



**Stronger Together**

November 19, 2020

# VESTA Weekly

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

## **BCTF Survey Reflects Vancouver Teachers' Lived Experiences**

The BCTF released a survey in September for all members focusing specifically on the adequacy of health and safety measures and the availability of appropriate medical accommodations for teachers. [The results](#) show that in September, only 7% of teachers felt the health and safety measures at their worksite are completely adequate.

The report demonstrates that teachers still require significant improvements to the health and safety plan in schools. Another issue that arose from the survey and we are feeling keenly in Vancouver is the inadequacy of the remote options available to students. Teaching in-class and remotely is not a sustainable program, and the Option 4 model was meant to be short term only. VESTA President, Joanne Sutherland, spoke last night at the Board meeting about teachers' untenable workload and the challenges created by Option 4.

*"Teachers understand and support the need for remote learning models for students but there needs to be dedicated teaching staff in schools and it needs to be consistent and predictable. Teacher workload is untenable and this cannot be stressed enough. VESTA's position from the beginning has been that reducing class density is the key factor in enabling physical distancing and health and safety."*

The VSB is contemplating the need for remote learning beyond December, given the increase in cases. VESTA will continue to advocate for discrete teaching staff for remote learners and the ongoing need for medical accommodations for teachers. VSB Board meetings are public and you can watch them online on Youtube. Livestream links and agendas can be found [here](#). The next Board Committee meeting is Finance Committee Monday, November 23.

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## **Health and Safety Fact of the Week**

Drills need not be conducted in the usual way or all at the same time. Earthquake and fire drills can be staggered where groups within the school practice at different times to avoid unnecessary density in the hallways or at muster points. For Lockdown drills, teachers can walk students through the expectations during a lockdown, but should not actually physically cluster together in the classroom.

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## **2019-2022 Collective Agreement Melding Underway**

The new collective agreement is being worked on by the VESTA Grievance Committee. When the two tables (local and provincial) sign off on changes to the Collective Agreement, a complex process of melding the old and new language together takes place and must be agreed to by both employer and union. We hope to have the new agreement printed and available for members soon.

You will remember that there were three matters that the provincial team agreed to discuss after bargaining was complete – replacing the Best Efforts language with a process for compliance to unlock an additional 1% at the top of the grid, a table with government to review the bargaining structure itself and a discussion about secondary and Adult Ed prep time. The provincial Bargaining Team will be meeting this week and meetings are booked with the LRB mediator to plan next steps in concluding these discussions.

## Vancouver and District Labour Council

The VDLC is a council of metro labour unions who meet once a month to build and maintain solidarity, share and problem solve issues, and to do ongoing education and outreach in the community. VESTA is an active member in the VDLC and VESTA VP Allison Jambor was just elected this week to the VDLC Executive Committee. Thanks, Allison for representing teachers!

VESTA still has spots available for additional VESTA delegates. If you are interested and would like to put your name forward to be a VESTA delegate to the VDLC, please contact [allison@vesta.ca](mailto:allison@vesta.ca)

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## Tell a Friend about the VESTA Weekly

During this time, the VESTA Weekly and our monthly meetings are the most effective way to get consistent, accurate information to members. We're asking each member who receives this email to ask a colleague if they are getting weekly VESTA updates in their inbox. If they are not, they can easily and quickly sign up by sending an email to [lori@vesta.ca](mailto:lori@vesta.ca) in order to be part of the ongoing communication and information loop.

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## BCTF Face Shields

There are still a few BCTF donated face shields at the VESTA office and we'd like to get them out to members. If you would like a good quality face shield blue bagged to your school, email [lori@vesta.ca](mailto:lori@vesta.ca)

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## **Dates to Remember:**

<p><b>Professional Issues Committee Meeting</b> November 25 @ 4 pm <b>Join Zoom Meeting</b> <a href="https://zoom.us/j/95001648816?pwd=ZzcvNk1HNEgvNUcwL053cXZWUEdHZz09">https://zoom.us/j/95001648816?pwd=ZzcvNk1HNEgvNUcwL053cXZWUEdHZz09</a> Meeting ID: 950 0164 8816 Passcode: 818828 +1 778 907 2071 Canada</p>	<p><b>TTOC Committee Meeting</b> November 26 @ 4 pm <b>Join Zoom Meeting</b> <a href="https://zoom.us/j/98697808908?pwd=TWo0N3dtM1ZjZERNU1FncUJRc0xndz09">https://zoom.us/j/98697808908?pwd=TWo0N3dtM1ZjZERNU1FncUJRc0xndz09</a> Meeting ID: 986 9780 8908 Passcode: 419021 +1 778 907 2071 Canada</p>
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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.*