

Annual Reports

President's Report – Katharine Shipley

As I look back at the blur that is the 2017-2018 school year, some key things stand out. On a positive note, we now have a Superintendent, a Board of Trustees and a fully functioning Senior Management Team. There is a sense of optimism in the air that the Vancouver School District is finding its footing and that there are individuals committed to its' renaissance. The challenges that remain before us are as ever: funding, the full restoration of our language, declining enrollment and what choices the Trustees make in terms of facilities. Further to that, we are now heading into Bargaining – an exciting, but also stressful time.

At the VSTA office, we continue to hold a record number of workshops for and we have made a conscious effort to reach out to Newer Teachers and even student teachers in the hopes that all of those members, and prospective members, feel like Vancouver is a place they want to work in. We know that the cost of living is a deterrent to living here and we continue to suggest to the Board that it create non-market housing for Employee groups in order to attract new graduates. It has also been wonderful to see new people stepping up to Union roles and newer teachers putting their name forward to serve on our Executive as well.

As is our primary work, the VSTA office will continue to advocate on behalf of teachers – we represent and speak on behalf of you at all the VSB Standing Committees, in all of our contractual committees with the Board and in any informal conversations we have with the Board. It is in hearing from your school based Union representatives and yourselves directly that we feel confident in speaking for you and so we encourage you to continue to work with your Union reps and to contact us with your questions and concerns.

Speaking personally, it has been a rewarding year working with our VSTA Executive and our office staff. I always remind myself that teachers are doing the hardest work in the system and this is what sustains us through what is, at times, very challenging work. I hope that Vancouver secondary teachers find themselves reflected in their Union and that if they don't, they put their name forward to participate and work towards that.

Professional Development – Leanne Hagglund

Over the 2017-2018, the Professional Development Committee met regularly, engaging in productive discussion and action on PD issues. We hosted a well-attended SURT for Pro D reps on the *Culture of Professionalism* at the VSTA office. At our meetings, we routinely discussed school-based and district-level professional development concerns, questions and/or issues. We actively worked towards increasing district-wide collaboration on professional development opportunities for members. We engaged in conversations on possible future uses of the collaborative inquiry funds beyond merely collaborative inquiry.

This year laid the groundwork for further work on many of the previously mentioned issues, including hosting additional SURTS, developing district-wide guidelines for the use of professional development funds and district-wide PD collaboration. Overall, it was a highly productive year, full of promise for the 2018-2019 year.

Social & Environmental Justice Committee – Shelby Calman

The Social Justice Committee met regularly throughout the year. We organized and hosted our first conference for the January 29th Curriculum Implementation Day. There were a few hundred attendees, including elementary school teachers and support workers. The theme of the conference was social justice and the Core Competencies. Workshops included presentations from the BCTF, local educators, as well as various local non-profit organizations. We had guest speakers present at our meetings on a few occasions. It was a busy year with many initiatives.

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Technology Committee – Peter Halim

Our Technology Committee has met four times this year and worked on a variety of fronts.

Firstly, we discussed and cobbled together VSTA recommendations for new Secondary teacher devices based on our colleagues' feedback. These recommendations will help us advocate for what VSTA members generally need out of their VSB based laptops.

Secondly, we are working on developing VSTA recommendations for how our colleagues deal with student personal technology in their classrooms and school. Currently this area has been difficult to navigate due to lack of clear policies and procedures.

Thirdly, we discussed and shared site-based issues such as, bandwidth, network quality, personal devices, and computer labs. This feedback was critical for informing VSB IT how certain issues impact teachers in their classrooms.

In closing, our committee has been well attended and I would like to thank all the VSTA Technology school reps for their dedication and time!

Working/Learning Conditions & Bargaining Committee – Treena Goolieff

The Working and Learning Conditions & Bargaining Committee met each month except February and a consistent theme throughout the year was Remedy as outlined in the Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) as per LOU. No. 17. As prescribed by the MoA, classes that violate our restored class size and composition language will trigger remedy minutes. Remedy been rather ineffective due to the TTOC shortage.

WLC/B Committee discussed the MoA Best Efforts grievance that proceeds to arbitration December 2018, and the Interpretation of the Restored Language grievance, also accepted by the BCTF for arbitration. The committee received a report on the VSTA Restored Language Survey from December 2017. The survey results demonstrate that approximately 30% of our members experience improvements to their working conditions as a result of the Supreme Court of Canada ruling from November 2016, however a great deal of our members have increased stress and workload due to lost prep-time and inaccessibility of remedy. The committee provided input on the restored Ancillary Language and our Urgent Intervention Process (UIP) language, as the MoA set deadlines for modernizing this language. Advice was gathered from committee members on the pending LOU with the VSB on Prep-time recovery. This LOU was initiated by VSTA with VSB as a response to the TTOC shortage.

Preparation for bargaining was the second overarching theme of this year. Our current Collective Agreement expires June 30, 2019 and an invitation from the BCTF to BCPSEA requested to open bargaining no later than December 1, 2018. This continues to be our goal, as is achieving a good deal for teachers prior to the expiration of our current CA. WLC/B reps hosted or facilitated a Bargaining Focus Group Workshop was hosted or facilitated in most schools in March and April. The purpose of the workshop was to elevate the profile of bargaining, inform members of the bargaining structure and timeline, and to increase participation in the VSTA Bargaining Survey that was available to members April 20-30. The Workshop aims to highlight the reality that member engagement in bargaining strengthens the power of the bargaining team at the table.

Thank you to WLC/B reps for the consistent participation in meetings. I greatly value their input and efforts to support teachers.