



Stronger Together

October 29, 2020

VESTA Weekly

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

Face Shields to be distributed

There were a number of face shields that were donated to VESTA through the BCTF and are here at the VESTA office. They appear to be a higher quality than the ones provided by the district. The VESTA EC carried a motion to distribute 50% of those masks to TTOCs and 50% of them to district / itinerant teachers upon request. We are interpreting this to include school-based teachers who work across cohorts.

Please send an email to lori@vesta.ca if you would like to receive one of the face masks and we can blue bag them to a worksite for you until we run out! First come, first served.

VESTA Policy on Letters of Reference – Mini and Private Schools

VESTA policy commits members to declining any invitations to write reference letters for students applying to mini-schools or private schools. Due to COVID-19, the process for application and selection may look different than previous years, but that does not mean a change in our practice. Please support this policy by ensuring that our response is collective across the city. We have spoken with our VSTA colleagues, who are aware of our policy and do not expect letters of reference from VESTA members to be provided as part of application packages.

VESTA General Meetings and Staff Rep Assemblies

Our last GM / Staff Rep Assembly was a lengthy affair where many important items were discussed. However, the time of adjournment was too late to allow reasonable participation for many members. To address this concern, we will work on the upcoming meetings to prioritize discussion topics early in the agenda and to ensure that only the most time sensitive matters are brought to the meetings.

What we request from members to support the streamlining of the agenda is that motions are provided in advance as much as possible, and that if you'd like support for the crafting of motions, that you contact your in house liaison or one of our VESTA Local Reps.

VESTA recommended standard TTOC form

It's always important that our TTOC colleagues have access to the information they need to do their work during the day, and to do so safely. It's never been clearer that we need to be mindful to convey information to all adults on site. The VESTA TTOC Information Form is recommended by the TTOC committee to ensure adequate provision of information, and to streamline the process for teachers taking leave. Completing this form once and re-using for future absences can save time and paper and ensure a more seamless transition for TTOCs working at your school. You can find the form [here](#) on the VESTA website.

Failures to Fill

Thank you to all Staff Reps who have started sending in your failure to fill forms. This is really helping the VESTA office get a sense of the magnitude of the problem and the specific places where the need is most significant. The information you are providing regarding loss of service to students is helpful in our advocacy, as well as in our preparation for the VSB budget process in the spring. Please [fill in the PDF file](#), save it with a new name (preferably, the name of your school) and email it to jody@vesta.ca. You can also print, fill it in by hand, and scan or blue bag to the VESTA Office. Please also keep track at your site of names and dates.

Opportunity to set BCTF policy

Every March, the BCTF AGM sets policy and procedures for how our provincial union does its' work. If you have ideas about things being done, or done differently, you can influence the direction of the BCTF by bringing a motion to the VESTA December General Meeting. Please contact your in-house liaison or VESTA Local Rep if you would like help putting your ideas into words! You can [find the form to submit your motion here, on the VESTA website](#). The BCTF AGM brings nearly 700 members together from around the province to make decisions, elect the Executive Committee and debate and determine our collective direction.

Mentorship Funds from 2019 Round of Bargaining

The VESTA share of the bargained mentorship funds amounts to \$625,000 and will be available after November 13, 2020. This was negotiated as one of our recruitment and retention objectives in the last round of bargaining. This is union money controlled by the union and our goal is to ensure the broadest application to members. Please watch for specific information about application processes, but the criteria is as follows:

- Available to all VESTA members including K-12 and AE members, district, itinerant staff and TTOCs
- funds only be used for TTOC release, either to release contract teachers or, in the case of TTOC applicants, to pay their TTOC daily rate.
- That a committee of one IHTO, the Pro-D chair and the TTOC chair accept and review applications at the start of each month using the following criteria:
 - that the committee prioritize broad availability of the fund if possible
 - that any member who self-identifies be accepted, with priority given to early career teachers or teachers who have recently begun a different position
 - That the following projects be supported:
 - Release to observe another teacher's practice
 - Collaboration with another teacher
 - Voluntary peer mentorship arrangements

Meeting Dates:

*****NOTE*** Please sign into the meeting using the link below. Please sign in early if the platform is new to you as the meeting will begin promptly at 4:00 pm. Use of video is optional, but please rename your profile to show your first and last name and school name.**

Communications Committee Meeting

November 4

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/97562833424?pwd=T3ZTeDNDUnU1bXFyMGtrQ1VRYmdEdz09>

Meeting ID: 975 6283 3424

Passcode: 056823

Dial by your location

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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.