



TACKBOARD

The monthly newsletter of the Vancouver Secondary Teachers' Association

March Deadlines



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

Deadline: **MARCH 15, 4:30 PM**

TRANSFER (Vacate Card) for employees who commit to a transfer (vacate card).

Deadline: **MARCH 31, 4:30 PM**

INCREASE/CHANGE IN TEACHING TIME.

Part-time teachers wishing to increase their FTE at their current school must notify their principals using Request for Increase/Change in Teaching time for desired FTE for Sept 2018; a copy of the form (with both teacher and administrator signatures) **MUST** be received in HR before 4:30 PM on March 31.

Important note! If there are layoffs, employees will not be able to increase their teaching time as per Article C.20.3.c.

LEAVE OF ONE YEAR OR LONGER for applications of leave of one year or longer beginning Sept 2019.

RETURNING FROM LEAVE. Teachers returning from leave must notify HR, **in writing**, of intent to work for Sept 2019.

Message from the Office

Spring Break is here and we wish everyone a restful holiday – we know by the quality and quantity of questions coming to the office that the break is much needed and deserved.

The VSTA Delegates to the BCTF Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be in Victoria from Saturday, March 16th until Wednesday, March 20th discussing and debating with colleagues from all over BC. Thank you to those who put their names forward to engage with our union on a provincial level.

The BC Public School Employer's Association (BCPSEA), who bargains with us on behalf of the government, has given the green light for districts to start local bargaining so we will be opening shortly. Your Staff Reps and WLC/B Reps will be your first point of contact at the local level. For Provincial bargaining updates, log into the BCTF members' portal for information. A reminder to all not to share the information on social media or with people who are not part of the bargaining unit. We are scheduling site visits for after Spring Break to discuss local bargaining issues, our political action bargaining campaign and to connect directly with members.

We are also visiting staffs whose schools have been mentioned in the VSB's Long Range Facilities Plan (LRFP) to hear their questions and concerns that we will then share with Trustees and Senior Management. The LRFP is described as a document for outlining a process for making decisions around school "consolidations" or closures and related facilities matters. This will be a stressful process for many of our colleagues, the students they teach and the larger community. The VSTA does not currently have a formal position on the process, but will be discussing it at our next Executive meeting.

Once teachers are rested and recovered after Spring Break, we hope they will have the energy to turn their minds to engagement with the VSTA. The VSTA AGM on May 14th will elect the In House Table Officers, Members at Large and Standing Committee Chairs. We are currently seeking a member who identifies as Indigenous for the Aboriginal Chair position on the VSTA's Executive Council for the 2019-20 school year. This is a newly created position this year – if a teacher is interested in knowing more about this position, or any other position, please contact the office for more information.

As always, we thank all VSTA members for their hard work and contributions to public education and wish you a restorative holiday.

Adding IHTOs' emails to contact lists



If you are corresponding with any of the In House Table Officers and we agree to send any further information via email, remember to check your junk mail folder as some email settings such as Gmail are rigid. You can also add the Table Officers' emails to your contact list:

katharine@vsta.ca; treena@vsta.ca; terry@vsta.ca; shelby@vsta.ca



Terry, Treena, Katharine & Shelby

VSTA Executive Committee 2019-2020

In anticipation of our upcoming AGM we would like to encourage any and all interested VSTA members to consider nominations for next year's Executive Committee. These hard working members provide union representation at the school, district and provincial level. Check out the "job description" below and see if you, or someone you know, might be a great fit for this upcoming opportunity! **The deadline for nominations, candidate statements and a photo is APRIL 12.** *Nomination forms are available from your Staff Rep, the VSTA website (<http://vsta.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Nominating-Form.pdf>)*

Executive Committee member description

This volunteer position is open to any VSTA member. The Executive Committee provides advice to the In-House Table Officers (President/Vice-Presidents) and takes on an active leadership role. This is an excellent opportunity for anyone looking to gain more insight into the workings of their local union and the school board. You may serve as a Local Representative, chair one of the VSTA standing committees (Pro-D, Health & Safety, Working & Learning Conditions/Bargaining, Social & Environmental Justice, Technology, serve as an Aboriginal Chair, TTOC Chair, or be a Member-at-Large.

We ask for the following commitments: attend three Thursday evening meetings a month, go to the annual weekend retreat (held this year on September 19-20, 2019), attend the BCTF AGM during Spring Break (starts on a Saturday afternoon and ends on the following Tuesday afternoon), possibly sit on VSB Advisory Committees as well as attend SURT days during the year.

VSTA In House Table Officer Description (President/Vice-President)

Responsibilities:

- Member services – Collective Agreement interpretation, discipline, Health & Wellness
- Liaising with Board staff – Employee Services, Labour Relations, Senior Management
- Collective Agreement – enforcement and interpretation, grievances and arbitrations
- Liaising with the BCTF – BCTF AGM, BCTF RA, Federation Leadership Institute, Zone Meetings
- Planning SURT & Exec Retreat
- Supporting Staff Reps & Exec members (especially chairs of Standing Committees)
- Creating Executive Committee & Council agenda
- Communications with members
- Managing office staff
- Managing the building

Expectations:

- Office hours (8:30-4:30/9:00-5:00)
- Evening meetings (Executive, Council, Board & Committee meetings)
- Weekend meetings (BCTF Functions & Executive Retreat)

Skill set:

Ability to balance big picture with details, willingness to listen and function well as part of a team, skilled at creating and maintaining professional relationships, good at seeing connections that lead to thinking ahead and predicting, flexibility and taking initiative.

Aboriginal Chair Position

The VSTA has added an Aboriginal Chair position to our Executive Committee for the upcoming school year. If you are interested in running for the position and you identify as Aboriginal, please fill out the nomination form and/or contact the office for more information.



The annual Teacher Regulation Branch (TRB) Annual Practice Fee

is a mandatory deduction from pay for all employees who require a valid TRB certificate to perform their job. This deduction will automatically be processed for all employees actively receiving pay on April 30.

Although employers are required to deduct the annual fee from all certificate holders, there are two exceptions where opt out is allowed:

1. If the Teacher certificate holder is employed by more than one school district or
2. If the Teacher certificate holder is retiring on June 30th and wishes to relinquish their teaching certificate

If you meet one of those exceptions, you can opt out of the Teacher Regulation Branch annual practice fee by providing your consent through Employee Self Service, click here Annual TRB Rescind Deduction or log in to PeopleSoft and navigate to Self Service>>Payroll and Compensation>> K12 TRB Withdraw Consent. If you forget your password (same credentials as myvsb), then contact the servicedesk@vsb.bc.ca or telephone 604-713-4444.

If you are on unpaid leave, you are responsible for the fee.

The Day of Mourning in Schools for workers killed or injured on the job began in Canada and is now observed around the world every year on April 28. This year, the **Day of Mourning BC Schools Project** will take place on **Friday, April 26, 2019**. See the following link about how to get involved or speak to your Health and Safety Rep who will have a package of information in the coming weeks: <http://domschools.ca/>.



Changes to Maternity Leave and our CA

As of May 2018 there were changes to Service Canada's regulations and EI Provisions for maternity and parental leaves, including increasing the 12 month maternity/parental leave to an 18 month option. Expectant parents, or teachers planning for a family, may want to be aware of how the changes work with our language as well as more detailed information on the leave in general. Refer to the Service Canada website for comprehensive information (<http://tinyurl.com/mat-parental-leave>). Of note is that if a parent chooses the extended parental leave of 18 months: "The benefit rate is 33% of the claimant's average weekly insurable earnings up to a maximum amount." This means that the rate is the same total as the 12 month parental benefit: "The weekly benefit rate is 55% of the claimant's average weekly insurable earnings up to a maximum amount." In other words, the 12 month payment is stretched out over 18 months.

While the top up provision remains the same if a member takes 12 months or 18 months leave, there is currently no provision in our Collective Agreement (CA) to return to the same site after more than a one year leave. Under our CA, the "additional" 6 months of parental leave would be considered unpaid parenthood leave, thereby guaranteeing a job if returning within 3 years, but not guaranteeing the same site. In discussions with the Employer, we have been told that this is potentially under discussion at the Provincial table.

Tutorial and Collaboration Time Contractual Obligations

This is a reminder to all schools that have a form of **tutorial/flex/collaboration time that this is instructional time**. Tutorial time usually means being available throughout the duration of the allocated time for helping students. Collaboration time is meant for staff collaboration on anything school related, including requested Admin topics.



STAND WITH THE WET'SUWET'EN

The Council, comprised of each school's staff rep passed the following motion in January:

THAT the VSTA send a letter of support to the Wet'suwet'en peoples, with copies sent to the provincial government, federal government, RCMP, and Coastal Gas Link, and that we also state our opposition to the unjust treatment of the Wet'suwet'en at Unist'ot'en Camp by the Canadian and BC governments, and RCMP at the behest of industry when 14 people were arrested for defending their unceded territory.

The reason why Council decided to pass this motion is because Article 10 of *The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (that the Canadian government officially signed off on), states that "Indigenous peoples shall not be forcibly removed from their lands or territories. No relocation shall take place without the free, prior and informed consent of the indigenous peoples concerned and after agreement on just and fair compensation and, where possible, with the option of return." In the spirit of reconciliation, we agreed that the federal and provincial governments should be working peacefully with the Wet'suwet'en.

From our TTOC Committee

It can be challenging for TTOCs and contract teachers to communicate given that they rarely see one another. We can all contribute to VSB recruitment and retention by thanking TTOCs (email/phone message) for a job well done. If a teacher has concerns about what happened in their absence, they should contact the TTOC for a professional conversation as per the BCTF Code of Ethics. If a teacher is not sure how to start the conversation, please speak to your Staff Rep or contact the VSTA office for some advice.

Accepting Long Term TTOC Assignments

Some reminders for TTOCs when accepting a long term TTOC assignment:

- TTOCs do not get paid statutory holidays and are entitled for paid Pro-D days on a fifth and subsequent consecutive working day in any one assignment (Article B.7.h)
- Day to day part time TTOC assignments are paid on a pro-rated basis as of the fifth day. This means that if a TTOC is teaching three blocks (.4286), they are paid .4286 of the daily rate as of the fifth day. As of the fifth day in an assignment, TTOCs are paid ten percent (10%) of 1/189th of their salary scale placement in lieu of benefits. (Article B.7.a.i)

UIP Form

If a safety plan has been created by the School Based Team for a student and there continue to be violent incidents, we encourage you to complete the Urgent

Intervention Process form that is part of our restored language. Information on the process can be accessed on the VSB website (<http://tinyurl.com/VSB-UIP>). Essentially, the process is set up to expedite support for students that demonstrate behavior that is "sufficiently disruptive" and sufficiently "at risk." The reason why it is beneficial to use the UIP is because there is an obligation on the part of the Board to create a plan within five days of receiving the form. The comprehensive team that deals with the situation is composed of Case Managers, DRTs, SLPs, Area Counsellors, School Psychologists and Resource Teachers. Your Admin will have the form on hand and will need to sign off on it.





GAINING GROUND

NEW TEACHERS TOGETHER, LEADING THE WAY



BCTF New Teachers' Conferences

New Teachers, New TTOCs, and Teacher Candidates

April 5
Vernon

May 10
Nanaimo

Participants will have the opportunity to network with colleagues from all over the Province. There will be high quality workshops on a wide range of topics: Aboriginal Education, Special Education, TTOCs, French Education, New Curriculum, Inquiry, Social Justice and more. Vendors with their displays of freshly developed teaching materials that align with the revised curriculum. Both events will host a panel on Aboriginal Education discussing ways to infuse Aboriginal ways of being and learning in their classroom.

New teachers with 5 years or less experience, TTOCs, and teachers who have changed positions or Districts are encouraged to attend one or even both events. The registration fee is only \$60 which includes the Welcoming Reception, breakfast, lunch and coffee/tea break. <https://www.bctf.ca/NewTeachers.aspx>

FAIR Pharmacare

Pharmacare

A PLAN FOR EVERYONE

The Canadian Labour Congress has a federal campaign demanding for fair pharmacare for everyone. Consider partaking in the campaign by emailing your MP. See the link for more information: <http://tinyurl.com/CLC-pharmacare>.

BCTF Advantage Program

The BCTF Advantage Program is your gateway to a number of benefits and offers from cars to insurance. With 41,000 members the BCTF, as an organization, has been able to obtain savings on various products and services for members. The BCTF Advantage program allows your membership in the BCTF to work for you in areas outside of your employment relationship. For most BCTF Advantage partners you simply state that you are a BCTF member and they will apply your discount/savings to your purchase. Have you taken advantage of your BCTF membership lately? Take a moment and see what is available to you!

The program includes: Insurance, Personal Finance, Cars, Travel, Marketplace partners, Health & Wellness partners .

Teacher's Pension Plan BC

There are some updates to our pensions as well as information that is helpful for members to be aware of regarding their pension account. You can access your account on the TPP website: <https://tpp.pensionsbc.ca/>

To create a profile go to www.myaccount.pensionsbc.ca. You can view information on your beneficiaries, pension estimates and read the annual pension report.

Our pension has a surplus because of valuation. There are cuts to members' payments by 1.75% (see the change on your paystub).



VTF BARGAINING TEAM: (front, L-R) Vanessa Lefebvre, Jill Barclay, Danielle Durant, Treena Goolieff, Joanne Sutherland, Darren Tereposky (back) Alyssa Reid, John Silver, Scott McKeen, Greg Canning.

"Spring Break is just too long and I miss my students dearly," said no teacher ever!!!



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