

VESTA WEEKLY

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

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February is Black History Month

This is a great opportunity to start thinking about the ways to highlight not only the Black History, but to investigate and delve into the frequent erasure of Black Canadian history, and our tendency as Canadians to often focus on other Nations. Black History Month is also an opportunity to consider the differences between settler identities, including the experiences of those whose history in Canada was not consensual or a result of choice, as it was for those whose relationship to Canada and relationship with First Nations was by way of Slavery or forced relocation. Remember that the BCTF's [Teach BC](#) has resources developed and vetted by teachers on social justice and other curricular matters, as well as the Anti-Oppression Educators Collective PSA [Resource page](#).

Please be mindful and use a trauma informed lens when addressing curriculum that connects with the oppression of your students or their families, and acknowledge that the experience of each of your students will require consideration and thoughtfulness.

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If you are looking for additional support, please consider joining the National Congress of Black Women Foundation, New Westminster and District Labour Council, and Vancouver and District Labour Council for two virtual events entitled "Facing Facts and Finding Feelings"

Through our presentations and resources, we hope to encourage you to look for truths, find the facts and face the feelings. We have the opportunity to recognize history and work towards a more diverse and inclusive society.

Part 1: February 9, 2022 at 7:00pm

Join moderator Alicia Fahrner and speakers Candace Knoll (Racism is a Virus), and Parker Johnson (Anti-Racism, Respect and Inclusion at Work) for an insightful discussion as we honour Black History Month.

Register:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Q9E9jUlsQnmkfDD0CEwjcQ

Part 2: February 16, 2022 at 7:00pm

Join moderator Alicia Fahrner and speakers Parker Johnson (Systemic Racism and Intersectionality) and Candace Knoll (Dismantling and Challenging Racism) for an insightful discussion as we honour Black History Month.

Register: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_mflnBD4sQYSwSxTFIXqkYw

BCTF New Teacher Zoom



The poster features the BC Teachers' Federation logo at the top left. The main title "New Teachers' ZOOM Gathering" is prominently displayed in large, bold, blue and red letters. Below the title, a sub-headline reads "Level Up with Professional Development". A descriptive text block states: "Join an open discussion on accessing funds through your Collective Agreements to support choices around your professional growth." At the bottom, event details are provided: "DATE: Tuesday, January 25, 2022", "TIME: 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.", and "REGISTRATION: <https://members.bctf.ca/Event.aspx?e=2326>". To the right of the text, there is a photograph of a person's hands typing on a laptop keyboard.

New Teachers, please mark your calendars for January 25, 2022 from 3:30 – 4:30 – the BCTF will be hosting a virtual zoom meeting for New Teachers to share strategies, support and struggles. You can register on the [BCTF website](https://members.bctf.ca/Event.aspx?e=2326) under the "EVENTS" tab.

Remedy

At Tuesday's General Meeting there was a discussion about the small amounts of unused remedy in schools that add up to less than a $\frac{1}{2}$ day TTOC call out. The following motion was carried as result of that discussion, "That VESTA develop a mechanism for accounting for and pooling school-based remedy funds below a certain threshold, to be distributed by a joint committee." The remedy agreements between VESTA and the VSB have an agreement to form a joint committee that can be utilized if there is no agreement on how the remedy should be used at a current school. Up to this point schools had been able to pool remedy either for postings or a TTOC call out. However, this year there are small amounts of remedy that cannot be combined to create a $\frac{1}{2}$ day TTOC call out. This motion allows for the union to work with the District to determine how best to reallocate these small amounts of unused remedy. This means that the remedy will no longer stay connected with the teacher who generated it but may be pooled and redistributed.

Multi-Age Cluster Class Input

The VSB is currently reviewing and revisioning the MACC program (Multi Age Cluster Classes). The engagement process is currently underway in the form of digital workshops and an online survey. The VSB is looking to implement significant changes to the current program that will impact teachers and students. As VESTA represents and speaks on behalf of all elementary teachers in the District we are collecting your feedback, questions and concerns about the revisioning of the MACC program. We will collate your feedback and provide it to the District. Individual teachers are not provided the same protections as the union when speaking out or providing feedback or concern about the employer, which is why we are asking that you send your feedback to the union. The deadline to submit your feedback to the union is February 4th. Please hold a VESTA meeting at your school and collect feedback on behalf of your staff or you can send individual feedback to joanne@vesta.ca.

BCTF AGM

The BCTF Annual General Meeting is a yearly hootenanny of policy, procedures and politics. If you have concerns or curiosities about why the BCTF does (or doesn't) take positions on certain matters, how decisions get made, or what VESTA's relationship is to the provincial body, there is no better way to learn than by diving into the debate that creates those policies.

We still have space for additional delegates to be elected in the February meeting. The meeting will be held virtually due to concerns about the Omicron variant, which means you can attend from the comfort of your own home. You can find the application form on the VESTA Website [here](#) or put your name forward from the floor at the February General Meeting.

The responsibility is 4 days of online meetings during spring break, as well as that VESTA provides training with release time for delegates to discuss recommendations and learn processes.

Coverage for SSWs

VESTA has been receiving reports that teachers have been directed to cover for absent SSWs, our CUPE colleagues who work with us in our classrooms. While resource teachers may be redirected to provide extra assistance to a class that has an absent SSW, the role of the resource teacher remains that of a resource teacher. The role of the SSW may be to provide assistance to specific students including toileting and feeding. Teachers are not trained to provide this type of intimate support to students and there should be no expectation for a teacher to do this type of work. If your administrator directs you to cover for an SSW, please ask for that direction in writing and contact VESTA so that we can reach out to the board to problem solve.

Bargaining Update

Local bargaining has been progressing on a weekly basis and a full report was provided to Tuesday's General Meeting on the objectives set by the November 1st VTF General Meeting. Please speak with your Staff Rep for updates and watch this space for information on progress.

Your BCTF Provincial Bargaining team has been appointed and has begun planning for the upcoming round. The Bargaining conference, held in the fall of 2021, determined bargaining priorities for the entire BCTF and the team, appointed from locals around the province, are researching and working on proposals. The BCTF AGM is an excellent place to discuss bargaining and strategy!



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TTOC task force

The VESTA Executive identified that a significant factor for teacher workload is the recurrent failures to fill when teachers are absent, and this is never clearer than when we are in the midst of a COVID wave, such as Omicron. The results of failures to fill teacher absences include lost or delayed prep time, lost or rescheduled resource support, availability of libraries and other learning supports, reorganization of classes and the reassignment of teachers across the school and the district.

In the view of the Executive, this is very closely linked to the callout of TTOCs. Our concern is that before a failure to fill impacts a school community and/or school staff, every available TTOC should be deployed. To support research on VSB practice, the VESTA EC is seeking TTOCs to determine a mechanism for collecting this data and studying the resulting information. We are seeking 5 TTOC VESTA members to work on this project with release time from VESTA. This work can be done virtually.

Please use the [CV form for Task Forces](#) to apply for this opportunity and email to amy@vesta.ca

Dates to Remember

Executive Committee Meeting

January 25, 2022 @ 4:00 PM

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86512566758>

Meeting ID: 865 1256 6758

Passcode: 980165

Dial by your location

+1 778 907 2071 Canada

VESTA

The Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association is the union representing elementary teachers and adult educators working in public schools in Vancouver.