



Stronger Together

November 12, 2020

VESTA Weekly

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

Success at the Labour Relations Board

Yesterday's decision by the LRB was welcomed by teachers across the province. You'll recall that in early October, the BCTF sought intervention from the Labour Relations Board on the haphazard and inconsistent implementation of the K-12 Health and Safety guidelines. In part, this is due to the fact that the existing processes can be lengthy and that some of the same issues were arising in multiple worksites and districts.

The key components that members need to know about are as follows:

- It is in effect as of Monday, November 16
- We still need to keep using the local processes (school based and district JOHS, grievance) where appropriate
- A set of troubleshooters has been assigned to work on an expedited basis (including evenings and weekends) to address consistent or repetitive problems
- Clarification on the enforceability of ministry and district plans
- LRB review of district plans for compliance
- Strengthening and increasing collaborative role of provincial Steering Committee

Please continue to check your BCTF email for updates and information on this important victory. One of the factors that we are most pleased about is that the decision does not limit the use of the established process to Health and Safety matters, which we believe may potentially assist in addressing Workload issues, Medical Accommodations and other issues related to COVID operations in school districts.

Teachers and VESTA have been raising concerns through our JOHS committee and grievances, and we'll need to keep doing that. The LRB decision won't solve all of our problems and we'll need to demonstrate we've used the local processes available, but please be assured that VESTA will be availing ourselves of this process as appropriate.

Please plan to attend the Staff Rep Assembly on November 17 for updates on this and other Health and Safety matters.

VESTA's work with Provincial and Regional Bodies

This week, VESTA President, Joanne Sutherland, met with the provincial Steering Committee to raise concerns about issues facing VESTA members, and has continued to meet with the Health Authority to improve processes in schools around enforcement and reporting of confirmed COVID cases.

We are working to establish greater transparency around school exposures and any transmissions, and to determine proactive measures in case the model is required to change – i.e. an equitable, sustainable remote learning option, should such a need be required.

At the BCTF Rep Assembly, VESTA Local Reps helped to carry motions including:

- Sharing of expenditures of Provincial and Federal COVID grants
- Investigation of the impact on student learning of COVID measures
- Investigation on the physical and mental health of staff and students
- Review and report on the efficacy of the K-12 Restart Plan

BCTF face shields and masks

BCTF branded face masks have arrived! The staff at the VESTA office are hard at work packaging up your one-per-member branded face mask. They are soft and warm just in time for winter, and you can show your union pride by wearing them at school or out in the community. Please watch for an envelope addressed to your staff rep. The mail-outs will begin at the end of this week, and should be in schools by next Friday.

We still have a number of BCTF face shields available for distribution. Please email lori@vesta.ca if you wish to receive one. We will send them out on a first come, first served basis and prioritize members who work across cohorts and TTOCs.

BCRTA Retirement Workshops

The BC Retired Teachers' Association has moved their workshops online during COVID-19 and we wanted to remind members that the BCRTA is an excellent source of information and resources. The workshops are informative and helpful in considering or planning for retirement and will help members make assessments about their own retirement and understand the Teachers' Pension Plan. You can find information about, and register for, upcoming workshops on the [VESTA website](#).

Café Etico and CoDevelopment Canada

Looking for a sustainable, ethical gift with local connections for friends and family this coming holiday season? VESTA is a member of CoDevelopment Canada, a non-profit organization committed to social justice and global education in the Americas. CoDev founded Café Etico to support community-led projects and pay fair prices to small scale farmers in Nicaragua, Guatemala, Cuba and Mexico. You can learn more about the project and purchase fair trade, organic, ethically sourced and grown coffee and chocolate [here](#).

Dates to Remember:

Staff Rep Assembly November 26 @ 4 pm	Professional Issues Committee Meeting November 25 @ 4 pm	TTOC Committee Meeting November 26 @ 4 pm
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E-mail!

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VESTA

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