



TACKBOARD

The monthly newsletter of the Vancouver Secondary Teachers' Association

Message from the office

Dear Colleague,

After a long and sometimes heated debate at the Winter Representative Assembly (January 31-February 1), the BCTF has formulated an action plan to support the Bargaining Team. You will have received an email from the BCTF that provides a thorough summary and the VSTA In-House Table Officers have discussed at it length as well with members during school visits. Public education in BC continues to be underfunded. Beginning teachers especially are underpaid – no wonder there is a recruitment and retention challenge that affects us all. The BCTF continues to remain hopeful that talks will start up again through the assistance of the mediator and the Bargaining team will need our full support, given that we are sitting across from the same people at BCPSEA we sat across from under the Liberals.

On top of the current Bargaining impasse and funding challenges, we are concerned to see the Ministry of Education move in the direction of “quantifying” student success. The Numeracy and Literacy assessments are part of the “Framework for Student Success”. Nine school districts in BC are serving as pilot districts (Vancouver is NOT one of them) and we look to see what the MOE will do with the data collected from these districts at the end of the year. We have taken your feedback and concerns regarding the disruption caused by the literacy/numeracy assessments to the Employer and will continue to press them to come up with a workable solution.

Thank you to all of you who filled out the VSTA Budget survey – we were able to share VSTA Budget priorities with the Board (resources & flex budgets, concerns about staffing following the Jackson arbitration on G & Q designated students, equipment maintenance, mentor teachers) and the connection to morale on all these fronts. The VSTA Executive passed a motion to request that the VSB find a way to fund and run Indigenous focused courses in the current curriculum as a concrete action in support of Reconciliation. We have brought this request to every forum we can – we know that change can be slow, but we hope that by starting this conversation we will see a shift from the Trustees’ claim to support reconciliation to action on the ground. In the words of Margaret J. Wheatley, “There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about.”

In the meantime, stay warm and dry – only four more weeks until Spring Break!

In solidarity,

*Katharine, Treena
& Jerry*



Temporary Supplemental Pro-D Fund



In May 2019, the District Professional Development Committee created a new Professional Development fund to support further pro-d opportunities for teachers. The Temporary Supplemental Fund provides teachers access to Professional Development funds up to **\$1000** in addition to the school-based and Collaborative Inquiry funds already available.

Temporary Supplement Pro-D Funds may include, but are not limited to: workshops, guest speakers, conference fees (may include travel and accommodation costs to attend conferences), professional resources, in-district initiatives.

VSTA members are permitted to apply and will be reimbursed for Summer Pro-D activities. Those teachers who submitted applications for Summer 2019 Pro-D activities will now be reimbursed these costs.

The District Professional Development Committee will continue to accept and grant applications for Temporary Supplemental Pro-D until the allotted funds have been depleted.

For further information and to review the Temp Supp application, visit the VSTA website or go to <https://tinyurl.com/TempSuppPD>.

Remedy 2017-2018

If you still have Remedy owing from 2017-2018, please check with your Staff Rep to see how much is left. Teachers have used Remedy for Pro-D, field trips, classroom supplies, bringing in guest teachers, etc.

The VSTA would like to get these monies spent on classroom resources or Pro-D **by June 2020**.

Please submit all your receipts at once to make accounting easier for us.



Message from the BCTF Social Justice department

Many BC teachers, students, and families are experiencing feelings of despair and hopelessness as we witness the devastation in Australia brought on by fires sweeping across portions of the country. As with fires, flooding, and sea level rises around the planet, global warming is the indisputable cause of the fires in Australia. Yet many of us are concerned and dismayed with our governments' limited commitment to taking action. The reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) are clear: unless we cut global carbon dioxide emissions in half by 2030 and eliminate them entirely by 2050, our planet will experience catastrophic and irreversible effects. Yet few governments, including our own, are taking the initiative to adequately follow the IPCC guidelines.

Instead of giving in to a sense of hopelessness, we can all be inspired by the actions of youth around the world,

who, through climate strikes, are telling our leaders know that they must take immediate action. At the BCTF Fall Representative Assembly, delegates from across the province passed the following motion:

Solidarity with youth climate strikers

That the Federation encourage locals and members to participate in demonstrative action in solidarity with the youth climate strikers and the global climate strikes.

For information on upcoming climate strike dates or to help plan a climate strike in your community, visit the **Fridays for Future** (<https://fridaysforfuture.org/>) website. This website also provides resources to support youth in taking action locally. Check out this **BCTF document** (<https://tinyurl.com/bctf-climate-strike-res>), originally developed for the September 2019 global climate strike, for tools and resources to help teachers support youth climate activists.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

The VSTA has a list of resources with a Canadian focus at <http://vsta.ca/2020/01/black-history-month/> for teachers and students. African-Canadian contributions to our communities, including the Labour movement, are largely unknown – we can all contribute to teaching and celebrating Black Excellence in Canada. If you know of other Canadian resources that should be on the list, please let us know.

BCTF Change.org petition

The BCTF has started a petition on change.org to put pressure on the government to invest in kids and their teachers.

<https://tinyurl.com/BCTF-petition>

PLEASE SIGN AND SHARE

LEAPING INTO ACTION

TEACHERS RISE FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

A SOCIAL JUSTICE CONFERENCE FOR BC, WASHINGTON, AND OREGON TEACHERS

**SATURDAY,
FEBRUARY 29, 2020**

12:00 PM - 7:30 PM
KWANTLEN PARK SECONDARY
(10441 132 STREET, SURREY, BC)



CROSSBORDERCONFERENCE.COM



VSTA/VESTA Building Redevelopment Update

The VSTA/VESTA building redevelopment project is progressing slowly but progressing nonetheless.

Recent developments and next steps include:

Recent Developments:

- Hosted neighbourhood Open House on December 11th
- Completed Pre-Application Process and submitted Letter of Inquiry to City Planning
- Received approval from City Planning to launch formal Rezoning Request

Next Steps:

- Complete the Rezoning Application Check-List
- Host City-Led Open House
- Refine Financial Modelling
- Identify Financing Options
- Obtain final approval from Membership to proceed



What we aspire to:

Our offices, retail space, and 27 rental units, affordable for teachers

An example of our building's current condition:

A length of rebar protruding out of our back parking lot after being caught by the snow plow.



International Women's Day — Sunday, March 8

An equal world is an enabled world. Individually, we're all responsible for our own thoughts and actions - all day, every day. We can actively choose to challenge stereotypes, fight bias, broaden perceptions, improve situations and celebrate women's achievements. Collectively, each one of us can help create a gender equal world. Let's all be **#EachforEqual**.

PINK SHIRT DAY



This year, **Pink Shirt Day**, or **Anti-bullying Day**, is on **FEBRUARY 26**. It is a day when people come together by wearing **pink shirts** to school or work to show they are against bullying. The focus for 2020 is **"lift each other up."**



Welcome SPIRIT LAVALLEE, elected as **ABORIGINAL EDUCATION CHAIR** at the January Council Meeting.

"I am Cree/Metis and Wet'suwet'en, a mother of four and was born and raised on unceded Coast Salish Territory of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil Watuth Peoples in Vancouver, BC.

I have been teaching at Outreach Alternate School at Britannia since 2011.

I am excited for this opportunity to work with Indigenous educators and allies to shape this role."

29th Annual Women's Memorial March

For missing and murdered women
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2019

womensmemorialmarch.wordpress.com



VSTA TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE DIRECTION 2020

Carl Janze is the Chair of the VSTA Technology Committee. For the duration of this year and leading into 2020-2021, the Committee is considering the following directions:

1. Entering into a discussion at the District level with the aim of more fully developing *Technology Integration for Teaching and Learning*. Exploring, as a departure point, what would be necessary to more fully implement existing tools such as Classroom Notebook and Teams for use with and by students.
2. Developing clear guidelines, possibly extended to District Policies and Procedures, regarding device use in classrooms. This discussion needs to contemplate issues related to equity of access and regulating when self-regulation fails.
3. In discussion with District staff, exploring the possibility of expanding the number of technology-capable, bookable "Lab" spaces in each High School.
4. Advocating for a suitable Inservice/Mentor-release model to support teachers in their adoption of the Employee Portal and Digital Tools such as Teams, OneDrive, and Cherwell (the new FootPrints).
5. In discussion with District staff, exploring the possibilities of standardizing procurement, licensing, and related practice regarding course software.
6. In discussion with District staff, exploring the possibility of implementing a predictable schedule for upgrades to the Employee Portal & Digital Tools.

Other matters that will be on the Committee's agendas include:

- IT considerations related to Communicating Student Learning
- IT support for Career Education courses (CE 8 and 9, CLE, CLC and Capstone)
- ePortfolios as a tool for documenting growth and learning
- Issues related to teacher risk and liability stemming from their use of IT

Please feel free to contact Carl via the VSTA office email: tech@vsta.ca.



Tackboard is a newsletter produced and distributed to all secondary teachers from September to June. It is designed to meet the needs of the VSTA members and contains information on an array of subjects, ranging from the VTF Collective Agreement to current news about the state of public education and its implications for Local 39. **In addition to our usual paper copies distributed to members, you will be emailed a link to the latest issue of Tackboard via Campaigner.**

Current and past issues of Tackboard are also available on the VSTA website at <http://vsta.ca/publications/tackboard/>.

VTF & VSTA General Meetings

On Tuesday January 21, a Vancouver Teacher's Federation (VTF) meeting was held at Tupper in the hopes that we would be able to ratify our local bargaining package as well as make amendments to the VTF Constitution regarding quorum. Ironically, quorum was not met and the meeting dissolved allowing each Association to proceed to their respective general meetings where their BCTF AGM delegations were elected. Along with your previously elected Local Reps (LRs) Shelby Calman, Preet Lidder and Alyssa Reid, the VSTA elected to send the following members to the BCTF AGM on March 14-17:

Michael-Don Borason, Talya Florian, Treena Goolieff, Connor Levesque, Sylvia Metzner, Sarah Ng, Rod Ofreneo, Nancy Palejko, Nigel Reedman, Carmen Schaedeli, Katharine Shipley, John Silver, Matt Sinclair, Terry Stanway, Jesse Taylor, Erika Thompson, and Kathryn Walks with Lindsay Donaldson and Paul Falardeau elected as Alternates.

Terry Stanway provided the membership with an update on the condition of the VTF building as well as where we are in the process of redevelopment with the City of Vancouver. Treena Goolieff also briefly updated the membership on the status of provincial bargaining.

The **VTF General Meeting was reconvened** on January 27, at the VTF office where the local bargaining package was successfully ratified, and the VTF constitution was changed to read:

THAT a quorum for a general meeting shall consist of 70 VTF members, but in the event that a General Meeting fails through lack of quorum to accomplish the business on the Agenda, the meeting shall recess for 10 minutes, and the members present following the recess shall constitute quorum.

THANK YOU to all members who have taken the time to attend the General Meetings.



Could you be missing out on salary?

The Teacher Qualification Service (TQS) has made some changes in its policies. Please go to <https://bctf.ca/SalaryAndBenefits.aspx?id=55786> to make sure you don't miss out on salary.

PLEASE NOTE: TQS reviews or upgrades will not be processed automatically. You must apply to the TQS in order to receive a review or upgrade.