



Stronger Together

2014 February 26

Staff Rep Weekly

Please share this important information with all VESTA members

Dates to Remember

Meetings at VESTA office 4pm unless otherwise indicated.

March 3

Advance Poll – VESTA office 8am—4:30pm

March 4

Strike Vote at schools or VESTA office

March 5

Strike Vote at VESTA office 8am—4pm

Aboriginal Ed Committee

March 6

Strike Vote at VESTA office 8am—4pm

Intern'l Women's Day Dinner, 5pm, Flamingo Restaurant

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Strike Vote – Tuesday, March 4 at your school!

Since the BC Supreme Court ruling, the government, via BCPSEA, tabled language to once again strip our collective agreement of all class size, composition, and staffing levels. As a further insult, they tabled an unfair and unreasonable salary offer. Even though most other public sector workers received 3.5% to 4% over the last two years, teachers have been offered 0.5 (not retroactive to June 30) and 0 in the first two years of this new contract. That means up to two more years of zeros.

Teachers have taken four years of zeros, and continue to fall behind. Teachers are looking for a fair deal negotiated in good faith that respects our work and provides better support for our students. But this government is determined to underfund BC's education system. We're already \$1,000 per student below the national average and have the worst student-educator ratio in the country.

Our only recourse in response to these unfair and unreasonable proposals is to apply pressure through a strike vote. VESTA's strike vote will take place on March 4 at schools. Advance voting will be on Monday, March 3 at the VESTA office only. Voting at VESTA office will continue on March 4, 5, and 6.

BCTF will announce the results the evening of March 6. **VOTE YES!!**

Restored 2002 Language in our CA

VESTA pursued, in May 2000, a special needs grievance where 25 teachers had over 3 special needs children in their classes, and the resolution was that almost everyone received an extra 0.5FTE teacher in their class. It is vital that newer teachers understand that with our restored language, it is the arrival of the 3rd child with special needs, not the 4th or more that triggers the violation of our CA. Historically, the remedy that was typically achieved was additional teacher time for that teacher's classroom.

Government Granted Stay of Justice Griffin's Ruling

Wednesday morning, Justice David Harris granted a stay of order to the BC government on the implementation of our restored Collective Agreement provisions. He further ruled against the release of the confidential court documents, until the government's appeal of Justice Griffin's ruling is heard.

The stay of order does not indicate in any way that Justice Griffin's ruling in BC Supreme Court was incorrect. It is expected that the Court of Appeal will hear the case in May 2014. BCTF president Jim Iker stated, "We hope that happens sooner rather than later so we can actually have some certainty heading into the next school year and we're hoping that government is going to work with us to expedite the hearings."

Coming Events – Just Film Festival: Fri., Feb. 28 to Sun. Mar. 2

The Just Film Festival brings the pursuit of justice to the big screen. Festival shows social justice and environmental documentaries with the objective to motivate audiences to action by focusing on both global and local issues. It runs Feb 28–Mar 2 at Langara College and is BC's largest social justice film festival. See www.justfilm.org