

## Another round of local bargaining? Yes, please!

**A** Commission, a withdrawal of service, a Ready Award and another Commission recommended and conducted by Mr. Ready -- all that, and still no change in our bargaining process other than to continue to use the "supervised" bargaining model that resulted in the 2006-2011

collective agreement. That's where we are with bargaining today, with two and a half years to go until the parties are to open negotiations again.

The Collective Agreement negotiated in 2006, has achieved a more homogenized set of provisions and has brought us significantly closer to a common provincial collective agreement. Harmonized salary scales, porting of seniority and sick leave, common provisions for teachers teaching on call around the province, have made moving between districts more attractive and possible. These are the easy things to harmonize and their implementation is also easy to monitor and defend.

More difficult are those issues that are deeply rooted in the culture and practices of the district and the local. The achievement of a minimum of prep time was much more difficult to implement because of the different provisions that already existed in our local agreements.

Some provisions in our collective agreements vary significantly from district to district and common provisions for those would be very hard to achieve, and because we all know they would be hard to achieve we have not even attempted to put them on the bargaining table for many years.

Because of that many important provisions in our collective agreements are old, and out of date and we have not been able to address the issues that are important to us at the local level.

As we have told every bargaining review and commission that has

looked at teacher bargaining in the last fourteen years, provincial bargaining is not working for us. And since the two most recent commissions have failed to consider anything other than provincial bargaining, it is time that the BCTF and its locals presented a new bargaining process that will meet the needs of teachers in their local context.

We have done the co-operative, participatory give-our-input stuff to two commissions and I don't know how many government ministers of education and labour and we have been ignored. The only time that we get any attention it seems is when we are at the bargaining table and moving toward a strike position. That is why, in preparation for the 2011 round of bargaining we have to begin now to ensure that that round of bargaining has some ways of addressing local issues locally and in a real way, a way that includes a dispute resolution mechanism.

I don't know what that process will be.

The world is a different place today than it was when we lost the right to bargain locally in 1994. But there are models used by teachers both in Canada and internationally that may offer some opportunities for change in

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**Christina Schut**  
Local Rep to the BCTF



## What does "full, free local bargaining" mean?

**Full = to be able to bargain all of the work-related issues of concern to teachers. Seven years ago, the BC Liberals legislated away huge chunks of our Collective Agreement, taking away our class size and composition language, and other important language teachers had bargained (and gone on strike for) over decades. The BC Liberals have made it "illegal" for these things to be in teachers' Collective Agreements. Teachers want those rights back.**

**Free = to be unhindered by third party interest (government, BCPSEA, etc.), with reasonable source of funding to make changes possible, and with the ability of teachers to strike.**

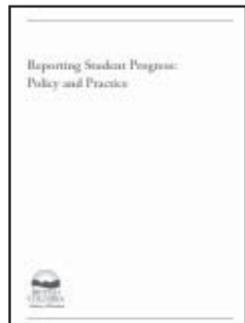
**Local = to be able to bargain directly with the school board on all issues. In 1994, a provincial bargaining structure was imposed on Vancouver teachers, leaving only a handful of "non-cost" items for VESTA and the Board to discuss.**

# My school is holding parent- teacher conferences. I want to try something different this year. What are my options?

Teachers need to provide three formal reports (the report cards) to parents every year, and need to provide two opportunities for informal reports every year. These informal reports, as long as they relate to a student's progress relative to the Learning Outcomes, can take on a variety of forms -- not necessarily the form of a one-size fits all parent-teacher conference that the rest of your school staff may or may not be doing.

Here's what Ministry of Education and Vancouver Board of Education policy have to say on the subject:

**The Ministry of Education has just released its 2008 version of Reporting Student Progress: Policy & Practice, which you can read at [www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reportcards/08\\_report\\_student\\_prog.pdf](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reportcards/08_report_student_prog.pdf)**



**On page 38, it states as follows:** *Informal reporting is the ongoing communication between parents and teachers that occurs throughout the school year. Informal reports may include telephone conferences, interim reports, written communication, portfolio reviews and face-to-face conferences. The School Act requires that teachers provide parents with two*

*informal reports each school year. Teachers should keep a record of such communication, noting the date, the topic or focus of the informal report, a summary of the discussion and any follow-up action decided on.*

**Vancouver Board of Education policy regulations IKAB-R state as follows** *Teachers shall provide parents with a minimum of two informal reports each school year. In relation to curriculum. Informal reports will describe: (a) what the student is able to do; (b) the areas of learning that require further attention or development; and (c) ways the teacher is supporting the student's learning needs and, where appropriate, ways the student or the parents might support the learning. Informal reports provide an important link between home and school, and can be accomplished in a variety of ways, such as telephone calls, interim reports (written or oral), and/or conferences (parent-teacher, three-way, student-led, etc.)*

Questions? Email [glen@vesta.ca](mailto:glen@vesta.ca)

**More general questions about reporting and report cards? You can also see the Report Card FAQ documents on the VESTA website under "Downloads" providing joint advice from the Board and VESTA on the topic of report cards.**

## Kindergarten issues

Talking with the VESTA Kindergarten Issues Ad Hoc Committee

Last Spring a kindergarten teacher, at a Staff Rep Assembly, eloquently expressed her frustrations on the integration and support of students with special needs in her classroom. Not surprisingly, this thought was echoed around the room by other kindergarten and resource teachers. It didn't take long to realize that this issue was one that we needed to more fully come to terms with. Jane MacEwan, a K/1 teacher from Roberts Annex, quickly made a motion, and we now have an ad hoc kindergarten issues committee.

We called the first meeting on May 1<sup>st</sup> at the VESTA office. You never know how many teachers will have the stamina to come to a meeting after a busy teaching day, but we were very pleased to have an overflowing room of teachers from across the district wishing to participate.

Teachers on that day identified many issues related to kindergarten. One important issue was the overwhelming needs of unidentified students with special needs that come with little or no support. It was clear that teachers were becoming increasingly frustrated with the demands made on teachers working with kindergarten students, and that those demands seemed to increase every year. Teachers are trying to juggle a host of

**It was clear that teachers were becoming increasingly frustrated with the demands made on teachers working with kindergarten students, and that those demands seemed to increase every year.**

competing interests and programs making it very difficult for them to do their job.

While debate still rages about what the core program of kindergarten should include, all teachers agreed that what was really missing was a forum to discuss issues and curriculum in an open format. The ability to talk to other kindergarten teachers about what was happening in their classroom and school provided the participants with reassurance, confidence, and reflection on their own teaching practices. A supportive

environment that respects the professional autonomy of all teachers is critical in any kind of collaboration.

One interesting discovery by the kindergarten teachers was that the supposedly voluntary Ready-Set-Learn program didn't necessarily seem so voluntary at every school, and that the money associated with the program was spent in many different ways. Some kindergarten teachers were given full control over the money while others had no idea where it had gone.

The teachers quickly asked for a second meeting in June, and we had it June 18<sup>th</sup>. Participants were able to clarify and add to the many issues identified last time, and set a course for the future. The thoughts were very clear. Whether the Board would listen to our concerns or not, it was important kindergarten teachers kept meeting. Often, kindergarten teachers feel a little isolated in their school and are unable to converse with colleagues that have the same concerns and perspective. The VESTA office was a safe and reassuring place to have good conversations about kindergarten specific issues.

The next few meetings will have some focuses for sharing. The first one of the school year is on organizing and setting up your kindergarten day. It is hoped that kindergarten teachers will bring some ideas that have worked for them to share while also continuing the work of advocating for ourselves and our students. I remember teaching a half-day kindergarten class for the first time and would have loved to hear some practical ideas on organizing what seemed impossible at the time.

Please look for bulletins coming to your school on upcoming Kindergarten meetings. We hope to see you there!

Chris Harris  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President

### VESTA news

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# Miscellany

## Student Vote—Federal election material for teachers

The BCTF would like to make teachers aware of the valuable information and materials available through Student Vote. During the previous provincial and federal elections, many BC teachers involved their classes in Student Vote, discussing the issues and holding mock elections. With the federal election under way, Student Vote is active once again and has asked that the Federation share this message with members. The program culminates in a vote—hosted by students themselves—where the student body casts a ballot on the real candidates running in the schools' riding. The Student Vote results will be displayed to the public following the close of official polls in partnership with CBC and regional daily newspapers across Canada. Teachers can learn more about the program and register at [www.StudentVote.ca](http://www.StudentVote.ca)

## "Gag law" court challenge

The BCTF has joined six of the province's largest unions in a court challenge against Bill 42 — Campbell's "gag law." This undemocratic legislation puts in place a ban on free speech for months before an election. Unions are speaking out for BC's public services. Go to [www.justshutupbc.com](http://www.justshutupbc.com) to learn more about Bill 42 and take action now!

## Interested in an overseas teaching exchange?

Are you a permanent teacher with 5 or more years teaching experience? Why not consider exchanging your job with an overseas or Canadian teacher in order to:

- Immerse yourself in a different education system.
- Develop yourself professionally by exchanging ideas and knowledge.
- Broaden personal experiences by traveling, working, and living in a different community and culture.

### Orientation meeting

Saturday, October 25, 2008  
10:00 am to 12:30 pm  
North Ridge Elementary School  
13460 62nd Avenue, Surrey  
Carol Wilkins, from the Canadian Education Exchange Foundation,

will be presenting information about exchange opportunities. Teachers currently here on exchange will be attending to answer questions specific to their country. To register for the Orientation meeting, contact Mel Caldwell at [bcxchangeteacher@yahoo.ca](mailto:bcxchangeteacher@yahoo.ca) For further information, guidelines, and an application form, visit [www.ceef.ca](http://www.ceef.ca)

## BCTF Services Book

The BCTF offers a wide range of workshops, programs, and services for members. Access individual handbook sections below or download the complete handbook at [www.bctf.ca/BCTF-ServicesHandbook.aspx](http://www.bctf.ca/BCTF-ServicesHandbook.aspx)

## Education Finance

Adequate, stable funding that covers all costs associated with the delivery of fair and equitable education is essential to maintaining quality public education. How education is financed is key to both quality and equity. Select from the links at [www.bctf.ca/IssuesInEducation.aspx?id=10720](http://www.bctf.ca/IssuesInEducation.aspx?id=10720)

to track education finance issues and to review ministry funding documents.

## Upgrading your TQS category

The BCTF has compiled a list of program offerings at educational institutions in BC to assist members who wish to upgrade. Visit [www.bctf.ca/OpportunitiesForMembers.aspx?id=16128](http://www.bctf.ca/OpportunitiesForMembers.aspx?id=16128) for details.

## Election Direction

With municipal elections fast approaching on November 15th, it's time for the VESTA membership to decide the type and level of involvement we want to have in shaping the next Board of Trustees. Having a progressive school board that is ready to vigorously advocate for improvements to public education is an important consideration for teachers. Electing trustees who would be ready, willing, and able to listen to the collective voices of teachers, and who are prepared to act on our advice, would go a long way to improve the learning conditions in our classrooms and in our schools. Come out to discuss and debate this issue with colleagues, learn more about the candidates running for school board, and have a voice

in determining the "election direction" of VESTA at our next general meeting on October 21, 4 p.m., at Tupper Secondary. Together, we have an opportunity to make a difference this election. Let's ensure the race for school board is not one that leaves us standing on the sidelines.

## "88 and Out"—

**Save up to \$800. Per Year**  
BCTF Salary Indemnity Plan regulations provide for a member who has reached age 64, or a total of age plus contributory service of 88, to withdraw from the long term portion of the plan. You may wish to continue the plan, however, if your accumulated sick leave and BCTF Short Term SIP (120 days) will not protect your salary until you reach the age of 65 or factor 90. Members who withdraw from the Long Term portion of the plan will still receive the 2% SIP allowance. Call the Income Security Division at the BCTF at 604-871-2283 or the VESTA website (look under "Downloads") for an application form or more information.

## Purchasing Pensionable Service Lost Due to Taking a Leave of Absence

Purchase of service means paying for periods of employment that have not been counted as service with the Teachers Pension Plan. During a leave of absence without pay or with partial pay, your contributions and pensionable service are reduced in proportion to your salary. By purchasing service, you may be able to increase your future pension benefit. Members who have taken leaves of absence are encouraged to explore options to buy back their pensionable service. Such purchases must be made within five years of taking the leave, and are always cheapest if applied for prior to the end of the leave, (normally June) prior to any salary increase. Members

cannot purchase a leave after resigning from a school board, even if they are immediately hired by another school district; members must purchase leaves before resigning. Members should discuss purchasing leaves when the leave is granted, when returning from leave, or before terminating employment. For more information, go to the Teachers' Pension Plan website at [www.tpp.pensionsbc.ca](http://www.tpp.pensionsbc.ca)

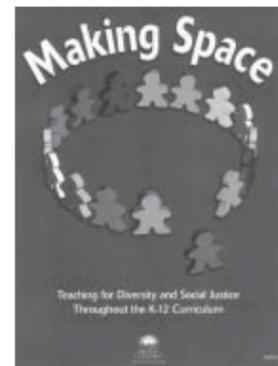
## Horizon Training Workshop for TOCs

A workshop for TOCs wanting to train to work in school libraries is being offered by the Board. The registration deadline is Monday, October 20th. For more information or to register, see the "Current Professional Development Opportunities" webpage [www.vsb.bc.ca/vsbprograms/Prod](http://www.vsb.bc.ca/vsbprograms/Prod) or contact Moira Ekdahl, Teacher-Librarian Consultant at [mekdahl@vsb.bc.ca](mailto:mekdahl@vsb.bc.ca).

## "Making Space" - at last?

This new K-12 social justice resource for use across the curriculum is being distributed 2-per-

school during October. It comes out of the settlement between Peter & Murray Corren and the provincial government after a complaint at the BC Human Rights Tribunal. Share with your staff, and let us know what you think.



[stophomelessness.ca](http://stophomelessness.ca)

VESTA acknowledges the joint traditional territory of the Musqueam, Tsleil Waututh, Squamish, and Sto:lo Nations.

# BC Liberal government record on public education

PART TWO OF  
THREE

2001

2002

2003

2004

2005

2006

2007

2008

Since coming to power in 2001, the BC Liberal government has blatantly attacked the public education system by cutting education funding, reducing services to students, destroying collective bargaining for teachers, increasing support to private schools, demonstrating a bias toward privatization of public school services, removing the right to strike, and imposing terms and conditions of employment. Our chronology of legislation and actions illustrates the impact on services to students and teachers' working conditions.

Time to take stock and gear up to make change!

## DESCRIPTION AND IMPACT OF LEGISLATION AND ACTIONS

2003

April 23, 2003

Minister Christy Clark tabled changes to the Graduation Program in an open cabinet meeting.

*Impact:* Includes Grade 10 in the Graduation Program, and mandatory Grade 10 and 11 exams. Potential impact on students who have borderline marks and may result in an increase in the Grade 10 drop out rate.

May 1, 2003

Task Force on Rural Education report released.

*Impact:* Report recommends reviewing the funding for rural schools. The majority of schools closed due to lack of funding are rural schools. Report signalled online learning, private partnerships and regional administration as alternatives for rural school districts.

May 29, 2003 (3rd Reading)

Bill 51 – Teaching Profession Amendment Act, 2003

Restructures the composition of the College of Teachers' governing council to add government appointees, provides for interim council appointed entirely by government, and requires college members to report professional misconduct.

*Impact:* BC Liberals took over control of the College of Teachers to implement their vision of professional standards (teacher supervision, recertification, etc.). Teaching was no longer a self regulating profession. Majority of college councillors appointed by government. Teachers were required to report on colleagues' professional misconduct. The College no longer had a say in approving teacher education programs. Members of the public can directly file alleged complaints against teachers. The College must report directly to the minister on College matters, including competence of members. The minister has the power to disallow College by laws. Appointees on the council gained additional powers. The operations of the new, undemocratic College were still to be paid by members' fees. In October 2003, the college developed "Standards for the education competence and professional conduct of educators in B.C." without any input from people who actually teach

children. Many of the "professional standards" are so general they are meaningless but some of the others appear to threaten teachers' democratic rights as citizens.

October 8, 2003 (3rd Reading)  
Bill 37 – Skills Development and Labour Statutes Amendment Act, 2003

Amends provisions governing the employment of children.

*Impact:* Allowed employers to hire children as young as 12 with nothing more than a note from home. Removed onus on government to inspect and determine safety of worksite for children. Employers no longer need permits for hiring children aged 12-15. British Columbia now has the weakest labour standards for children working in Canada.

2004

April 22, 2004 (3rd Reading)

Bill 19 – Education Services Collective Agreement Amendment Act, 2004

Makes retroactive changes to the teachers' collective agreement.

*Impact:* The legislation ensures that there can be no contractual guarantees of class size limits, services to students with special needs, or support from specialist teachers in B.C. schools. Section 1 took the provisions stripped from the collective agreement by arbitrator Rice in August 2002, and restored at least in part by the B.C. Supreme Court in January 2004, back out of the agreement, retroactively to July 1, 2002. Section 3 deleted from the School Act the provisions which created the stripping arbitration process in the first place, retroactively to January 28, 2002. Section 5 prevents adjudication of grievances which rely on stripped language, no matter when they were filed.

May 18, 2004 (3rd Reading)

Bill 55 – Teaching Profession Amendment Act, 2004

Makes amendments to the B.C. College of Teachers' governing council and the duty to report professional misconduct. Merges certification and membership in the college.

*Impact:* As a partial response to concerted boycott action by teachers, Bill 55 provided for a 20 member council comprised of 12 elected members, eight appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, at least three of whom must be college members, and one nominated by the deans. Eight college zones to be established by regulation.

However, B.C. law so that report on misconduct is a reason to be a member is a misconduct. College regulations made even privileged in confidential disclosure. This change improves misconduct is limited to:  
• conduct in "Student" is what it means and the Index  
• "physical" "sexual abuse" exploitation "significant student."

October 5, Minister of the maintenance of the super program.

*Impact:* The additional funding program, with enhancing the of school principals. Teachers received at train its members supervision climate of for schools. Work of learning administrat province. Legislation is becoming Rather than improvement power and progressive violates the around evaluation

December 7

The Minister the government report on teacher bargaining.

*Impact:* The Commission recommendations of teachers. The report a recommendation employer's teachers. Recommendation as resolution Institutional interference bargaining. bargaining r

2005

October 7,

Bill 55 also changed the teachers now must colleagues' professional. A member who has believe that another guilty of professional must report to strar. Report must be if belief is based on information or is and forbidden from by other legislation. makes two nts. The professional that must be reported: n relation to students. s defined to mean ns in the School Act ependent School Act; harm to a student," use of sexual n of a student," and emotional harm to a

2004

Education announces nance and expansion rvision of learning

Province will provide unding for the hich focuses on he supervisory skills rincipals and vice The BCPVPA has least \$400,000 to mbers in teacher . Has created a ear and low morale in orkshop on supervision eing offered to ive officers around the egitimate supervision snoopervision. n a climate of collegial nt, we see an abuse of a selective model of discipline that contract language uation.

16, 2004

er of Labour releases ment commissioned eacher collective

report by her Don Wright ds the further stripping y bargaining rights. e accepted 14 ations from the side and none from ecommends final offer the dispute echanism. lizes government e in teacher Proposes reduced ights for teachers.

2005 (3rd Reading)

### Bill 12 - Teachers' Collective Agreement Act

Constitutes a collective agreement between the British Columbia Teachers' Federation and the British Columbia Public Schools Employers' Association. *Impact:* Imposed the teachers' collective agreement. The bill extended the terms and conditions of the current contract, that ended on June 30, 2004, to June 30, 2006. The results were five years of imposed conditions of employment, no improvement in students' learning conditions, and 0% on salaries for two years. Teachers voted to take strike action and began an illegal, two week province wide strike on October 7, 2005 which was strongly supported by the labour movement and the public. Judge Brenda Brown ruled the strike was illegal, ordered teachers back to work, and imposed an injunction on union expenditures to support the strike, including a ban on strike pay. Teachers continued their strike, their resolve remained strong and public support gained momentum. The government appointed mediator Vince Ready to facilitate an agreement which was reached on October 21, 2005. The stripped contract language on class size, class composition and specialist teachers was not restored in the agreement. The government committed to consulting with the BCTF on how to include class size limits in the School Act. Judge Brown fined the BCTF \$500,000 for refusing her return to work order and decreed that the money be distributed to charities to be chosen by the BCTF in consensus with the BCPSEA. While the agreement did provide for the "harmonization" of teachers' salaries and an increase in pay for teachers teaching on call, it did not improve services to students or return full collective bargaining rights to teachers. Nor did it compensate Vancouver teachers for the working and learning conditions stripped by Eric Rice in 2002 because of Bill 28. The "Learning Roundtable" that came out of this also has not produced any improvements for students or teachers.

Sources: *BC Hansard, Ministry of Education website, www.bctf.ca*

**TO BE CONCLUDED NEXT MONTH**



### Valedictorian speech from the winner of VESTA's adult education student bursary

It is a real honour and prided for me to represent South Hill Graduates and my heartfelt gratitude goes to the school for granting me this very memorable opportunity tonight which I will always cherish.

I was born in Nepal and from the tender age of 3 months, I was designated to a monastery to become a monk. I studied Buddhist scriptures and meditation. When I resign my monk life, I had no formal western education. Then at 21, thanks to my sister and brother in-law, I came to Canada. Initially my plan was to work because honestly, if I started school in Nepal, I would have been the oldest among my classmates, and I thought that was really embarrassing. However, my sister and brother in-law insisted that I go to school here and complete my high school diploma. Upon registering at South Hill and starting school at level 2, I was the youngest in my first class. That was a great initial motivation for me to start my western education.

The start of my school life was rather intimidating and sometimes funny. I remember addressing my first teacher as Ma'am and was reprimanded for addressing her as Ma'am because it made her sound old. This was just one of the many cultural differences which I began to accept and adapt. At times I was discouraged because of some setbacks. It was definitely daunting to write my first English essay and likewise trying to solve a simple mathematical equation. I had to study everyday at the Learning Centre for help. Sometimes I felt in my heart that I couldn't do it and just wanted to give up. But thanks to every one of you, I carried on. Oh yea, I also remember one specific moment, when I had my very first test, which was to be answered on a scantron sheet. Naively, I wrote down all my answer on the test paper instead of the scantron. The whole class laughed at me. However, I was not embarrassed as I found it pretty amusing. People learn from their mistakes, I learned from mine and now am confident and I am much wiser.

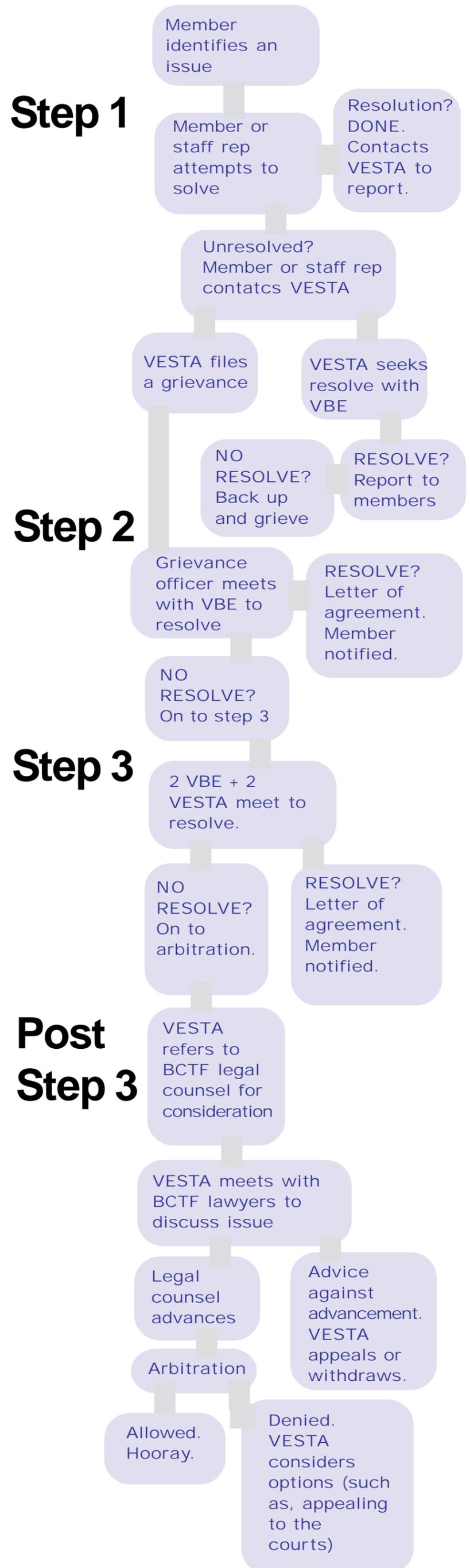
I now realized that education is a passport to the future. From South Hill, I have not only gained book knowledge, but also I have learned many important skills and tools to succeed in all my future endeavours, from creating resumes, to gaining work experience, working in a group environment and doing presentation. Through the school I have made many important friends who have been helpful and supportive. Plus the teachers and academic counsellors, and staff members are not just there to teach us in the classroom or give us advice, but they are guiding figures and more importantly friends, who were always approachable and helpful.

I don't know where and what each of us graduating students will be pursuing in the future, but I have no doubt in my mind that with what we have gained from the school, we have every reason to succeed. Thus, with that in mind, come this fall, when I begin my electrician's apprenticeship at BCIT, I am confident and will give it my all. It is definitely an exciting challenge and prospect, for a guy who grew up in a Buddhist monastery without any formal education. Indeed it's to my great fortune that my accomplishments have been made possible by the teachers, school members, and friends at South Hill as well as my sister, brother in-law, and parents.

As for my fellow colleagues and all others, I wish you all the best in your future endeavours. Every one of you has chosen to walk this path of knowledge and learning and for that you have my respect and admiration. Thank you all, especially the teachers, Learning centre staff, the principal and my family. I don't know where I would be without your kind love and support. Thank you and good night.

**Karma Tashi, Student and Valedictorian from South Hill, Grad 2008**

# Grievance updates



## REMINDER: VBE/VESTA Joint Statement on School Goal-setting & Planning

### Are teachers expected to be involved in School Goal Setting and Planning?

Yes, the sixth non-instructional day is for this purpose. (This could be taken as two half days or other equivalent.) **School Goal Setting and Planning** is dynamic and on-going. Frequently monitoring progress towards attaining goals allows adjustments to be made.

The School Plan is a reflection of the learning taking place and a guide for future focuses. **The Plan should be narrowed to one or two goals based on real school needs.** Goals should be eliminated or modified as necessary. Time lines to meet school goals need to be realistic and appropriate to the school community.

### What have teachers been advised to stop doing?

Across the province, teachers have decided through the BCTF not to participate in the development of government mandated School Growth Plans or to be part of School Planning Councils (SPCs). As professionals, teachers are encouraged to be involved in setting school and classroom goals.

### How will this impact parent involvement in School Goal Setting and Planning?

Parents and family play an essential role in the child's learning and development. Widespread and on-going dialogue with parents is essential. SPCs, mandated through legislation, will continue without teacher involvement. Parent Advisory Councils (PACs) represent the broader parent community. Some schools include parents in the sixth non-instructional day set aside for School Goal Setting and Planning.

### What does this mean for the collection of evidence (data) of student progress in School Goal Setting and Planning?

The School Goal Setting and Planning process asks participants how they will know there has been movement toward goal(s). It is important to have evidence, although **the evidence does not have to be in the form of numerical data.**

### What does this mean for the collection of evidence (data) of student progress for government mandated School Growth Plans?

The data collected in the School Goal Setting and Planning process and the data that is normally collected and recorded by teachers can be shared with Principals/Vice Principals. Teachers have decided through the BCTF that they are not to provide this data "in any additional way beyond their normal record keeping (e.g. chart form)" for the purposes of developing government mandated School Growth Plans.

### What are the expectations for reporting assessment information from Community School Teams and Inner City Projects?

Community School Teams and Inner City Project assessment information is required to ensure continuation of Community Link funding from the Ministry. Teachers are still expected to submit this data in the format required by the Principal for the compilation of a district report for the Board of Trustees and the Ministry.

### What are the expectations for all teachers to be involved in school and/or grade-wide assessments?

Teachers assess to determine student progress and inform instruction. Through Staff Committee and professional dialogue, staff make decisions regarding the most appropriate assessments for their school community and context, as well as the use of school and grade-wide assessments. Teachers are encouraged to participate in school and grade-wide assessments if this has been the decision of the school, but **individual teachers may choose to use other assessments.** The same expectations regarding the sharing of this data with Principals/Vice-Principals apply.

### What kind of assessments are recommended?

On-going classroom assessment and modification combined with students' abilities to self-assess are most powerful in enhancing student learning. Student learning needs are best met with assessment that is broad and varied in its range, and includes qualitative evidence.

Teachers have decided through the BCTF that FSA not be used for any kind of measure of school goals.

### Agreed-to in Winter 06/07 by the Board, VESTA, and the Elementary Principals & Vice-Principals Association

## REMINDER: VBE/VESTA/VSTA Joint Statement on Self-Directed Professional Development

*We agree with the following points with respect to self directed professional development activities:*

Self-Directed Pro D has a valuable role to play in the full complement of a teacher's professional development.

Teachers have a professional responsibility to plan for their Self-Directed Pro D.

A written plan will be submitted to the School Pro D Committee in advance of a Pro D day (suggested about two weeks prior). A time-line will be proposed by the School Pro D Committee and approved by the School Staff Committee.

The Administrator is a member of the Pro D Committee and has access to those plans.

*We also agree there are principles which outline best practices for professional development – both self directed and staff organized. These are outlined in the VSB/VTF Pro D Handbook and in a variety of BCTF documents. There are also a variety of resources available to assist in planning in the VSB/VTF Pro D Handbook and documents created by VSTA and VESTA.*

**Agreed-to in Spring 2008 at the district Professional Development Committee**

### FIRED FOR ABUSIVE BLOGGING

A provincial government employee who posted thinly-veiled derogatory descriptions and criticisms of her co-workers and supervisors on several online blogs that she created was justifiably dismissed because this conduct irreparably undermined the employment relationship, an Alberta arbitration board has held. In upholding the dismissal, the board took into account both the hurtful nature of the comments and the employee's belligerent reaction and lack of remorse when she was confronted by management with the blog contents. Source: [www.lancasterhouse.com/](http://www.lancasterhouse.com/)

LOMCIRA's Fall Conference

Friday, October 24 8:30 - 2:30

HASTINGS ROOM AT THE PNE

2901 East Hastings Street, Vancouver

**One Size Doesn't Fit All! How Guided Reading and Writing Workshops Help Meet the Needs of ALL Your Primary Students-with Lori Rog Or Reaching Reluctant Readers: building confidence and competence with print (Grade 4-8).** Presented by: Lower Mainland Council of International Reading Association. Audience: K - 8 Teachers  
Cost: \$80 LOMCIRA and IRA affiliate council members Information: Meredyth Kezar, 604-713-5238 [mkezar@vsb.bc.ca](mailto:mkezar@vsb.bc.ca); [www.lomcira.org](http://www.lomcira.org)

# When else do you get to elect your own boss?

15 candidates running.  
9 trustees to elect.  
3 parties,  
including 1 joint slate to consider.

Here are the candidates:

For COPE (joint slate with Vision)

*Al Blakey*  
*Bill Bargeman*  
*Jane Bouey*  
*Alvin Singh*  
*Allan Wong*



For Vision (joint slate with COPE)

*Patti Bacchus*  
*Ken Clement*  
*Sharon Gregson*  
*Mike Lombardi*



For NPA

*Ken Denike*  
*Carol Gibson*  
*Clarence Hansen*  
*Heather Holden*  
*Lakhsir Singh*  
*Sophia Woo*



## DATES TO WATCH OUT FOR

OCTOBER 14  
Federal Election

OCTOBER 27  
Kindergarten Issues Ad Hoc  
Committee meeting  
4 p.m. at VESTA

OCTOBER 28  
Working & Learning Conditions /  
Bargaining Committee meeting  
4 p.m. at VESTA

NOVEMBER 15  
Municipal and school board  
trustee elections

## New Members Welcome Gifted Education Section

October 21, 2008  
4:00 – 5:15  
Room C Vesta Office

The Gifted Education Section's role is to support all VESTA members in understanding and providing service for gifted students, to represent the gifted education perspective at VESTA and other meetings, to raise support and awareness of the special needs of gifted students, and to foster communication links with other VESTA groups.

We warmly welcome new and past members to work with us this school year. Our first project is to review the results of the Gifted Education Survey that was conducted in April 2007 and make recommendations based on the information. As this is a relatively new group, you will have a chance to shape its direction. We look forward to working with you. Please e-mail [tmilden@vsb.bc.ca](mailto:tmilden@vsb.bc.ca) to RSVP. Light snacks provided.

## General Meeting & Staff Rep Assembly October 21

TUPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL CAFETERIA at 4 p.m.

*On the agendas:*

BCeSIS  
School board trustee elections  
Delegates to BC Federation of Labour Convention

## ELEMENTARY, SECONDARY & DISTRICT TEACHER POSTINGS Continuing & Temporary Vacancies

are now accessible online

*[myvsb.vsb.bc.ca](http://myvsb.vsb.bc.ca)*

Don't know your user name or password?  
Call 713-4444



Note: VESTA advises you to use your personal email, not VSB email, to contact the union