



TACKBOARD

The monthly newsletter of the Vancouver Secondary Teachers' Association

VSTA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday, May 14, 2019

4PM at Tupper

Members will receive financial reports, vote to approve the 2019-20 operating budget, and elect the VSTA Executive Committee for 2019-20. Members will also receive an update on bargaining and the building redevelopment project.

There is currently a vacancy for the Pro-D Chair as well as the Aboriginal Chair. A member can run from the floor for the Pro-D Chair and a member who self-identifies as Aboriginal can run from the floor for the Aboriginal Chair.

Door prizes will be drawn at the end of the meeting, followed by a social hour for members in the staffroom. We look forward to seeing you there!

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.

Union membership is like a gym membership. You pay your monthly dues, but you must show up and participate to become stronger.



May 1st Raise

A reminder to teachers that on May 1st we will receive a 1% salary increase as well as a .75% raise connected to the Economic Stability Dividend (ESD).



Message from the office



The VSTA Executive has been working with Vancouver District Labour Council to support student-climate-justice initiatives!

AGM 2019

As school-based preparations such as timetabling remind us next year is just around the corner, so does the VSTA Annual General Meeting. The VSTA AGM is at Tupper Secondary on May 14 at 4:00, and among other things, we will elect Executive and In-House Table Officer positions. As a commitment to make our Executive more inclusive and diverse, we are also pleased to see the newly created Aboriginal Chair position up for election. The November 2018 General Meeting made a decision to create this new role which is open to any member who self-identifies as Aboriginal. This role will be tasked with chairing a new committee to specifically engage with Aboriginal issues and teachers and bring recommendations to our VSTA Executive Committee.

VSBRFP

At the district level, the Long Range Facilities Plan (LRFP) increased tension among members and the public with discussions of closing or consolidating some schools. However, a recent letter received by all Board Chairs from Minister Rob Fleming regarding the revised Long Range Facilities Plan guidelines have extinguished imminent concerns regarding school closures and consolidations. The VSB Budget cycle is also well underway and based on information gathered through our VSTA Budget Survey, we will be taking feedback to the Trustees at the Special Board Meeting on April 23.

REMEDY 2017-18

In early April, based on the feedback collected through surveying the membership, and speaking directly with members and staff reps, the VSTA has come to an agreement with the VSB regarding inaccessible 2017-18 Remedy. Affected teachers may choose to pool ALL school remedy to secure a TTOC to support their school. If all teachers do not agree, remedy funds from 2017-18 may be used by affected teachers for resources or Pro-d. Teachers are encouraged to speak directly with staff reps for more details. This year's (2018-19) remedy continues to be available ONLY to call in TTOCs to enable co-teaching with affected the teacher or provide prep time to the affected teacher.



Bargaining is well underway and we encourage you to stay engaged with the process by logging into the BCTF Members' Portal for provincial bargaining updates. VSTA Table Officers will be visiting school sites beginning in May; we look forward to the opportunity to hear from you in person. However, please do not hesitate to reach us directly at the VSTA also.

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Terry, Treena, Katharine & Shelby

Post and Fill

The Post and Fill process as outlined in Article E.21 of the Collective Agreement. Teachers will apply for postings as category A, B, C, D, E, or F as appropriate.

SOME KEY DATES TO NOTE:

JUNE 1 or earlier	Employees informed in writing of transfer due to surplus; Copies of surplus letters must be submitted to HR.
JUNE 4-10	Spring Transfer Period 1: All continuing and temporary vacancies
JUNE 10 onwards	Interviews and offers for continuing positions only <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interviews and offers for temporary positions may only proceed upon approval from HR (may be used for placements)
JUNE 17	HR will begin placement of all unassigned continuing contract employees (unassigned Priority Group B employees)
JUNE 18-24	Spring Transfer Period 2: All continuing and temporary vacancies
JUNE 24 onwards	Interviews and offers for continuing positions only <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interviews and offers for temporary positions may only proceed upon approval from HR (may be used for placements)
AUG 13-19	Summer Posting Period
AUG 19 onwards	Interviews and offers for SPP continuing positions only <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interviews and offers for temporary positions may only proceed upon approval from HR (may be used for placements)
SEPT 3-9	2019-20 Posting Period 1

TTOCs & Field Trips

If you have a field trip planned and need to call in a TTOC to be one of the supervisors on the field trip, please ensure that you inform the TTOC in your SFE message or call the office to communicate all required information. For example, if there is a student with a behavioral issue and the TTOC may have issues, it may be best to cancel the field trip or ask admin for another staff member to cover the field trip instead. If you wish the field trip to go ahead, safety plans should be made available to the TTOC for any students that need them. It would also be prudent to request admin to print off a class list with pictures of the students if the TTOC is meant to be the lead supervisor.

If you are a TTOC and feel uncomfortable in a situation, talk to the admin to clarify your concerns regarding the field trip and safety plans procedure. It is better to ask for help than to proceed with concerns.



Teacher Regulation Branch (TRB) Fee

If you are a **TTOC** who did not work from April 1-15 or if you are a **teacher on leave**, make sure that you have paid your TRB fee. The TRB fee was deducted from the April 15 pay advice, so if you were not in receipt of a pay cheque for this period, you will need to pay it directly to the TRB yourself.

BCTF AGM 2019 Report

The AGM was held in Victoria, BC this year. Many resolutions were passed including a few that were brought forward by the VSTA. As a result, the BCTF will conduct an audit using an equity and social justice lens to identify any invisible barriers that exist to running for leadership roles. Another VSTA resolution that was passed was to lobby the government for AEDs to be added in all schools in BC. Seth Klein was the keynote speaker and addressed the delegates about the importance of supporting climate justice and supporting the student strikers. The same strikers he referenced came and spoke to the delegation about their work. The BCTF will be taking up more of the climate justice motions at the spring Rep Assembly. Various other motions were passed around policy and governance.

The VSTA congratulates the elected BCTF table officers: Teri Mooring (President), Clint Johnston (1st Vice-President), and Carole Gordon (2nd Vice-President).

Many thanks to our delegates who spent 5 days of their Spring Break to represent VSTA.



Student Climate Strikes

In light of the May 3rd National *Fridays for the Future* Student Climate Strike, the VSTA Council recently passed a motion to support the climate strikes. We encourage all members to read the section on how teachers can support the strikes and be aware that we are liable for our students' safety as we are "in locus parentis" (in the place of a parent). Teachers are at risk of consequences if they direct their students to go out and strike.

That the VSTA:

- a. Recognize that climate change:
 - i. Presents an existential threat, being a "global emergency" according to the 2018 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report
 - ii. Has already had negative impacts both internationally and in Canada, as evidenced by the breaking of heat records, prolonged and more aggressive forest fire seasons, and increased extreme weather patterns
 - iii. Is a product of inequality, with 70% of the world's global emissions caused by 100 of the world's largest companies
 - iv. Will have the biggest impact on working-class people and developing countries
 - v. Requires immediate and wide-reaching action within the next decade to avoid disaster

and therefore:

- b. Express our solidarity with climate student strikers fighting for real climate action.

Fridays For Future Canada

In August 2018, Greta Thunberg began striking for the climate. Canada's first climate strike in solidarity with Greta was Friday, November 2, 2018. By Friday, December 7, 2018, there were nine youth groups in Canada striking with Greta.

Many youths in Canada are now striking regularly. On the March 15 global climate strike, Canadian youth joined the strike in at least 85 cities.

Canada's next national strike is Friday, May 3, 2019. Youth in the USA, Australia and Mauritius plan to join the Canadians.

The climate crisis is an emergency. As Greta says, we must obey the science, work within the planetary carbon budget, follow the Paris Agreement, and the 1.5C ambition.



How can Teachers support Student Climate Strikes

1. Consider not scheduling tests on Fridays. Tests are often the biggest barrier to students' decision to participate in Climate Strikes.
2. Take opportunities within teaching time to deconstruct civil disobedience. Consider having conversations regarding civil disobedience, and discuss why civil disobedience can be effective. "An individual who breaks a law that conscience tells him is unjust, and who willingly accepts the penalty of imprisonment in order to arouse the conscience of the community over its injustice, is in reality expressing the highest respect for the law" — Martin Luther King Jr.
3. We can also discuss the importance of youth rights without saying "go out and strike" (avoid direct language that instructs students to miss school). Instead, you can use language such as "I support your rights to a healthy future." Teachers must communicate carefully as our allegiance cannot be perceived as indoctrination or permission to skip school.
4. Encourage students to have conversations with adults, especially their parents about their motives to take action. They should be encouraged to seek permission from their parents to participate in Climate Strikes.
5. Talk to other adult allies (friends and family) about the strike and encourage them and their children to attend. The VSTA has reached out to the Vancouver District Labour Council (VDLC) who have also passed motions in support of the Climate Strikes.
6. If there are curricular and core competency connections that can be made in your class, consider the option of organizing a field trip to attend a climate strike.

Attention New Teachers!

SHARE YOUR PERSPECTIVES!

Invitation to Focus Group Participants

May 30, 2019

VESTA/VSTA office
2915 Commercial Drive
4:00pm to 6:00pm



- Are you a new teacher with less than five years of experience?
- Do you have ideas for how the BCTF and VESTA/VSTA can support new teachers?
- Are you interested in learning more about your union?
- We need to hear about your experiences and insights!

The **BCTF 2050 Project** is holding focus groups throughout BC this Spring to hear about new teachers' experiences, concerns and visions for the future.

Your participation will be confidential.

Snacks and prizes will be provided.

Please RSVP to hsawyer@bctf.ca by May 20, 2019 to receive further details.

We look forward to connecting with you at our focus group session!

MAY EVENTS

MAY 1-31: Asian Heritage Month. Canadians are invited to learn more about and celebrate the many achievements and contributions of Canadians of Asian descent who, throughout history, have done so much to make Canada the culturally diverse, compassionate and prosperous nation it is today.

(<https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/asian-heritage-month/about.html>; <https://explorAsian.org/>)

MAY 1: VDLc May Day. Unite to Strike! Join the Vancouver May Day Organizing Committee in marking May Day, International Workers Day, and calling for the right to strike for all workers in Canada! (http://www.vdlc.ca/may_day_unite_to_strike)

5:30 pm Rally at West Georgia & Richards

7:00-8:30 pm Celebration at Victory Square

MAY 6-10: Canadian Mental Health Week

Mental health is a state of well-being, and we all have it. We might have a mental illness, and we might not. Either way, we can all feel well. We can all have good mental health. It is about having a sense of purpose, strong relationships, feeling connected to our communities, knowing who we are, coping with stress and enjoying life. And it's never too early or too late to get there. But it's not just about what you do for yourself, by yourself—everyone needs healthy and supportive places to work, live and learn. (<https://mentalhealthweek.ca/>)

MAY 17: International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia was created in 2004 to draw the attention to the violence and discrimination experienced by lesbian, gay, bisexuals, transgender, intersex people and all other people with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities or expressions, and sex characteristics. (<https://may17.org/canada-country-page-2019/>)

MAY 21-25: Aboriginal Awareness Week was first introduced in 1992 "with the purpose of increasing awareness of Aboriginal peoples within the federal public service"*. Aboriginal Awareness Week has largely focused on giving federal public servants an opportunity to learn more about the Métis, Inuit and First Nation peoples. Since its beginnings in 1992, Aboriginal Awareness Week has moved beyond this original mandate in order to provide meaningful events for the general public to explore contemporary Indigenous life in Canada. (<https://videa.ca/indigenous-knowledge-2/aboriginal-awareness-week/>)

On April 16 and 17, 65 teacher reps came in to the VSTA office for the **SPRING SURT** training. In the morning we had a visit from Glen Hansman who gave a bargaining update, and we discussed post and fill and remedy. In the afternoon Reps participated in one of the two following workshops: "Having Conversations" with BCTF facilitator Karen Langenmaier or "Balancing Your Professional and Union Role" with Geoff Ayi-Bonte, MA RCC.

