



A Saturday evening in July: Day 49 of the province-wide Class Size / Class Composition arbitration

A big thank you to the teachers from Hastings Elementary School (past and current) that participated in the arbitration on behalf of teachers around the province, providing evidence before the arbitrator and sticking through until the end to support their colleagues. A full report will be given early in the school year to Staff Reps and other members.

Make this your year to participate!

The start of a new school year is now upon us. While you are busy preparing for another busy year with your students, I would like take the opportunity to remind you of the real necessity of participating in your union.

Whether it is VESTA meetings at your school, Staff Rep Assemblies, or General Meetings, your voice is what makes us stronger when we move forward with issues important to teachers. Make this year **your** year to participate!

We know that teachers are increasingly being faced with terrible working conditions. We know, due to decreasing resources, that it is becoming harder and harder to meet the needs of your students. We need your voice, added to the collective voice, in order to take on those and other challenges on.

Our current collective agreement expires 2011 June 30. While that may sound far away at the moment, there is a lot of work to be done beforehand. Keep yourself involved now so that you are fully aware of the issues as we go into another round of bargaining. Things you could do include:



- Being a staff rep at your worksite and coming to Staff Rep Assemblies;
- Making sure that you have regular VESTA meetings at your worksite;
- Apply to be a member of one of our VESTA standing committees or section;
- Making sure that you attend all VESTA General Meetings.

I look forward to seeing new and familiar faces this school year. Remember to take care of yourself and support your colleagues in all

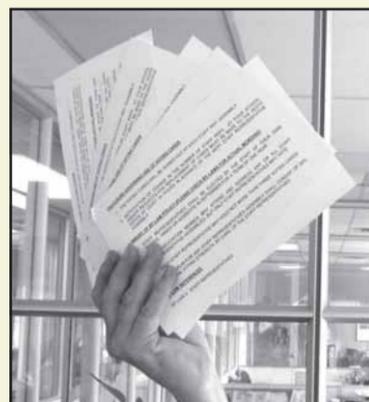
the work that we do. There is always strength in solidarity.

Chris Harris chris@vesta.ca
President



Visit the new
VESTA webpage at
www.vesta.ca

Staff Rep Assemblies



Staff Rep Assemblies occur monthly, with Staff Reps entitled to vote. Voting is by proportional representation using voting cards, based on number of VESTA members at your worksite. Staff Rep Assemblies set policy, provide a forum to discuss school concerns, make recommendations to your Executive Committee and the BCTF, and provide a venue for information to be exchanged. It's important that each worksite is represented every month.

General Meetings

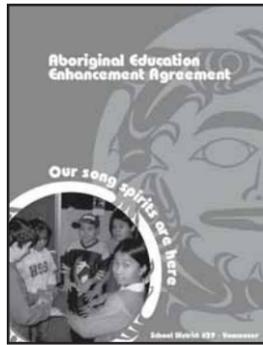


General Meetings are held every couple of months, or as needed, with every VESTA member in attendance entitled to vote. General Meetings make recommendations to the BCTF Annual General Meeting and BCTF Rep Assemblies, elect delegates to the BCTF AGM and BC Federation of Labour Convention, and are usually held when a membership vote is necessitated. All members are encouraged to attend when General Meetings are called.

Committees & Sections

VESTA also has a number of committees and sections that members are encouraged to join and participate in. Committees and sections provide advice to the Executive Committee, and organize a number of activities. See the list on page 6, and the name of the appropriate contact person.

ABORIGINAL EDUCATION ENHANCEMENT AGREEMENT SIGNED



Congratulations to the Coast Salish Nations, Musqueam Nations, *and* the First Nations, Metis, Inuit, and the Urban Aboriginal Peoples served by the Vancouver Board of Education.

After several years of work, the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement for School District #39 (Vancouver) has been signed. The intent of the agreement is to improve the educational experiences and results for Aboriginal students in Vancouver public schools.

The agreement, copies of which will be circulated to all schools early in the school year, contains three goals:

Belonging - *To increase Aboriginal students' sense of pride, self-esteem, belonging, place, acceptance, and caring at their schools.*

Mastery - *To ensure that Aboriginal students achieve increased academic success in Vancouver schools and that they participate fully and successfully from kindergarten through the completion of grade 12.*

Culture & Community - *To increase knowledge, acceptance, empathy, awareness and appreciation of Aboriginal histories, traditions, cultures and contributions of all students through eliminating institutional, cultural and individual racism within the Vancouver school district learning communities.*

Salaries - 2009 July 1 to 2010 June 30

Steps	4	5	5+	6
0	\$42,932	\$47,141	\$50,999	\$51,788
1	\$45,080	\$49,504	\$53,591	\$54,379
2	\$47,227	\$51,867	\$56,183	\$56,971
3	\$49,375	\$54,230	\$58,775	\$59,563
4	\$51,523	\$56,593	\$61,366	\$62,155
5	\$53,671	\$58,956	\$63,958	\$64,746
6	\$55,819	\$61,319	\$66,550	\$67,338
7	\$57,967	\$63,683	\$69,142	\$69,930
8	\$60,115	\$66,046	\$71,733	\$72,522
9	\$64,131	\$68,409	\$74,325	\$75,113
10		\$72,895	\$78,840	\$79,891

For Teachers On Call in the K-12 bargaining unit, your pay is based on the above grid. For 1-3 days of work, you'll be paid \$204.61 for each full day, and will be paid an additional compensation of \$3 in lieu of benefits. For work over 3 consecutive days, you'll be paid on-scale (retroactive to the first day); additionally, you'll be paid compensation of \$3 in lieu of benefits for the first four days, and then after the fifth day you'll be paid 10% of 1/189th of your placement on the grid in lieu of benefits.



Looking for Pro-D opportunities?

Visit bctf.ca/

ProfessionalDevelopment.aspx

CONTACT US

Chris Harris
President
chris@vesta.ca

Dan Graves
First Vice-President
dan@vesta.ca

Jody Polukoshko
Grievance Officer &
Second Vice-President
jody@vesta.ca

Glen Hansman
Third Vice-President
glen@vesta.ca

Donna Brack
Additional office contact
donna@vesta.ca

Lisa Holman-Fiffe
AE Sublocal President
lisa@vesta.ca

Karin Bernauer
Health & Safety Chairperson,
Salary Indemnity & Rehabilitation
Support
karin@vesta.ca

VESTA's objectives

To promote the welfare of members;

To raise, by united effort, the status of the teacher profession;

To promote the interests of education;

To co-operate with other bodies in the advancement of the foregoing objectives;

To represent the Association's members and to regulate relations with their employer through collective bargaining of terms and conditions of employment.

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

AT YOUR FIRST STAFF COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE YEAR, MAKE SURE TO ESTABLISH YOUR WORKSITE'S ...

... INTERVIEW COMMITTEE

... PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

... TIME-TABLING AND STAFFING COMMITTEE

... FINANCE COMMITTEE

All of these are provided for under the Staff Committee language in both the K-12 and Adult Educators' collective agreements with the Vancouver Board of Education. Use them! VESTA recommends that your Staff Committee formally elect members to these worksite-based committees. The names should be recorded in the minutes.

New IRPs in effect

Remember to recycle the old K-7 *Social Studies* and *Personal Planning* IRPs. Both of these were replaced with the new *Social Studies* and *Health & Career Education* IRPs, respectively, which were to be fully implemented last school year. Both contain Learning Outcomes that were not present in the older versions. The new *Mathematics* IRP was also being phased in at various grade levels -- specifically, Kindergarten, as well as grades 1, 4 and 7.

This school year, the new *Physical Education* IRP is to be fully implemented. The new *Mathematics* IRP is now also mandatory for grades 2 and 5, in addition to the grade levels introduced last year. (Grades 3 and 6 are mandatory next school year.)

The draft version of the new *Fine Arts* K-7 IRP is now online for feedback at www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/drafts It will be fully implemented in a couple of years.

VESTA News

Published by the Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association, Local 391 of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation

VESTA
2915 Commercial Drive
Vancouver, B.C. V5N 4C8
Phone: 604-873-8378
Fax: 604-873-2652
www.vesta.ca

Editor, Photos, & Layout
Glen Hansman

Top cover photo
Jennifer Duprey (VSB)

Proofreaders
Donna Brack
Chris Harris
Elizabeth Bion
Christina Schut



Articles herein reflect the views of the authors and not necessarily the policies of the Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association. No reprints without permission.
Printed by Thunderbird Press

Politics is not a dirty word

There was a time when people regarded voting as not only a right but a duty. I have met many senior citizens who would never for a moment consider not going to vote. I think also of media pictures of the first elections in South Africa after apartheid where people stood in line for days waiting for their turn at the ballot box. I think about the current strife in Zimbabwe and Iran about questions of electoral fairness and wonder at the fact that in one of the most brilliant countries on earth many citizens can't be bothered to vote.

We worked our way through three elections last year. A big work load for both the union and for individual teachers as they addressed through the issues both in their classrooms, as citizens and as union members. And yet despite our efforts, the big story of the elections are the low voter turnouts, the lowest in our history.

In the provincial election the two major parties made some important promises. If you looked at their websites you would see that NDP promised an increase in the minimum wage, something antipoverty activists had long been lobbying for. In education they promised that they would add specialist teachers to address the unmet needs of students who need additional and special support. The Liberals promises in education were also enlightening. They promised a continuation of the FSA testing, performance incentives, surveillance cameras in schools that wanted them among a few other things.

These are important promises whatever your point of view, and yet almost a majority of citizens (48%) chose not to vote. Harry Neufeld, the Chief Electoral Officer was quoted on the CBC website : "We did a survey after the 2005 election, and a significant number of people, about 44 per cent, the last time we surveyed them, were simply disengaged with the political process and just didn't have an interest in following politics, being involved and being part of the voting process."

As teachers we have first hand experience as to how the political party that is elected to form government affects our jobs on a daily basis. The funding for adequate class sizes and specialist support for students with special needs and students who need additional help learning English are annual political decisions by government. How student achievement is reported and assessed, what is included in the curriculum (think DPA) are all determined by the provincial government. If, as the teachers' union, we are to continue our involvement with third party campaigns to support the election then we need to address this issue of voter turnout.

There was agreement by the respondents in the 2005 BC Elections survey that schools should do to educate students about voting. As we start this new year, and in the years ahead to the next elections let's push for our schools to take this issue on. I'm not as conversant with intermediate and secondary curriculum as I used to be, but I would think that the duty to vote would be included both in the Social Responsibility as well as Social Studies curriculum. If it isn't then we should demand that it be included. If it is, then lets call for more emphasis on this part of the curriculum, and let's, as teachers take on this issue of voting, and its vital role in a democracy.

Many solutions are being aired to address this problem of low voter turnout, some calling for mandatory voting (you're fined if you don't) as they do in Australia. Elections BC is considering allowing online voting in an effort to increase the convenience and therefore the turnout. I think these are facile measures that don't address the real issue. I want people to vote because they know it matters.

Christina Schut
cschut@vesta.ca
Local Rep to the BCTF (alt.)
Communications Chair

64? Reached factor "88"? In receipt of pension?

Then you are able to withdraw from the Salary Indemnity Plan. Staff Reps have been provided with the application for withdrawal in their year start-up kits. Ask for one, or email glen@vesta.ca for a copy.

British Columbia Teachers' Federation
1000 West 4th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V6E 4P5 • 604-671-1281, 1-800-663-9161 • www.bctf.bc.ca

SALARY INDEMNITY PLAN
Application for withdrawal from the Long Term section of the Salary Indemnity Plan

Name: _____ School district: _____ SEN: _____
Municipality: _____ Local Association: _____
Home address: _____ Postal code: _____ Home phone no.: _____
City: _____

Regulation 2.3
A member who has attained age 64, has reached the factor "88", or, in receipt of a retirement pension under a registered pension plan, may voluntarily withdraw from the long term section of the plan. Withdrawal may be made during any school year in which one of the foregoing conditions has been met and upon the completion of the appropriate withdrawal form submitted from the plan administrator. Withdrawal will be effective, upon approval, as determined by the administrator in their report, and applications submitted later will be effective the month following approval of the application.

I wish to voluntarily withdraw from the long term section of the Salary Indemnity Plan based on one of the following:
 I am 64 years old, or of
 I am in receipt of a retirement pension under a registered pension plan
 I have reached "factor 88"

I understand that if I voluntarily withdraw from the STP Long Term, I will no longer be required to make contributions and I hereby release the BCTF STP Long Term, from all claims, expenses and against those who may be liable for the same. I understand that I will not be eligible for any further relief whatsoever under the BCTF STP Long Term plan. I consent to the BC Pension Corporation disclosing personal information about me to the BCTF regarding my participation in the Salary Indemnity Plan, including employment information regarding service and salary. I understand that this information will be disclosed to the BCTF to allow the BCTF to assess my eligibility for the Salary Indemnity Plan Long Term benefits or withdrawal from the Salary Indemnity Plan Long Term contributions. I understand that my contributions to another teacher's pension plan is fully recognized by the Salary Indemnity Plan if transferred to the B.C. Teachers' Pension Plan may be provided.

Signature: _____ Date: _____
Note: The Plan requires a signed original application (handwritten entries are not acceptable).
 Make the Salary Indemnity Plan, BCTF and include photographs of:
 1. valid certificate of government identification for proof of age
 2. proof of contributory service to B.C. under a Teachers' Pension Plan (Member's Benefit Statement)
 3. proof of contributory service to a pension with a registered agreement, if applicable, or
 4. proof of benefits from a registered pension plan, if applicable.

For office use only (Attach copy of calculation formula.)
 Approved: _____ Date: _____
 Effective date of withdrawal: _____ Signature: _____
 Existing file: _____ File stamped: _____
(specify claims, etc.) (or include file #)

A Union of Professionals
©2002

JOB-SHARING? WORKING PART-TIME? Please read this!

Are you a part-time K-7 school-based, itinerant, or district teacher at one or more worksite? Then it is important that you are being paid for the time that you work, and that you are working your actual Full-Time Equivalent (FTE). The best thing to do is to figure this out **now**, not later in the school year when there are fewer days left to make adjustments.

The Vancouver Board of Education (VBE) hires and pays each teacher according to a precise FTE, which is also linked to the number of days each employee works. The number of days in a school year varies from one year to the next. For 2009/2010 there are 191 days. *Statutory holidays are not included in this count.* The School Act governs that teachers work a set number of days that make up a school year; therefore, contract teachers do not receive statutory holidays in the same way as other workers do.

In most cases, the calculation is relatively straightforward. This year, a part-time teacher at a school with equal 300 instructional minute days needs only to multiply her/his FTE by 191 to see the total number of days to be worked. Depending on how statutory holidays overlap with a part-time teachers' regular days at a worksite, she/he may **owe time** or **be owed time**.

For example, if a teacher works 0.2000 FTE at a school with regular length days, that amounts to 38.2 days she/he must work this year (0.2000 FTE *times* 191 total school days = 38.2 days to work). If, for example, the teacher's regular work day is every Monday, that teacher will *owe* days to her/his school or job-share partner because there are only 36 Mondays in the 191 days of this school year. By contrast, if that teacher's regular work day was every Wednesday, she/he would be *owed* days.

At schools on a modified week, where the days are not all equal in length, this will have to be broken down into minutes. For grade 1-7 teachers, there are 1500 minutes in the school week, inclusive of a 15 minute recess and prep. Kindergarten teachers have slightly different instructional minutes, but the same principle applies. (Remember too that each teacher's 90 minutes of prep per week is also prorated by FTE).

Some teachers work part-time in more than one school and have to be vigilant that their FTE works properly. Add in the mix of schools with modified days and you can see the potential for working more than 194 days because of the extra minutes over the course of a year. It may also be that a resource teacher is missing from one site because she/he owes a day at another site, or a job-share partner is working on a day other than the one usually scheduled while the usual partner is working elsewhere.

For these reasons, and because of leaves and other extenuating circumstances, it has always been important to make calculations at the *beginning* of the school year so that a proper schedule based on FTE can be arranged well ahead of time. Job-share partners need to work this out together so both understand and agree to fairness. Non-enrolling teachers have more flexibility, but need to ensure that colleagues know about any adjustments to the "regular" schedule well ahead of time.

Principals and vice-principals were recently given a new spreadsheet to assist in calculating FTE in terms of days to be worked. VESTA and the VBE realize that the practice of adjusting schedules to actual FTE has not been standard practice at all worksites. It is important that schools attend to this matter early in the school year, every school year, from this point forward so that teachers are not being made to work the time they are not being paid for, and so that schools get the full amount of FTE allotted to them.

Many job-share partners and part-time teachers are able to sort out the differential FTE among themselves. Principals and vice-principals have been asked by Human Resources to provide assistance in situations where adjusting schedules present some difficulty.

Glen Hansman
glen@vesta.ca
Past President & current 3rd Vice-President

K-12 Collective Agreement updates

Good news! In May, Arbitrator Mark Brown made his decision on several "in dispute" items that arose out of putting together the 2006-2011 Collective Agreement for K-12 members. For Vancouver, the "in dispute" item can be found on page 32 of the VBE/VTF Collective Agreement. There had been disagreement as to whether or not some local language around personal property damage could be retained. Arbitrator Brown ruled in our favour.

The full language will thus be properly incorporated into the next edition of the Collective Agreement after bargaining in 2011. For now, feel free to clip out the language below, and attach it to page 32 of your Collective Agreement.

ARTICLE B.7 REIMBURSEMENT FOR PERSONAL PROPERTY LOSS

1. Private Vehicle Damage

Where an employee's vehicle is damaged by a student at a worksite or an approved school function, or as a direct result of the employee being employed by the employer, the employer shall reimburse the employee the lesser of actual vehicle damage repair costs, or the cost of any deductible portion of insurance coverage on that vehicle up to a maximum of \$600.

2. Personally Owned Professional Material

The employer shall reimburse an employee to a maximum of \$150 for loss, damage or personal insurance deductible to personally owned professional material brought to the employee's workplace to assist in the execution of the employee's duties, provided that:

- a. The loss or damage is not the result of negligence on the part of the employee claiming compensation;
- b. The claim for loss or damage exceeds ten (10) dollars;
- c. If applicable, a copy of the claim approval from his/her insurance carrier shall be provided to the employer;
- d. The appropriate Principal or Vice-Principal reports that the loss was sustained while on assignment for the employer.

Local Provisions:

3. Vandalism, Loss or Damage Compensation

Employees shall be provided with vandalism, loss or damage compensation under the following conditions:

a. Personal Property Claim

i. The Board shall reimburse any employee whose personal property is stolen or damaged at a worksite or a school function for the replacement or repair cost of the property up to fifty percent (50%) of the deductible amount stipulated in the employee's insurance policy covering such perils, to a maximum payment of one hundred dollars (\$100). The employee shall provide the Board with a copy of the claim approval from his/her insurance carrier.

ii. The employee shall submit his/her claim on the appropriate V.S.B. claim form. Forms shall be available from each worksite office.

TYPOS & OTHER CHANGES

Get out your pens! Please make the following corrections to the text of your 2006-2011 VTF/VBE Collective Agreement for K-12 members. Both parties recognize these changes, and they will be incorporated into the next edition of the Collective Agreement after bargaining in 2011.

Article B.2.7.1.ii (page 30): The reference to "B.2.1." in the last sentence should be changed to "B.2.7.1.i (above)".

Article B.22.4. (page 39): The words "one hundred sixty-five dollars (\$168)" should read "one hundred sixty-eight dollars". It is suggested that a chart be included in the next edition of the Collective Agreement to show what the amount would be for each year, as we did with other allowances.

Article B.25.8.c. (page 45): The reference to "6+" should be changed to "5+".

Article E.26.1.c. (page 92): The reference to "G.21.18.j." should read "G.21.18.i."

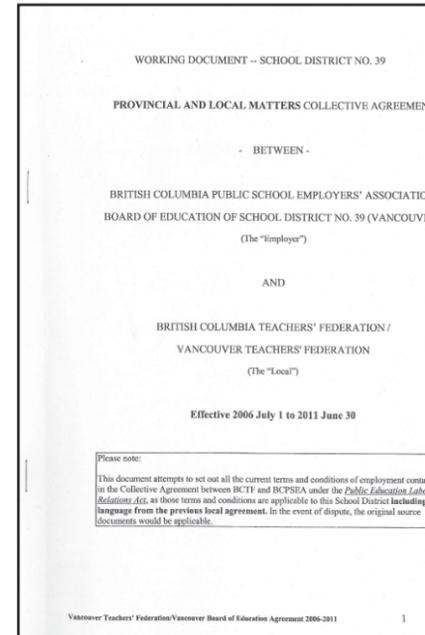
Article G.21.9.g. (page 107): The reference in the stem to "Clause d.i above" should read "Clause d.ii above".

Article G.21.9.h.ii (page 108): The reference to "Clause d.i above" should read "Clause d.ii above".

Appendix B – ERIP (page 157): The reference to "10.EE" in the long paragraph should read "G.21.30".

Cross-Referenced Numbering (page 175): The reference to "CF" half-way down the page in the second column should read "CTF".

Index (page 177): For "Extended Health" under "Benefits," and additional page number should be printed. Please include a reference to what is currently at page 50.



The VBE/VTF Collective Agreement contains the terms and conditions of the employment relationship between K-12 members and the Vancouver Board of Education.



Language that Staff Committee Chairs should know

Article A.5.5.c. (pages 11-13): Staff Committee
Article A.30. (page 26): Staff Meetings

Language that Pro-D Chairs should know

Article A.5.5.c. (pages 11-13): Staff Committee
Article A.5.5.c.ii.j.ii. (page 13): Pro-D Committee
Article A.30.4. (page 26): Staff Meetings & Pro-D
Article F.20. (page 98): Professional Autonomy
Article F.21. (page 98): Pro-D

Language that Health & Safety Chairs should know

Article A.5.5.c. (pages 11-13): Staff Committee
Article D.22.2. (page 79): Worksite H&S Committee
Article D.22.3. (pages 79-80): Safety of Working Conditions
Article E.34. (page 96): Administration of Medication

WHAT HAPPENED TO ALL-DAY KINDERGARTEN AND UNIVERSAL CHILDCARE IN BC?

Kindergarten updates across Canada

Ontario:

In June, the Ontario premier announced that the province would be going ahead with a \$1 billion dollar proposal that would consolidate daycare and kindergarten into a single program from 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. beginning in 2010. Pupils will be instructed by teams of teachers and early childhood educators. Full-day kindergarten had been a platform promise of the current provincial government there. (Many of the province's Catholic public school districts already offer full-day kindergarten, offering them a competitive edge, but not with the added feature of daycare.)

British Columbia:

Half-day kindergarten is not mandatory, but it is the norm. Plans for full-day kindergarten in all schools across BC for this fall have been scrapped. The province cited financial concerns. The BCTF has taken a position in favour of all-day kindergarten.

Alberta:

Half-day kindergarten is not mandatory, but it is the norm. A 2003 commission on learning recommended that an optional junior kindergarten be phased in, and that all-day kindergarten also be implemented province-wide. The provincial government rejected those recommendations.

Manitoba:

Kindergarten is not compulsory for five-year-olds, and each school district can decide whether to offer full-time or part-time programming. The province had considered combining early childhood care with kindergarten so that both four- and five-year-olds could attend, but it has no plans to introduce that type of programming at this time.

Saskatchewan:

Half-day kindergarten is not mandatory, but it is the norm. The province offers publically funded prekindergarten for three- and four-year-olds only in communities with low socio-economic status, where many children have special needs, or in communities with a 40-per-cent aboriginal population.

Quebec:

Since 1997, the province's daycare system has become the cornerstone of the province's unique early-childhood education program. At \$7 per day for each child, tens of thousands of

preschool-aged children are enrolled in the system. A further 20,000 spaces are being developed. Full-day kindergarten is available.

Nova Scotia:

Enrolment in full-time kindergarten (known as "grade primary") is mandatory for all five-year-olds. The government launched a pilot pre-primary program for four-year-olds in 2005 at 19 schools; it ran for three years and was well-received, but the province wanted its school enrolment age to be on par with those of most provinces, so it cancelled the program. Instead it allowed four-year-olds who turned 5 on or before December 31 to also be eligible.

New Brunswick:

Full-day kindergarten is compulsory for students who are five-years-old on or before December 31.

Newfoundland & Labrador:

Half-day kindergarten is not mandatory, but it is the norm.

PEI:

Half-day kindergarten is not mandatory, but it is the norm. Parents must pay extra for full-day.

And meanwhile over in Finland . . .

Finland's primary education program has been the envy of the world for many years. But there are some differences that may be contributing to its success. Finnish children do not begin primary school until they are seven years old. But from the age of eight months, all children have access to free, full-day daycare and kindergarten. Finland has had universal access to daycare in place since 1990, and of all preschool since 1996.

Primary school teachers in Finland all have master's degrees, and the profession is one of the most revered in Finnish society. Finnish primary-school teachers have a high level of autonomy over the curriculum, a noted difference to the centralized approach in some jurisdictions – notably Ontario and most places in the United States.

There is also a high emphasis on socialization in Finnish schools. Finnish students (and teachers) received a free hot meal daily, there is only a minimal amount of homework, and students call their teachers by their first names.

Glen Hansman Past President

Sources: www.globeandmail.com, websites of provincial and territorial ministries and departments of education

In Teachers We Trust:

Learning from the public education experience in Finland

Imagine a country where no one evaluates teachers, no one evaluates schools, and individual schools' test results remain confidential. You've just imagined Finland, which regularly bests all other developed nations in international assessments of student performance.

How can Finland pull this off without undermining quality? According to Dr. Reijo Laukkanen, a 34-year veteran of Finland's National Board of Education, "We trust our teachers."

In a recent interview with *Public School Insights*, Laukkanen assured us that this trust is well deserved. Finland draws its teachers from the top 10 percent of college graduates, and teaching regularly beats out law or medicine as a top career choice among high performers. "We can trust that [teachers] are competent," Laukkanen told us; "They know what to do."

It doesn't hurt that Finland's teachers study education at government expense, receive strong professional support throughout their careers, and count on ample time for collaboration with colleagues. This ongoing support creates what Laukkanen calls high "working morale" in schools.

Laukkanen also cited other reasons for Finland's success: Ambitious national content standards guide teachers' work without stifling their professional judgment or creativity. Aggressive, early and frequent interventions keep struggling students from falling behind. And schools coordinate with social service providers to prevent disadvantaged students from slipping through the cracks.

Here are a few other things he had to say:

What do you think are some of the major reasons for Finland's success?

LAUKKANEN: Teachers. They are the most important [aspect of] Finnish success. But there's also other issues. The second one is that we take care of all our children. And the third big issue is that we have set our objectives or the standards of education high.

How do you evaluate teachers in Finland? Is there a strong system for doing this?

LAUKKANEN: No. We don't have any evaluation of teachers. The working morale and the working ethics of the teachers are very high, and we can also trust that they are competent; they know what to do.

Do you evaluate school performance in Finland?

LAUKKANEN: No, we don't do that. We just evaluate student performance in the whole country, not in the school. When we are making assessment[s], they are random sample based. And we never publish [results] school by school. We are not making ranking lists. Of course, we make national reports. They are important for policymakers. They are eager to know what's the state of the art in the country. We also give [an] individual feedback report to each school in the sample, for the faculty, so they can see how their school has performed compared to the whole sample. But this report, it's confidential because we don't send that report to any other school. So it's some kind of public service for those schools.

Could you describe some of the mechanisms you have in place to help struggling students?

LAUKKANEN: We have two different kind[s] of mechanisms, and they are very near each other. We understand that the concept of early intervention is very important, and that's why we start to correct certain problems already [in] the first grade. We have teachers who have specialized in the correction of the problems in reading, writing, and speech. They go around [to] the schools. They ask the teachers, "Do you have students who have problems like that," and if they have students like that... they have special methods to correct that kind of problem. And then another issue is that those students who have problems can get remedial education, and that's also given by the school and paid for by the school.

Source: www.publicschoolinsights.org

Over 100 years of teacher organizing in Vancouver

2009-2010
VESTA Executive Committee

1890s: The first register of proceedings of the **Teachers' Association** in Vancouver was a record of its first meeting on 1891 September 29, at 16:00 hours at Central School, where teachers had assembled at the request of the Board of Trustees to discuss matters "pertaining to the profession".

At that time, teachers held a monthly meeting in each school but this was the first general meeting. At the 1891 September 29 meeting it was decided unanimously that a meeting be held on the last Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. to "discuss methods and reading papers on teaching." 1893 January 26 was the last recorded meeting.

Early 1900s: The founding meeting to form the **Vancouver Teacher Association** was held 1914 November 27. In the late 1920s and early 1930s, when the City of Vancouver was amalgamating to its present size, the teachers of Vancouver formed a Greater Vancouver Teachers' Association (involving VTA, South Vancouver Teacher Association and Point Grey Teacher Association). The GVTA was formed in 1928 with each association remaining as a section and a central executive committee elected to deal with the Vancouver School Board.

1930s: It wasn't long, however, until sub groups of the VTA began to feel that their diverging interests could not be adequately represented by one organization. Thus, the **Vancouver Elementary Teachers' Association** was formed 1930 November 18. (The association's name was informally changed to the **Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association** on 1935 October 21). Vancouver Secondary Teachers' Association (VSTA) was formed on 1935 June 17.

In October 1935 VESTA agreed to join the **Vancouver Teacher Council** on the basis that there be four VESTA members, four VSTA members and two Vancouver School Principals' Association members.

1940s/50s: On 1949 June 13, VESTA received a letter from the Vancouver School Principals' Association stating that they were withdrawing from the Vancouver Teacher Council. No representatives were appointed for the 1949-50 year from VESTA, and the VTC was dissolved.

On 1959 April 30, the Proportional Representative System was adopted for decision-making meetings involving all schools – what we now call Staff Rep Assemblies.

1980s onward: On 1987 November 1, the BCTF granted a charter for local association #39 (Elementary). On 1988 January 26, The Industrial Relations Council declared the **Vancouver Teachers' Federation** (comprising VESTA and VSTA, as autonomous locals) as the bargaining agent for teachers in School District #39.

Vancouver's adult educators joined VESTA in the early 1990s.

Local bargaining rights for K-12 teachers were diminished in 1994, when provincial bargaining for most matters was introduced through legislation. (VESTA's adult educators, however, retained the right to full local bargaining.) VESTA continues to advocate for full, free collective bargaining at the local level, and looks forward to it being restored SOON.

VESTA PRESIDENTS from 1930 to present

2009-??	Chris Harris
2007-09	Glen Hansman
2005-07	Mary McDermott
2002-05	Patricia Gudlaugson
1999-02	Barbara Parrott
1997-99	Suzie Mah
1995-97	Heather Frazer
1993-95	Christina Schut
1991-93	J. Alan Crawford
1988-91	Sheila Pither
1985-88	Maureen L. MacDonald
1983-85	Susan Davis
1981-83	Kitty O'Callaghan
1978-81	J. Alan Crawford
1976-78	Steve L. Norman
1974-76	M. Al Paterson
1972-74	Allen Blakey
1971-72	A. Robert Haskins
1969-71	W. Allan Garneau
1968-69	Allen Blakey
1967-68	W.K. Butchart
1966-67	Gerry L. Ritchie
1965-66	Don A. Clark
1964-65	Frances M. Worledge
1963-64	S.S. Gill
1962-63	Don A. Symons
1961-62	Isobell Cull
1960-61	Norman Ornes
1959-60	Rae Bates
1958-59	M.E. (Mike) Downing
1957-58	W.H.B. Hawkes
1956-57	George A. (Al) Dew
1955-56	H.C. (Bert) Stevens
1954-55	Jacob Penner
1953-54	Cynthia Tilson
1952-53	Gordon Phillips
1951-52	L. McAlister (Miss)
1950-51	Jean Fraser
1949-50	Norval Brown
1948-49	W.M. McGill
1947-48	M.A. Batchelor (Miss)
1946-47	H.G. (Howie) McAllister
1945-46	E.V.H. Kendal (Miss)
1944-45	A. Reid (Miss)
1943-44	D.H. Van Nes
1942-43	Edith Unsworth
1941-42	W.H. Auld
1940-41	Sydney Taylor
1939-40	N. Kent (Miss)
1938-39	A.F. Robinson
1937-38	F.J. Townsend
1936-37	Owen J. Thomas
1936 to Oct.	Josephine Dauphinee
1935-36	E.V. Caspell
1934-35	F.E. Williams (Miss)
1933-34	Rufus Palmer Steeves
1930-33	C.L. Thornber

56 past presidents and counting . . .



President
Chris Harris (Bruce)
chris@vesta.ca

1st VicePresident
Dan Graves (Gordon)
dan@vesta.ca

2nd VicePresident
Grievance Officer
Jody Polukoshko (Dickens Annex / LS)
jody@vesta.ca

3rd VicePresident & Past President
Glen Hansman (Kingsford-Smith / LS)
glen@vesta.ca

Secretary-Treasurer
Rod Ratzlaff(Carr)

Local Reps to the BCTF
Anna Chudnovsky (False Creek)
Bill Hood (Maquinna)
Jack MacDermot (Kingsford-Smith)
Sasha Wiley-Shaw (Roberts AE)
alt: Christina Schut (TOC)

Members at Large
Donna Brack (Gathering Place)
Nancy Hawkins (Secord)
Romy Cooper (Gordon)
Bernice Jay (Osler)
Dorothy Smith (Alderwood)
Glenn Volkeroth (Nootka)

Adult Educators President
Lisa Holman-Fyffe
lisa@vesta.ca

Status of Women
Susan Garber (Dickens)

Anti-Racism
Myriam Dumont (Strathcona)

Pride
David Butler (Van Horne / Queen Mary)

Sustainability
Heather Allison (Queen Mary)

Anti-Poverty
Linda Young (Lord)

Aboriginal
vacant

Communications
Christina Schut (TOC)
cschut@vesta.ca

Working & Learning Conditions / Bargaining
Heather French (Fraser)

Health & Safety
Karin Bernauer
karin@vesta.ca

Professional Development
vacant

TOC
vacant

TTOC Swap Meet & BBQ

Thanks to all the retirees who dropped off learning resources. They were well appreciated, and will be well used!



To anyone who hates FSAs

During FSA preparation and testing we got less work done than usual. We missed both Science and Health and Careers for about a month. The FSA doesn't help people to learn things, if that's what anyone is thinking. Instead, it makes us learn way less than usual and I have to say that is not good. Most kids my age think it just a way for the government to see how we are doing (and a way for teachers to punish us). At least that's what we have been told over the years. Instead it is a way to show everyone how much smarter private school kids are and show people which schools have kids that have had more education because they are more privileged.

Let me ask you, have you ever seen a kid's face when they are at the bottom of the list of schools for FSA testing? Well my parents have and I know it is not a pretty sight. I have heard about the damage caused by FSA's to public schools. Often a school with a low score will have parents who move their children to other better scoring schools. The next year, for the school that the kids with parents with money and time move out of do even worse because they have taken away the kids with more education. It doesn't mean that the kids there are learning less just that they are losing children to private schools. Really, if you looked at the top of the lists over the years you would see most of the top schools are private schools. I have nothing against private schools but of course they score higher – because kids who do not pass the admissions tests cannot get in. They also do not have many learning disabled or ESL students.

I don't just hate the FSA's because they're boring and meaningless it's how they show the results to everybody IN THE NEWSPAPERS and also how its taking up all my time to learn stuff even though I didn't do them cause I'm in grade six.

Written By Mikaela Harris
School Cove Cliff Elementary, North Vancouver

Ps: Are FSA's really necessary?

Teachers Teaching on Call Survey Results

This spring VESTA sent out a survey to TTOCs in order to gather information about the amount of work that TTOCs were getting with the VBE.

Of the 89 sample TTOC surveys, 94.4% listed VBE as their primary district of employment.

Of the 89 sample TTOC surveys, 92.1% are available 5 days per week AM and PM.

Here are the results:

- The survey indicated that work with the VBE this year has been incredibly slow compared to previous years.
- Out of 89 TTOC surveys, 76 respondents are available full time on the regular TTOC list. Of these 76, the **average number of days worked per week over the past two months was reported as 2.4 days** (consisting of both half and full days combined).
- 65.7% of the respondents reported that they were required to take on supplemental income as a result of lack of work with the VBE.
- 4 surveys were completed by teachers on the retired limited TTOC list, 100% of them averaged less than 1 day per week, mostly less than a day per month.
- Although it was not a question on the survey, out of the 89 TTOCs who responded 22.5% volunteered the information that they were applying to or increasing work in other districts as a direct result of work shortages with the VBE. In Vancouver we are losing numerous great teachers to other districts and other professions.

What TTOCs are saying:

"I only need 6 days/month to pay all of my bills, which is on the very low end, yet I am not even getting six days a month. I've now applied to Richmond as well in hopes that I will have another district in September." Survey #49

"I understand there are slow times of the year, but this year has been the slowest of the three years I have worked for the district." Survey #61

"I am becoming increasingly depressed, frustrated and helpless as there is absolutely no work these days. I really feel that TTOCs should be provided with a minimum amount of pay. As a TTOC it is difficult to find other employment because I have made teaching, and availability to the VSB of the utmost importance and most other jobs do not work well with this. I am afraid I may have to give up teaching in order to survive." Survey #28

"I calculated that since I started TOCing in Vancouver I work on average 2.8 days/week. I need to work more in order to pay rent! It's difficult to find supplementary work when you are on call every day. I would love to work more!!" Survey #33

"I want VESTA to know that I have not been picky about where/when I have worked; I am available all week for a large selection of subject matters, and I have accepted EVERY assignment for which I have been called, yet I am still working an average of only 1.7 full days a week." Survey #38

Imagine making yourself available for calls every evening and all morning but only averaging about 2.5 days of work per week? Not knowing if you will work on any given day along with not knowing where or what grade you will be teaching is enough uncertainty. Not knowing if you will be able to pay rent each month should not be a constant concern for teachers.

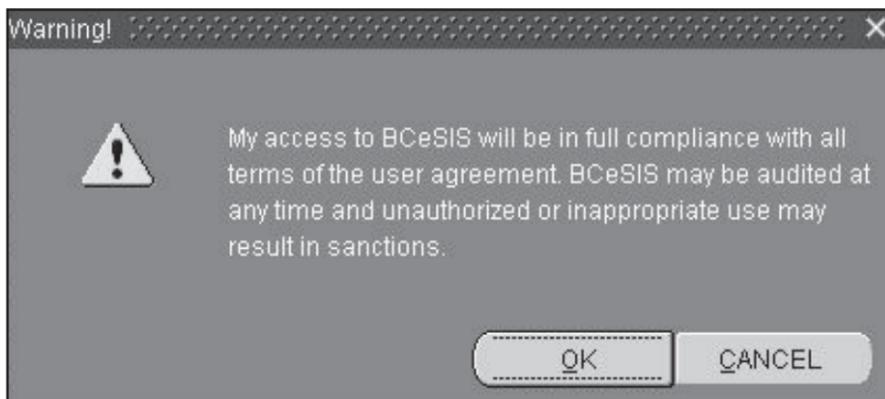
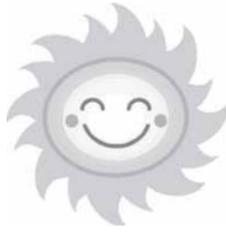
Thank you to those TTOCs who responded to the survey and made it possible to compile the data to present to the VBE. We hope that these results will contribute to an examination of work shortage and ultimately an increase in work for TTOCs.

Survey data compiled by VESTA's TTOC Committee



Congratulations 2009 retirees! A good time was had by all at the annual VESTA Retirement & Appreciation Dinner at the Royal Vancouver Yacht Club. Many stories were shared, and many friendships were renewed. Thank you to all of the retirees who were able to attend. You will be missed!

BCeSIS's friendly greeting . . .



“Sanctions”? “Inappropriate use”?
Good thing BCeSIS isn't the job of Vancouver elementary teachers!

A copy of the new VESTA bylaws for each member



Members should find a copy of the new VESTA bylaws accompanying this issue of the *VESTA News*.

Revisions to the association's bylaws were developed by an ad hoc committee last year, and the Executive Committee recommended these to the 2009 VESTA Annual General Meeting. The AGM, which took place in May, formally adopted the changes.

Please keep your bylaws with your Collective Agreement.

Elect your Staff Reps in September

VESTA members at each worksite should formally elect their Staff Rep, or Staff Reps, at a worksite-based VESTA meeting in September. Call the meeting, see who is interested, and formally make your decision.

Consult the bylaws to see how many Staff Reps your worksite is entitled to for the purposes of the Staff Representative Assemblies.

PEER TO PEER CONSULTANTS

The new Peer to Peer Consultant positions at the VSB, a result of a collaborative effort between the union and Human Resources, is aimed at providing support for **new teachers, teachers in temporary contracts, TOCs and for any teacher new to an assignment** who would like support in enhancing their skills and accessing appropriate resources. Support can be in the areas of long term planning, unit & lesson planning, teaching strategies, classroom management, assessment and paperwork.

All consults are **confidential** and are **initiated by the teacher**. No reports are given to Administrators or to Human Resources. It is not an evaluative process but **rather a supportive one**. A teacher who initiates contact will identify the issue and with the consultant will work on strategies to meet those concerns. Consults may be as short as 1 visit or may extend for a period of time.

Phil Lee (**Secondary**), Esther Carelse-Borzel (**Elementary**) and Myrne Ross (**Elementary Resource**) are the new Peer to Peer Consultants at the VSB. Peer to Peer Consultants provide direct one-to-one support, host monthly sessions for new teachers to connect (T.E.A.C.H.), offer workshops and have established a website that provide links to useful sites as well as provide a venue for news and communication between teachers.

If you would like to contact a Peer to Peer consultant, they can be reached at:

Esther Carelse-Borzel	778-227-2860	ecarelse@vsb.bc.ca
Phil Lee	778-836-1290	pkleee@vsb.bc.ca
Myrne Ross	604-713-5026	myross@vbs.bc.ca

Please do not schedule after-school events on next year's Staff Rep Assembly and General Meeting days

Below are the dates for Staff Rep Assemblies and General Meetings during the 2009-2010 school year. Please do not schedule after-school meetings, professional development activities, sports events, or other activities on these days. It is important that all worksites have the opportunity to be represented at all of these meetings. The dates are as follows:

September 22	March 3
October 20	March 23
November 17	April 20
December 8	May 18
January 19	June 15

**General Meeting /
 Staff Rep Assembly
 September 22
 Tupper Secondary, 4 p.m.**