



**Stronger Together**

September 13th, 2018

# VESTA Weekly

Topics Worth Talking about! Please read and discuss with your colleagues

## Dates to Remember

Meetings at the VESTA office start at 4pm unless otherwise indicated.

**Staff Rep Assembly/  
General Meeting**  
September 18th

**Professional Issues  
Committee Meeting**  
September 19th

**TTOC Committee  
Meeting**  
September 20th



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## FSA Exemption Letters

The Foundation Skills Assessment tests will be coming up early again this year with the administration dates between October 1st and November 9th so it is important to get exemption letters to parents as soon as possible. The BCTF now has a letter and detachable exemption form available through a link at <https://www.bctf.ca/fsa.aspx>. Letters in French, Punjabi and traditional Chinese, will be available and posted shortly on the same page. Please remember that these communications need to be in a sealed envelope or stapled shut and addressed to the parents or guardians of the student when being sent home. The letter has been reviewed by BCPSEA and there should be no challenges regarding sending this updated version of the FSA letter and exemption form home. Note that at the bottom of the BCTF page there are links to letters supporting the BCTF position that the unethical or unfair use of the FSA data needs to be stopped. More information on the 2004 Monroe arbitration and 2008 Kinzie arbitrator support of our right and responsibility to communicate with parents regarding educational issues is also available through links on the above BCTF page.

## Student Vote

October 20 this year is municipal election day across BC. Municipal elections often have very low voter turnout, but as teachers we have a unique opportunity to help make long term changes to those statistics. Student Vote is a non-partisan initiative that teachers can access to help students learn about government and the electoral process, research the parties and platforms, discuss relevant issues and participate in an election simulation including voting for the candidates of the current election. Feedback from students and teachers who have participated in Student Vote in past elections has been overwhelmingly positive. As students engage they often talk to their parents about the issues and parents become more engaged and likely to vote. Teachers are provided with lesson plans and resources needed through every step of the program. To register your class or to learn more about the program visit [studentvote.ca](http://studentvote.ca).

## Remedy

If you were entitled to remedy last year and had unclaimed time remaining at the end of June, rest assured that the entitlement has not disappeared. Although the Ministry of Education has reclaimed the funding given to school boards for remedy, there is an arbitration decision pending and the results will determine the way forward with this issue. The VSB has archived the remedy information, but teachers should also keep all their own records of time owed in case discrepancies occur that need to be sorted out later.

As teachers receive their new classes some are finding that once again there are violations of our class size and composition language. Teachers of classes in violation will again be entitled remedy using the same formula as last year as set out in the MOA. Note that all teachers will begin at zero minutes for this year. The Board is working on a tracking system through People Soft and teacher's pay slips with a running total of remedy accrued. Stay tuned for more information. As was the case last year, we urge teachers to keep their own records of time owed and have the staff rep contact the office if there are questions regarding entitlements. Remember that remedy is calculated beginning in the month of October and is not accessible until November as it is based on the greatest violation in each month, which cannot be determined until the month is complete.