

CANDIDATES FOR VSTA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2020-2021

POSITION	CANDIDATE(S)	
PRESIDENT	Treena Goolieff	
1st VICE-PRESIDENT	Terry Stanway	
2nd VICE-PRESIDENT	Preet Lidder	Alyssa Reid
TREASURER	John Silver	
LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES (3)	Shelby Calman Oliver Kollar Connor Levesque Scott McKeen	Karine Ng Nancy Palejko Katharine Shipley
ABORIGINAL COMMITTEE CHAIR	Spirit Lavallee	
HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE CHAIR	Michael-Don Borason *	
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE CHAIR	Trish Mugford	Kathryn Walks *
SOCIAL & ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE CHAIR	Gabrielle Egan	
WORKING/LEARNING & BARGAINING COMMITTEE CHAIR	Karen Chong	Jesse Taylor
TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE CHAIR	Carl Janze *	
TEACHERS TEACHING ON-CALL REPRESENTATIVE	Lindsay Donaldson	Paul Falardeau
TEACHER OF COLOUR MEMBER-AT-LARGE	Sarah Ng	Sharlene Prasad
2SLGBTQ+ MEMBER-AT-LARGE	Brendan Sangster	
MEMBER-AT-LARGE (5)	Nigel Amenu-Tekaa Jelana Bighorn Karen Chong Paul Falardeau Nikitha Fester Leanne Haggglund Irving Lau Sara McGarry	Scott McKeen Karine Ng Nancy Palejko Bal Panesar Sharlene Prasad Carmen Schaedeli Jonathan Wynn

* Committee endorsed

2020-21 VSTA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CANDIDATES



FOR PRESIDENT

TREENA GOOLIEFF, VSTA Office

I am running for President, and if elected, 2020-21 would be my 4th year as a VSTA Table Officer. Over this time, I have built trusted relationships with many of you and I would like to continue to provide our membership experienced and consistent support – especially in these unprecedented times. My priority as President will be the health and safety of our members as we return to face-to-face teaching. I have productive relationships with Senior Management and I will utilize these connections to insist the highest-degree of safety protocols to protect our members. The additional focus will be on the maintenance of members' contractual rights as outlined by the Collective Agreement. I would like to thank Katharine. I admire her enormous capacity to organize, create and lead. Thank you, Katharine – you leave VSTA better than when you arrived. To members, I hope you are managing in these strange and for many - unsettling times. Take care and please let VSTA know if we can help.



FOR 1ST VICE-PRESIDENT

TERRY STANWAY, VSTA Office

Prior to this year, I taught at Van Tech for 27 years. During that period, I had several tenures on Staff Committee, chaired our school Technology and Finance Committees and served as Department Head.

I have been a member of the Executive Committee since 2011; I am currently 2nd Vice-President and previously held the roles of part-time 3d VP and Treasurer. In the community, I am a former President and current Treasurer of the Association of Neighbourhood Houses. I have been a member of the ANH Finance Committee since 2005. As part of my work with ANH, I sat on a committee which oversaw a building redevelopment with a budget of over \$20 million.

I am interested in good governance in general and how financial management influences organizational structure and governance. I look forward to working with the Executive Committee to address the challenges facing the VSTA, BCTF, and district - including the challenges presented by the potential redevelopment of the VSTA/VESTA building.



FOR 2ND VICE-PRESIDENT

PREET LIDDER, Windermere Secondary

My favourite part of ten years of teaching has been making connections with my students and colleagues amidst the hustle and bustle of life in the classroom. COVID-19 has brought to the surface what we already knew: that schools are a bedrock and lifeline for communities. In this new uncertain context and after careful consideration, I have decided to put my name forward for 2nd Vice-President.

My local and provincial experience as a Local Representative, Pro-D representative, BCTF Working/Learning Advisory Committee member, and Anti-Oppression Educators PSA Member-At-Large have left me feeling humbled, energized, and ready to serve my local in a new role. Advancing equity and inclusion and fighting for better working and learning conditions are the principles that drive my union involvement. Racial justice and feminism make us stronger. As a 2nd generation Punjabi woman, I know that representation matters and leadership should reflect our diverse school communities across Vancouver.

Let's build effective coalitions to overcome inequities and lead a new way forward for VSTA and our school communities.



FOR 2ND VICE-PRESIDENT

ALYSSA REID, Windermere Secondary

I am an art teacher at Windermere and have been Staff Rep for 5 years. As Staff Rep I have learned how to have difficult but respectful conversations with staff and admin. I have been on Executive as MAL and most recently as LR where I've had the privilege of representing your voices at BCTF Rep Assemblies. I have participated in a number of different capacities including assistant lead negotiator for our local bargaining team, TFEU liaison for 2 years, the BCTF Leadership Institute where I learned how to write grievances and further improved my skills in dealing with the Employer, and I attended Summer Conference on behalf of Health and Safety. I believe in the significance of our secondary perspective both at the local and provincial level - we are in a unique position as the only secondary local and as such we have an important role in strengthening and maintaining the position of secondary teachers. I am committed to representing the membership and would be honoured to do so as second VP.



FOR TREASURER

JOHN SILVER, John Oliver Secondary

I am currently teaching Technology Education at John Oliver Secondary. I have had several roles on the VSTA over the years including being a Member-at-Large, TTOC Committee Chair as well as serving as the Treasurer for the past year. I have been a delegate to the BCTF's AGM for the past 8 years and have also been a member of the Local Bargaining Team in the last two rounds of Local Bargaining.

I have been involved in the Finance Committee over the last few years before I was honoured to be elected as Treasurer last year. The work of the Treasurer and Finance Committee play an important role in creating a stable environment for the VSTA to attain the goals set out by the membership. If I am lucky enough to be re-elected, I will look forward to working with members to further advocate for improvements in our working conditions.



FOR LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE

SHELBY CALMAN, Lord Byng Secondary

I have been active in the VSTA since I was an early career teacher as a Social Justice Rep. In 2017, I was elected as the Social and Environmental Justice Chair for the VSTA Executive, and last year I was fortunate enough to be elected as the Part Time 2nd Vice-President. I am currently on the Executive acting as a Local Representative to the BCTF, where I have been advocating for various issues, including the funding of public over private education. This is a cause that our local has been passionate about over the last year while bargaining. I am also a facilitator for BCTF's Women in Negotiations. If I am elected again as a Local Rep, I hope to continue to fight against the push for neoliberal shifts in education, and to work on strengthening union voices across Canada by advocating for universal basic income for all workers. This is an important issue that would help protect our TTOCs against a rapidly changing and unstable economy. Thank you for your support.



FOR LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE

OLIVER KOLLAR, Tupper Secondary

I look forward to connecting our local union with the larger BCTF community. I teach an ELL program for academically struggling newcomers at Tupper Secondary. I have been inspired by our local's engagement in this momentous round of bargaining and see how greater member participation will inform what we fight for in the not so distant future. With experience in elementary and regular secondary class in various districts in BC, along with experience teaching ELL and students with diverse learning needs, I feel I can represent teachers' concerns to the BCTF to create equitable and sound policy that meets the needs of our most vulnerable students. I firmly believe that we must continue to apply an anti-oppression lens to our important labour. Through my union involvement, I have shown that I can listen intently and engage in meaningful debate that responds to the needs of all teachers across BC. I am excited to get more deeply involved with our union as a Local Representative to the BCTF.



FOR LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE

CONNOR LEVESQUE, Churchill Secondary

I am currently teaching at Churchill Secondary and am constantly inspired and energized by the passion our members bring to this profession and to the important issues facing teachers, students, and the public education community.

Having become increasingly involved in the union this year, through taking on roles of Staff Rep and PAC Liaison, I have had the opportunity to discuss and bring forward the concerns of many teachers within our Local. These roles have also demonstrated to me the power of our collective voices and the importance of engaging multiple perspectives on every issue. As your Local Representative to the BCTF, I hope to continue to cultivate an environment that listens to and values the diverse voices that represent our membership. I would strive day-in, day-out to bring forth all your voices to the BCTF to tackle the issues facing our profession. Lastly, I am a strong voice who believes in collaboration, diversity, and transparency, and, with your support, will carry these values with me as I fulfill this important role.



FOR LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE

SCOTT MCKEEN, Lord Byng Secondary

I currently teach Social Studies and English First Peoples; coach Rugby, field hockey and Girls ice hockey. At Byng I serve as a Staff Rep, PAC Rep, Staff Committee Chair, member of WLC&B, Timetable, Finance, and Pro-D Committees. From 2013 to 2019, I was Member-at-Large and in 2019-2020 I chaired the VSTA WLC&B Committee. During 2018-2019, I was a member of the VSTA Local Bargaining Team and am proud of the work we did to make meaningful improvements to the Local CBA. In the past I have represented the VSTA as a contact for the Aboriginal Education Committee at BCTF Zone meetings, was a delegate to two BCTF AGMs, and attended Local Rep Assemblies as an observer. My 7 years of involvement at the site and local levels of the VSTA, engagement with the BCTF at the Zone and Annual General meetings, and my experience in Local Bargaining have prepared me for the role of Local Rep. I respectfully ask for your support.



FOR LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE

KARINE NG, Newcomers Welcome Centre

My experience collaborating with members in multiple settings has taught me how diverse and vibrant teacher communities are (District: K-12, French, ELL, Mandarin, Resource, District Mentorship; VSTA: EC & TTOC committee; BCTF: AGM delegate, TTOC Advisory Committee, Women in Negotiation Facilitator, Anti-Oppression Educators PSA Secretary).

Representing you at the BCTF is a responsibility I will balance with the duty to listen to and participate in debates, because the decisions made impact us, and the students we care about. Locally, I continue to activate members through education, organizing and mentorship. Multiple unprecedented challenges lie ahead; I humbly offer my service to move towards a robust, sustainable future of our union by facing challenges boldly and collectively.

My grandmother taught me solidarity; my mother generosity. From both, I learned about love, hope, vision, courage, and justice that have led me to this candidacy. Lastly, as an immigrant-settler, I am committed to decolonizing myself, my practices, and my relations through my engagement in the union.



FOR LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE

NANCY PALEJKO, John Oliver Secondary

I currently teach languages and psychology, and I have been a Member-at-Large for the last 8 years. With this experience, I am no longer cowed by the need to speak up when necessary. I have also learned (hopefully!) to curtail my urge to speak when the important bit has already been said.

In whatever position I hold on the VSTA Executive I will continue to speak up when I feel more clarity is needed or when something uncomfortable or unpopular needs to be discussed. I will continue to make sure lines of communication are free flowing both from us to the leadership and vice versa.

My particular interest lies in increasing member involvement in and understanding of our union and helping our members understand how much the BCTF and the VSTA actually support us. I think our union is one of our few sources of hope in maintaining our high BC educational standards in these times of market driven ethics.



FOR LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE

KATHARINE SHIPLEY, VSTA Office

Local Representatives (LRs) are the conduit between the Local (VSTA) and the BCTF. LRs represent VSTA members at three Representative Assemblies (RAs) and the BCTF AGM. LRs keep the BCTF grounded in teacher realities on the ground and conversely, keep their Local informed of issues at the Provincial level. My service to Vancouver teachers as VSTA President/Vice-President for the last 5 years, and my previous experiences as Staff Rep, Pro-D Chair, Staff Committee Chair and VSTA EC member have informed my understanding of what teachers care about, representation and the power of collective action. The current pandemic has highlighted both stark societal inequities, which show up in our schools every day, and the fragility of our societal structures. A strong BCTF will keep the privatization/corporatization agenda at bay through collective awareness and action & continue to advocate for a strong public education system. As LR I would seek input at EC, Council and schools for motions to take to the BCTF and I would apprise EC, Council and members on the BCTF with regular reports.



FOR ABORIGINAL COMMITTEE CHAIR

SPIRIT LAVALLEE, Outreach Alternative (Britannia Secondary)

Tânsi, Hadîh, Éyswayel, Tanúyap. I greet you in Nehiyawewin, Wet'suwet'en, Halq'eméylem & Skwxwú7mesh. I am Cree/Metis & Wet'suwet'en. I was born & raised on Unceded Territories of the Coast Salish Peoples. I teach Social Studies & English in alternative education. I had the privilege to fill this role in February; I only just started connecting with our membership when the pandemic halted what I hoped to accomplish this year. It has been my goal to improve experiences for Indigenous students. It is my passion to see a more just school culture for all students to learn and understand Indigenous content, philosophies and issues; which includes increasing Indigenous educators. We have a unique opportunity to determine the direction of how this committee represents Indigenous educators and works with allies in Indigenous education. I'm excited to continue work with this committee in any capacity; however I would be humbled to have your support to continue as chair.



FOR HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE CHAIR—*Committee Endorsed*

MICHAEL-DON BORASON, Britannia Secondary

I am the Britannia Learning Assistance/Life Skills Program Teacher, having served as the Health & Safety Standing Committee Chair for the past 2 years. This year, I continued as the VSTA representative on the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), the District Emergency Management Team, as well as co-chair of our VSB District Health & Safety Committee. I was a member of the BCTF Provincial Health & Safety Committee (HSAC) and a H&S Facilitator, where I traveled to various school districts delivering SURTs and presentations to colleagues throughout British Columbia. As Chair, I endeavoured to be a source of information and leadership for our Health & Safety Reps, who do great work for their colleagues at their school sites. They have my respect and my thanks for this and their endorsement.

It would be my privilege to continue in my role as Health & Safety Standing Committee Chair for the next school year. I thank you in advance for your support!



FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE CHAIR

TRISH MUGFORD, District Learning Services (Templeton Secondary)

Professional development is central to my role as a District Mentoring Support Teacher, BCTF workshop facilitator and Parent Presenter. Mentoring and Community Building, Assessment, CSL, Anti-racism, Revised Curriculum and TTOC workshops are a few topics I regularly cover. Better stated: I get together with teachers and pro d breaks out. As the Pro D Committee Chair I commit to working hard with Chairs from all our schools, bringing a unique perspective, experience and ability to support teacher led pro d as well as helping coordinate larger collaborative events. I am part of a team that helped organize and facilitate the Curriculum Implementation days last year. This year I have worked alongside DRTs on the Tom Schimmer days. District teachers do not have a Pro D chair and yet we are deeply passionate and committed to professional development. Joining the PD Committee would be a wonderful opportunity for us to connect, learn and grow together, something that teachers do best.



FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE CHAIR—*Committee Endorsed*

KATHRYN WALKS, John Oliver Secondary

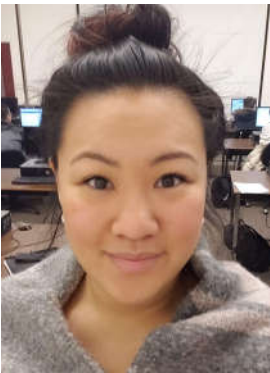
I am very honoured to be endorsed for the position of Professional Development Chair. This year I was inspired by the enthusiasm and collegiality of all those giving their time to plan and inspire dynamic professional development opportunities. The past year has seen great participation by school reps on the committee, dedicated to bringing new opportunities to professional development, including helping dozens of teachers access new funding to pursue pro-d that has always been out of reach. With the ongoing implementation of the new curriculum, re-examining assessment practices, and the hiring of many teachers new to the district, the need for responsive professional development is greater than ever. This year I plan to use my 25 years of experience adapting to change and working in the district to further the interests and values of the dedicated secondary teachers of Vancouver.



FOR SOCIAL & ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE CHAIR

GABRIELLE EGAN, Ideal Mini School, Churchill Secondary

I am excited to put my name forward for the position of Social and Environmental Justice Chair. I have been involved in social justice work for a long time, however, it wasn't until I attended the Cross Border Conference — where a panel of youth activists spoke about the importance of climate education in schools — that I understood the significance of union advocacy. The students' desire to make the world a better place has inspired me to serve within our union. As a new addition to the VSTA, I'm humbled by all the incredible work teachers are doing across the district to take action on important issues facing teachers and students. My hope is to further support these member-led projects through the Social and Environmental Justice Committee. I'm particularly passionate about making schools safer places for marginalized students and teachers. I'm committed to engaging new members and ensuring that all voices are heard and represented within our local.



FOR WORKING/LEARNING CONDITIONS & BARGAINING COMMITTEE CHAIR

KAREN CHONG, Gladstone Secondary

As we persist through COVID-19, it has become apparent the past 'normal' is not our future normal. I believe this is our best opportunity for progress, as we gaze forward towards a greater vision for our society through education and the WLC standards of the teaching profession. I have valued and grown from my experiences with our current leadership and fellow members, as the Gladstone WLC/B representative. It has been a privilege to collaborate with colleagues as they share their concerns and experiences, and I am grateful for this opportunity to serve our students, profession, and union. My past professional experiences have taught that high standards and practices of working conditions have positive, lasting effects. I humbly endeavor to equitably represent all our diverse membership and professional WLC/B needs by listening to our members and, in tandem with our committees and leadership, affect action to strengthen our professional body. Thank you for your support!



FOR WORKING/LEARNING CONDITIONS & BARGAINING COMMITTEE CHAIR

JESSE TAYLOR, Magee Secondary

I am the Mathematics Department Head at Magee, and I am honoured to stand as a candidate for the WLC/B Chairperson for 2020-2021. It is my belief that the person in this role must have extensive experience both as a chairperson and in matters pertaining to the collective agreement; I submit that I am that candidate. I have been a WLC/B representative for 4 years, Timetabling Committee Chair and Staff Rep for 3 years, and this year I have also sat as Staff Committee Chair and as a Member-at-Large on the Executive. I also sat on the VSTA team at the "Best Efforts" arbitration sessions this past November. Throughout all of my diverse union work, my dedication to the WLC/B committee has always been anchored in the belief that our role as a union is to defend the terms of the contract in the workplace and collective bargaining as a principle. It is with this view that I assert I am the ideal candidate to chair this committee, and I thank you for your support.



FOR TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE CHAIR—*Committee Endorsed*

CARL JANZE, Templeton Secondary

I have had the privilege of serving as the Technology Committee Chair this year. I wanted to share our accomplishments, but reflecting on the significant and unprecedented changes we experienced this year, I can't find the words. Instead, I will say that I have the honour of being endorsed by the Committee to continue our work next year, and to share two things about myself.

Attending my first BCTF AGM, to be part of Representational Democracy in action was a humbling experience. It is a significant part of the core that I reflect upon when I am called to act in service to and in the name of my colleagues.

My role as Technology Committee chair is to keep the conversation about technology focused on it's value to Teaching and Learning. New technologies must let us do something we already do much more easily, or, with minimum effort, allow us to do something we could not do at all. Technology is, and always should be, a tool to support learning, and never the learning itself.



FOR TEACHERS TEACHING ON-CALL REPRESENTATIVE

LINDSAY DONALDSON, Vancouver Technical Secondary

2020 marks my 20th anniversary in teaching and I still love it as much as ever! I've taught Home Economics and Special Education, elementary and secondary. In 2011, I accepted a half-time contract in Home Ec so I could TOC while my children were young. Early in my career, I served as Staff Rep, sat on VSB Advisory Committees, and on the VSTA Executive. For the past few years, I have been the Home Economics Department Head, the Staffing and Timetable Chair, and a Staff Rep at Van Tech. This year, I returned to the Executive as TTOC Chair. My connections throughout the district and experiences as a TTOC provide me with the confidence I need to liaise between TTOCs, Executive, and Administration. If elected again, I will continue with all endeavors mentioned in the TTOC Annual Report. Beyond that, I will ensure the TTOC Committee develops Terms of Reference while exploring ways for early career teachers to have a stronger voice on Executive. Thank you for your consideration.



FOR TEACHERS TEACHING ON-CALL REPRESENTATIVE

PAUL FALARDEAU, TEACHER TEACHING ON-CALL

Reflecting on my year as Member-at-Large, it has been an honour to do this work and to be a part of the labour movement. This has been a year of growth and learning. From bargaining and a TTOC shortage to the global pandemic, our flexibility, drive and resilience as educators have been tested. I hope to bring this experience and resolve to another year of union work. I have been a Vancouver TTOC for two years, working and living the daily challenges and rewards. Additionally, I've had the chance to meet with, talk and listen to this city's many dedicated teachers, both contract and on-call, in their diverse and dynamic circumstances. From you, I hear a call for equity, transparency and a strong union to advocate for these principles. As TTOC chair, I would like to represent you in this way. On-call workers are the backbone of our system and I believe successful teacher's unions engage and empower TTOCs and foster a supportive, member-driven community. Thank you for considering me.



FOR TEACHER OF COLOUR MEMBER-AT-LARGE

SARAH NG, Britannia Secondary

I am the Teacher Librarian at Britannia Secondary School and I also have twenty years of teaching experience in English, Special Education, and Fine Arts. I am ready and willing to do the Union work that this job entails. At Britannia, I have served as Technology Rep, WLC&B Rep, and I am currently a VSTA Rep. I have chaired my school's Staff Committee and Staffing and Timetable Committee.

As a single parent, a woman of colour, and a person living with a chronic health condition, I believe I can bring a number of valuable perspectives to the table. The Union supported me when I was struggling in the classroom, when I became ill, and when I was going through the adoption process: I was listened to and given the help and tools I needed to continue working in the job I love.

It would be a gift and a privilege to sit on the EC as your Teacher of Colour Member-at-Large.



FOR TEACHER OF COLOUR MEMBER-AT-LARGE

SHARLENE PRASAD, Prince of Wales Secondary

I am an English, Social Studies, and ELL teacher with a freshly completed MA in Library Studies. I am a new member of the union, so I think the best way for me to learn is to jump right in. I am passionate about bringing issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion to our schools. I am a woman of Indian heritage who has grown up on Coast Salish territories. My ancestors came here after generations of indentured servitude in Fiji. I believe that the Teacher of Colour member-at-large's role could be to work towards decolonizing education, hearing the voices of teachers of colour, and answering the calls of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. In both my teaching and library studies degree, I focused on social justice, equity, and Indigenous studies. I feel ready to bring this knowledge to the Teacher of Colour position. More importantly, I am a strong voice that knows when to speak and when to listen. I intend to hear, witness, and represent all of our union members.



FOR 2SLGBTQ+ MEMBER-AT-LARGE

BRENDAN SANGSTER, Kitsilano Secondary

Hello VSTA members! For the last seven years I have been teaching proudly in the VSB in all parts of the city. Presently I teach Art and Drama at Kitsilano Secondary. My personal journey of my own queerness has grown with me as I have grown as a teacher over the years. From becoming a SOGI School Lead, facilitating ProD, and starting events like Pronoun Day and the Staff Drag Show at Britannia, I have done my best to align my experiences as a gay man with my staff and student allies within our school communities. While I cannot speak for the entire community, I can do my best to bring the issues, needs, and experiences of the queer community to our union and support allyship for our colleagues and students. I volunteer myself equipped with my own experiences and I come prepared to learn and listen together. I feel I would make an excellent addition to the team as the 2SLGBTQ+ Member-at-Large for the upcoming year. With gratitude, Brendan Sangster (He/Him)



FOR MEMBER-AT-LARGE

NIGEL AMENU-TEKAA, Vancouver Alternate Secondary School

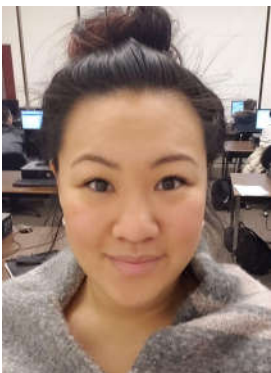
I am a Science/PE teacher in VASS, artist, and former competitive athlete-turned-coach. I am a second-generation settler born and raised in Alberta, of Ghanaian and Polish ancestry. My teaching career began in Kuwait, and while in Alberta/BC, I mainly worked with students from marginalized populations and of all ages. My scope of experience, both in and outside formal public education settings, has taught me the importance of ensuring we hear peoples' voices and appreciate the role unions have in protecting professional views. As the experts of our classrooms, we have the privilege of advocating for ourselves, students, and the classroom cultures/communities we work hard to establish. The proper way to represent and stand up for what is best is through ensuring we hear the voices of all people. Through utilizing thoughtful action and dialogue with each other, it would be my honour to serve you and carry your voice forward as a member-at-large of the executive council of VSTA.



FOR MEMBER-AT-LARGE

JELANA BIGHORN, Vancouver Technical Secondary

Since joining the VSB in 2006 as a Socials teacher, I have gained an immense appreciation for the complex issues that arise as we work to recreate the education system into one that serves the principles outlined in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report. Following the dictates of my Lakota culture I spent my initial years within the school system listening and observing as my first step in learning. Having now gained insight through direct experience and in-depth study, I have worked collaboratively with my colleagues and administrators to bring pressing matters related to indigenous education. At VT, we have successfully run English FP 12 and multiple blocks of BC FP 12 and Contemporary Indigenous Studies 12. The culture of the school has transformed and I bring that experience with me to the table. Reconciliation can be achieved through meaningful dialogue and thoughtful action. With that lofty goal in mind I will work tirelessly for the development of our union.



FOR MEMBER-AT-LARGE

KAREN CHONG, Gladstone Secondary

As we persist through COVID-19, it has become apparent the past 'normal' is not our future normal. I believe this is our best opportunity for progress, as we gaze forward towards a greater vision for our society through education and the WLC standards of the teaching profession. I have valued and grown from my experiences with our current leadership and fellow members, as the Gladstone WLC/B representative. It has been a privilege to collaborate with colleagues as they share their concerns and experiences, and I am grateful for this opportunity to serve our students, profession, and union. My past professional experiences have taught that high standards and practices of working conditions have positive, lasting effects. I humbly endeavor to equitably represent all our diverse membership and professional WLC/B needs by listening to our members and, in tandem with our committees and leadership, affect action to strengthen our professional body. Thank you for your support!



FOR MEMBER-AT-LARGE

PAUL FALARDEAU, TEACHER TEACHING ON-CALL

Reflecting on my year as Member-at-Large, it has been an honour to do this work and to be a part of the labour movement. This has been a year of growth and learning. From bargaining and a TTOC shortage to the global pandemic, our flexibility, drive and resilience as educators have been tested. I hope to bring this experience and resolve to another year of union work. I have been a Vancouver TTOC for two years, working and living the daily challenges and rewards. Additionally, I've had the chance to meet with, talk and listen to this city's many dedicated teachers, both contract and on-call, in their diverse and dynamic circumstances. From you, I hear a call for equity, transparency and a strong union to advocate for these principles. As Member-at-large, I would like to represent you in this way. On-call workers are the backbone of our system and I believe successful teacher's unions engage and empower TTOCs and foster a supportive, member-driven community. Thank you for considering me.



FOR MEMBER-AT-LARGE

NIKITHA FESTER, Vancouver Technical Secondary

It is with a sincere interest that I am submitting my candidature for the position of Member-at-Large for the VSTA. I feel that I am a strong candidate for this position because I am an effective communicator, problem solver and empathetic listener. Over the past two years, as a member of the Executive, I have been a member of the Diversity Committee at the VSB. This committee has allowed me to share with the employer goals and intentions of the union, provide proposals for initiatives and provide feedback on decisions that the employer is making. Concretely, I was a part of the working group that put together the Youth Anti Racism summit "Whats the move?" and facilitated workshops offered for teacher ProD on navigating difficult conversations. I would love to continue this work in the coming year and would be grateful for the opportunity to do so.



FOR MEMBER-AT-LARGE

LEANNE HAGLUND, Pinnacle Program, VASS

I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce myself: I'm a teacher with the Pinnacle Program, Vancouver Alternate Secondary School. I work with at-risk youth, age 16-19, in downtown Vancouver.

Over the past year, I took a step back from the EC to focus on my Master's in Counselling Psychology. Before this, I served as the VSTA Professional Development Chair. In this role, I had the opportunity to work on complex professional development concerns.

I've served as the Chairperson for the VSTA Executive and VASS Staff Committee. In this capacity, I learned how to collaborate with a team, listen to differing perspectives, and ensure all voices are heard. I've also had the honour of attending BCTF AGMs and the BCTF Women's Institute. I learned the inner workings of the union and issues of relevance for members.

Being involved in the union (in a variety of capacities) has allowed me to grow professionally as an educator. I welcome the opportunity to serve as Member-at-Large.



FOR MEMBER-AT-LARGE

IRVING LAU, John Oliver Secondary

I grew up in a union household - my mother was a seamstress and shop steward and my father was a unionized courier. I intimately understand the power and benefits of collective action. In my teaching career thus far, I am proud to have witnessed the critical role that our union plays in protecting public education and improving working conditions for staff and learning conditions for students, and I see a need for more teachers to become more active in their union participation to ensure and sustain these gains. If given the honour of being elected, I commit to providing honest, thoughtful consideration on matters while also advocating for a diversity of views, perspectives, and opinions. Thank you for your consideration.



FOR MEMBER-AT-LARGE

SARA MCGARRY, Templeton Secondary

Currently, I teach Templeton students remotely from my basement. In February, I knew that I wanted to seek re-election as Member-at-Large and continue to serve on the Executive Committee. I have been on the VSTA executive for five years, and have served on BCTF committees, facilitated BCTF workshops on Social Justice and TTOC issues across the province, attended many BCTF conferences, and BCTF AGMs. I continue to learn and be inspired by the dedication of our staff reps, committee members, and by the work that all teachers do to support students and colleagues.

In February, what I didn't know, was that I would be further inspired by teachers navigating very different and difficult times, and, as always, recreating public education within new constraints. As we move forward, our union advocacy will be shifting to prioritize health and safety, to protect our most vulnerable members and students, and to reimagine schools and classroom spaces. I would be honoured to take on this challenge.



FOR MEMBER-AT-LARGE

SCOTT MCKEEN, Lord Byng Secondary

I currently teach Social Studies and English First Peoples; coach Rugby, field hockey and Girls ice hockey. At Byng I serve as a Staff Rep, PAC Rep, Staff Committee Chair, member of WLC&B, Timetable, Finance, and Pro-D Committees. From 2013 to 2019, I was Member-at-Large and in 2019-2020 I Chaired the VSTA WLC&B Committee. During 2018-2019, I was a member of the VSTA Local Bargaining Team and am proud of the work we did to make meaningful improvements to the Local CBA. In the past I have represented the VSTA as a contact for the Aboriginal Education Committee at BCTF Zone meetings, was a delegate to two BCTF AGMs, and attended Local Rep Assemblies as an observer. My 7 years of involvement at the site and local levels of the VSTA, engagement with the BCTF at the Zone and Annual General meetings, and my experience in Local Bargaining have prepared me for this role. I respectfully ask for your support.



FOR MEMBER-AT-LARGE

KARINE NG, Newcomers Welcome Centre

My experience collaborating with members in multiple settings has taught me how diverse and vibrant teacher communities are (District: K-12, French, ELL, Mandarin, Resource, District Mentorship; VSTA: EC & TTOC committee; BCTF: AGM delegate, TTOC Advisory Committee, Women in Negotiation Facilitator, Anti-Oppression Educators PSA Secretary).

Representing you at the VSTA is a responsibility I will balance with the duty to listen to and participate in discussions at the Executive Committee, because the decisions made impact us, and the students we care about. I continue to activate members through education, organizing and mentorship. Multiple unprecedented challenges lie ahead; I humbly offer my service to move towards a robust, sustainable future of our union by facing challenges boldly and collectively.

My grandmother taught me solidarity; my mother generosity. From both, I learned about love, hope, vision, courage, and justice that have led me to this candidacy. Lastly, as an immigrant-settler, I am committed to decolonizing myself, my practices, and my relations through my engagement in the union.



FOR MEMBER-AT-LARGE

NANCY PALEJKO, John Oliver Secondary

I currently teach languages and psychology, and I have been a Member-at-Large for the last 8 years. With this experience, I am no longer cowed by the need to speak up when necessary. I have also learned (hopefully!) to curtail my urge to speak when the important bit has already been said.

In whatever position I hold on the VSTA Executive I will continue to speak up when I feel more clarity is needed or when something uncomfortable or unpopular needs to be discussed. I will continue to make sure lines of communication are free flowing both from us to the leadership and vice versa.

My particular interest lies in increasing member involvement in and understanding of our union and helping our members understand how much the BCTF and the VSTA actually support us. I think our union is one of our few sources of hope in maintaining our high BC educational standards in these times of market driven ethics. Thank you for taking the time to vote in this less than ideal venue.



FOR MEMBER-AT-LARGE

BAL PANESAR, Hamber Secondary

Hello everyone, my name is Bal Panesar! I have been an English teacher at Eric Hamber for over twenty years. My first involvement with the VSTA was with the Gender Equity Committee (now Social Justice) on which I served for several years. This introduction to the VSTA lead me to take on a much bigger role as a staff rep. It has been rewarding to serve my school community by getting to know the staff and providing support to my colleagues. Being a staff rep has also made me a more thoughtful and transparent department head. Coming from a staunchly proud UK Labour Party background, and being a strong Social Justice advocate, I have gained many skills from being a part of our local. I have attended the BCTF AGM twice, and it was an amazing experience to see our federation in operation. I would like to run for member-at-large and share my knowledge and experience to create a strong and viable Executive Committee. Thank you for considering me for this position!



FOR MEMBER-AT-LARGE

SHARLENE PRASAD, Prince of Wales Secondary

See statement for Teacher of Colour Member-at-Large



FOR MEMBER-AT-LARGE

CARMEN SCHAEDELI, Prince of Wales Secondary

I am currently teaching English at Prince of Wales where I have worked as a Staff Rep for a total of 5 years. During this time, I have come to appreciate the incredible responsibility that comes with serving our membership. Working through the many challenges that come with this role, including having difficult conversations and resolving conflicts, has given me the experience I need to be an effective member of the Executive Committee. One of my priorities is increasing union participation among our members. I am an empathic listener and I am action oriented. I have a solid understanding of the challenges facing teachers and I am ready to do the work that is necessary to achieve our goals.



FOR MEMBER-AT-LARGE

JONATHAN WYNN, Windermere Secondary

I am a Life Skills Teacher at Windermere Secondary School and I am seeking election as a Member-at-Large to the VSTA. A graduate of Lord Byng Secondary, I returned to Vancouver after teaching in London, UK and completing a Master of Education degree in New Zealand. As a new teacher to Vancouver I have seen first-hand the struggles that new teachers and TTOC's must overcome to work in this district. At Windermere I have served as a Staff Rep for two years. This has given me valuable experience having difficult, yet respectful, conversations with administrators. Working in the special education sector has given me a unique perspective on the challenges that alternate programs must overcome. As a Member-at-Large I would work hard to ensure the fair treatment of all teachers. Thank you for your support.