

VESTA WEEKLY

TOPICS WORTH TALKING ABOUT! PLEASE READ AND DISCUSS WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES

IN THIS ISSUE

Looking Back, Looking Forward - Page 1

Appreciating VESTA Teachers Teaching On Call - Page 2

#94DaysForReconciliation - Page 2

Rent Strike Bargain Survey - Page 3

Employment Insurance Benefits - Page 3

BCTF Opportunities for Members - Page 4



Looking Back, Looking Forward

Colleagues, friends, this year has been too much. Together we navigated the health and safety re-opening plan, worked our way through Option 4 and failures to fill that impacted students and staff in significant and challenging ways, stood together to defend our right to safe working and learning conditions. We came face to face with the many ways that our work, controlled in part by provincial, in part by municipal governments, requires significantly improved consultation and communication strategies, and that once again funding is at the root of many of our concerns and issues. We saw the impact of the reduction in numbers of designated students who “count” towards our class size and composition provisions, and felt the lack of resource support when our non-enrolling colleagues were pulled from their position to cover unfilled absences.

For many of us, this year saw significantly impacted relationships with families and friends, some isolation and the creation of new coping strategies and pandemic-related skills. At the same time, we were witness to so many global and social justice crises that profoundly changed the way we teach, live in the world, and connect with one another. While we worked to provide trauma-informed classrooms for our students,

...Continued from Page 1

Through all of this, your School Union Rep Team – Staff Rep, Staff Committee Chair, Health and Safety Chair, Professional Issues Chair, and all of those who supported the communication of updates, answered questions, facilitated process were there with you. Your VESTA Executive Committee was working hard to make decisions and run the union throughout and on your behalf.

Here at the VESTA Office, we hope that this summer will see you taking time to spend time safely with family and friends, doing things that will be restorative. In the year ahead, we have many opportunities including an upcoming round of bargaining, a Federal election and another year working with our students and families.

Appreciating VESTA Teachers Teaching On Call

This year, the provincial teacher shortage, compounded by increased absences due to COVID-19 saw significant failures to fill in schools across the province. Our colleagues who work on-call faced incredibly difficult working conditions and struggled with reassignments, poor pandemic-related information and protections and sometimes a lack of understanding of the complexity of their work. Please remember that our TTOC colleagues are a vital and essential part of our union and workplaces and find the time to show your appreciation and respect for their contributions!

#94DaysForReconciliation

Looking for an accessible way to teach about the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action? Check out the [youtube channel](#) where you can find a video by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youth who contribute their voices and opinions on each of the 94 calls to action with examples or questions. These videos are a great way to connect students to the Calls to Action, are produced in both French and English, and could be a daily way to remind ourselves of the needs for decolonization and reconciliation in schools and our lives.

Rent Strike Bargain Survey

Rent Strike Bargain is a grassroots, province-wide coalition, ceded by the Vancouver Tenants' Union, with the goals of seeding new tenant unions across the province, building solidarity between renters & workers, and ultimately winning collective bargaining rights for renters. Enshrining collective bargaining rights for renters in BC would:

1. Giving tenant the power to negotiate down rents & annual rent increases;
2. Put power back in the tenants hands to control their own housing;
3. Level the current unequal power dynamic between renters & landlords; and
4. Rent strike without fear of eviction.

To win these rights & spark new tenant unions they're getting in touch with workers who rent to get them involved in the fight. We need your help to get a renters committee started at your union, support rural workers in starting up their own local tenant unions, and more!

Can you take 2 minutes to fill out this [survey](#) to help the campaign for collective bargaining rights connect with union workers who rent & their allies?

The campaign is growing quickly and wants to get you involved! You can read more about them at RSB's website, www.rentstrikebargain.com, or by reaching out to them at rentstrikebargain@gmail.com.



Employment Insurance Benefits

You may be eligible for EI regular benefits if:

- your teaching contract has ended, and you were teaching at a pre-elementary, elementary, secondary, technical or vocational school;
- you teach on a casual or substitute basis; or
- you had employment other than teaching.

You may also be eligible for another EI benefit as long as you meet the conditions for this benefit. For information on these benefits, visit Canada.ca/ei.

Apply as soon as possible after you stop working. Do not wait until you get your record of employment (ROE) to apply. If you wait more than four weeks after your last day of work to apply, you may lose benefits.

Depending on which benefits you applied for, you will need to submit a report every two weeks to Service Canada. In these reports, you must:

- show you are available for work;
- declare any income; and
- indicate which days you are not available for work (for example, when you are on vacation).

You will also need to keep a detailed record of your job search efforts, as we may ask for this information at any time.

If you have any questions, contact Service Canada at 1-800-206-7218 or visit Canada.ca/ei

BCTF Opportunities for Members

- ***Committee for Action on Social Justice Disability Justice Action Group
One 3-year term***

The committee makes recommendations to the BCTF Executive Committee on social justice issues and BCTF social justice policy; promotes and assists in the development of local, zonal, and provincial networks of teachers on social justice issues; creates resources for teachers and locals; assists locals and zones in developing general social justice programs, projects, and events; and works on developing links with other unions, community groups, NGOs, and others.

- ***Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee Two, 2-year terms, Four, 3-year terms***

This committee advises the Executive Committee on the development and implementation of an employment equity program for Aboriginal teachers, reviews research on the level of success of Aboriginal students, and provides advice on initiatives to enhance success for Aboriginal students.

- ***Provincial Bargaining Team***

The team will work under the direction of the Executive Committee and will be responsible for negotiating the provincial aspects of the next collective agreement. The secondment dates for the team members are yet to be determined but will be as required during the 2021–22 school year and likely to be on a full-time basis once bargaining is under way. When seconded on a full-time basis, the members serving on the provincial bargaining team are on leave from their teaching duties and cannot hold any other BCTF or local leadership roles. In addition, applicants should also be able to commit to considerable time to this role, including extended periods of leave or secondment away from their home community, and be able to work effectively in a team situation. Applicants must submit a curriculum vitae form and include a statement regarding their approach to bargaining.

Find out more about the above postings at
<https://bctf.ca/opportunities/BCTFCommittees.aspx>