

# Opportunity for BIPOC members in VESTA/VSTA

## Talking Circles to discuss policing in schools

BIPOC-identifying members of VESTA and VSTA are invited to participate in a Talking Circle to share and discuss your experiences as BIPOC educators working in schools with police.

Grounded in Indigenous ceremony and cultural practices, the Talking Circle, guided by Vanessa Tait will invite your insight into the relationship between police and school practices, and a broader conversation around creating and sustaining safety in Vancouver schools. This is part of a BCTF Research project to understand BIPOC educator perspectives and experiences related to policing in schools.

### **Options** (please select one)

**Virtual:** February 16, 2022 at 1:30 p.m.

**Virtual:** February 28, 2022 at 1:30 p.m.

Half-day LOA will be provided to participants.

### **To register**

If you would like to participate, please register [here](#) by 5:00 p.m. on February 1. You will receive further information upon registering.

# IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

## Please read prior to attending

### About Talking Circles

The Talking Circle is a traditional way of communicating and sharing, which is practiced by Indigenous people here on Turtle Island and is a part of their traditional ceremonies and customs. The talking circle honours what the participants have to say in a sacred and safe space.

To begin the Talking Circle, the lead facilitator begins with a smudge (using sage) and a prayer to begin in a good way. The facilitator will introduce the concept of the Talking Circle and although it is hosted in a virtual space, a sacred item will be carried by the facilitator. The participants are asked if they would like to bring an item with them to the virtual space; they are welcome to as well.

The facilitator will allow space for each participant a time to speak and a time to listen in a respectful way, without interrupting or being interrupted in the virtual circle.

While information shared by participants will be documented and shared for research purposes, no person will be identified in any publicly shared report. All potentially identifiable information will be removed, as per BCTF Research protocols. This gives participants the ability to share their truth and provide insight in a safe and confidential space.

### About Vanessa

Born and raised in northern Manitoba, Vanessa Tait (Vee) is proud of her roots as a Two Spirit Cree Woman from O-pipon-na-piwin Cree Nation – South Indian Lake, Manitoba.

Vanessa is deeply rooted in her culture, way of life, and ceremony. She has facilitated community engagement sessions and talking circles, with Indigenous youth, Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, staff, and community members. Vanessa has her Master's in Development Practice: Indigenous Development degree from the University of Winnipeg; and a Bachelor of Commerce Degree from Asper School of Business.

Vanessa participates actively in knowledge exchange and has attended and presented at numerous conferences and community events. She is a trail blazer, and her vision is to ensure that First Nations people achieve self-determination in their communities and be able to tell their own stories. She is a leader in the community and has been instrumental in ensuring Indigenous people and Two Spirit voices are centered and included.

