena Goolieff, Phil Lee.

Opposing installation of BC Hydro sub-stations

On another note, there was a surprise motion from the floor at our General Meeting on Thursday, which was debated and passed:

"THAT the VSTA oppose the installation of BC Hydro sub-stations beneath public schools or on school property."

The VSTA will submit this as a late resolution to the BCTF Executive (as per Members' Guide Part 5 - 6.C.1) in the hopes that it will be recommended for inclusion in the proposed agenda. We look forward to debating this at the BCTF AGM in March if it is accepted.

School Union Rep Training

Functioning School Committees

February 7 and 8, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

As a follow up to our Fall SURT and by popular demand, we are offering two half-day workshops on functioning school committees. When school-based committees work well and are robust, processes are clear to all and create stronger staff cohesion. We encourage Staff Reps and any Committee Chairs to attend (Staff Committee, Pro-D, Health & Safety, WLC/B, Tech).



February 7		February 8	
Britannia	John Oliver	Magee	Tupper
Byng	Killarney	Point Grey	Univ Hill
Churchill	King George	Prince of Wales	Van Tech
DLS	Kitsilano	SET BC	VASS
Gladstone	VLN	Templeton	Windermere
Hamber		Thompson	

Topics will include:

- Language in the Collective Agreement that support School Committees
- School Based Constitutions
- Group discussion with members from different schools
- Concrete goal setting for individual schools

REGISTRATION: Contact Kim, kim@vsta.ca or call 604-873-5570. **RSVP deadline:** February 1



27th Annual Women's Memorial March

For missing and murdered women

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2017

March: noon from Carnegie (Main and Hastings)

Healing Circle: around 2:30 pm at Oppenheimer

Community Feast to follow at the Japanese Language Hall.

Website: <https://womensmemorialmarch.wordpress.com/>



The British Columbia Teachers' Federation
"Vitality" project presents...

Living with Balance

a program for BC Teachers

We are excited to be hosting the Living with Balance program initiated by the BCTF Health and Wellness Program and developed by the Occupational Rehabilitation Group.

Occupation Therapist Megan Lilley will be facilitating the Wednesday evening workshops with 15 Vancouver teachers. This popular program quickly filled up.

The focus will be on developing tools and skills related to improving one's vitality and resiliency. The holistic approach to wellness will equip teachers to make simple lifestyle changes that will positively affect their physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

This six-week group program will provide opportunities for:

- education, self-evaluation, and examining the importance of maintaining life-style balance
- discussing the importance of nutrition; exercise; sleep
- managing symptoms of low mood, anxiety, and stress; boundaries and managing conflict
- learning strategies that increase awareness of factors that contribute to fluctuations in mood as well as methods to manage them
- reviewing proven techniques used to improve self-esteem and self-confidence, and manage stress and low mood
- defining what work-life balance means to each of us and what happens when our roles collide, having good boundaries is often attributed to having clear values
- discussing how to be intentional, creative and assertive when you need to be
- learning the importance of social connections and community in building long-term wellness, understanding that social isolation is a significant health risk factor.

EdCamp Vancouver

Saturday, February 4

8:30 AM – 2:30 PM

GLADSTONE SECONDARY



Join us for a day of networking and sharing with educators, students and parents from Vancouver and neighbouring districts. EdCamp is an unconference organized by a group of teachers, administrators and district staff interested in the EdCamp movement. The EdCamp unconference agenda is created and driven by participants at the start of the event. Sessions are expected to be facilitated discussions (not presentations), where all participants have the chance to contribute their perspective.

EdCamp Vancouver is FREE AND offers child care services.

Get More Information or Register today at
www.vsblearns.ca

Follow us on Twitter at: @EdCamp_Van



BCTF Conference for New Teachers, New TTOCs, and Student Teachers

February 24–25, 2017

Radisson Hotel, 8181 Cambie Road, Richmond, BC V6X 3X9

**Workshops
Networking
Resources fair**

For information: bctf.ca/NewTeachersConference2017



Registration opens mid-January 2017

For more information, contact: Cécilia Huard de la Harpe
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