



WEST VANCOUVER Teachers' Association

Vol 44, no 3 Oct 2021

Notes from your President – *Spencer Capier*

Dear Colleagues,

There's a new K-12 Student Reporting Policy coming, and it has the potential to increase your workload. The language is unclear and there is a risk of districts reading the policy in different ways. You can read a quick summary of it [here](#). You can also go [here](#) for the full document. Please go [here](#) to give feedback to the government about the new policy. See page two for Insight and analysis.

Some schools are doing in-person parent conferences. The WVTA has pressured the district to be consistent and let teachers have a say if principals feel in-person conferences are preferable. High Schools are virtual this year. Raise this issue in your staff committee meeting, staff meeting and JOHS committee. This is a choice your principal has made. Make them defend it.

There is now a K-12 mask mandate across the province, thanks to public pressure and lobbying by the BCTF. Unsurprisingly, there have been challenges adopting the new mandate.

Principals are reluctant to discuss with parents any nuance around exemptions. The BCTF believes an exemption request should be the *beginning* of a conversation, not the *end*. There should be a dialogue as to what extent the child can comply with the mandate. The district disagrees, directing principals and teachers not to inquire any further once an exemption is stated.

Teri Mooring, BCTF president is discussing our district's position with the ministry directly.

Let's support teachers with legitimate medical exemptions for mask wearing. Please be kind to one another. If you see a colleague without a mask, start with the assumption that they are unable to wear it for good reason. I have spoken to members with medical exemptions, and they need our support.

Vaccines for students aged 5-12 should be coming soon. Vancouver Coastal Health tells us there could be an approved pediatric vaccine as early as November.

I think it likely there will be a vaccine mandate for all K-12 staff. It is unclear how that will come about. Unlike other provinces, teachers are not the direct employees of the provincial government, we work for local school districts.

A district-by-district approach is undesirable. The prospect of several Northern and Interior school districts refusing a vaccine mandate would be divisive and would undermine vaccine mandates elsewhere in the province. **Therefore the BCTF altered their position on vaccine mandates from neutral to in favour of a *provincial* vaccine mandate.**

We are well into Fall, and I want to urge you all to **take time for yourselves**. Remember, this year is still not normal! Take that extra moment with a good book, or a cup of tea, or a walk. This might mean saying 'no' a bit more to the extras at work. Be well, and I look forward to seeing you all in person someday soon.

Spencer

WVTA Issues Report: Student Reporting Policy for Grades K-12

by Stephen Price

The Province has undertaken a review of the Reporting Policy for K-12. This is the policy that drives what we need to do for our CSL Reports, Parent Conferences, etc.

Deadline for Feedback: Nov 5.

In her most recent message to teachers, Teri Mooring highlighted her top 5 points of interest to teachers wanting to give feedback:

- 1. Teachers will be required to provide “learning updates” on student learning, in all subject areas, five times per year (three of these reports must be written).*
- 2. The first update must be provided within the first 25% of the learning period for a particular subject or course.*
- 3. All updates on student learning must include student-generated content.*
- 4. K–9 updates must use the provincial proficiency scale/Grade 10–12 must use grades and percentages and may also use the proficiency scale.*
- 5. The Ministry is replacing the current “I” (incomplete) grade with a new ‘IE’ (insufficient evidence) grade.*

At the WVTA Office, we have identified two key concerns we’d encourage teachers to comment on:

Issue #1: A Report would need to be issued in the first 25% of a course. In elementary, this seems to be required for each subject area.

The ministry policy as it relates to this could be read in two ways, but seems to indicate that the interpretation as above is the case. Graeme Rainey, our Policy contact at the BCTF agrees that section lacks clarity. While initially we wondered whether this meant that, in effect a full CSL report would be issued by, for example, Nov 6 for Elementary students (which effectively means that teachers would spend Thanksgiving writing that report with minimal real information about most subjects), Graeme did clarify that if instruction for different subjects started at different times (e.g.: if French didn’t start until Oct), then a rolling set of reports on each subject could be issued.

Position: That a summative report on all subjects within 25% of the beginning of the school year is not appropriate for effective formative assessment practice. An alternative approach would be that one of the informal learning updates (e.g.: Parent Conferences) happen within the first 25%. If this is the intent of the document, then that needs to be clarified.

Issue #2: Workload and additional descriptive feedback.

Presently, there are no provisions for assessing the additional workload that would result from the policy changes and whether this workload will be funded. Any successful policy implementation needs to address resources to support the policy. While additional descriptive feedback for families is a desirable assessment practice, this additional feedback shouldn’t come at the expense of effectively robbing teachers of time with their own families.

Position: The policy implementation needs to account for workload considerations and a process needs to be in place to ensure that the reporting policy does not create an additional workload on teachers as it is implemented.

Full details about the new policy and the link to the feedback survey is available [here](#).



Get your Flu Shot!
Friday, October 15th
8:00 am - 4:30 pm, WVSS
South Campus Gym



Oct. 22nd PSA Day:

[One-stop shopping – find all your PD opportunities here!](#)

BCTF Health & Wellness Program

The BCTF will assist teacher-members who are unable to maintain or return to their teaching positions due to physical or mental illness or disability by funding an early intervention rehabilitation program. This program is offered on a voluntary basis. The BCTF will promote wellness initiatives in districts and at individual work sites.

[Health & Wellness Program Video](#)

October 18th – Persons Day

Persons Day is an annual celebration in Canada, held each year on October 18th, to commemorate a famous constitutional case (Edwards v. Canada) decided on October 18th, 1929. The Persons Case held that women were eligible to sit in the Canadian Senate.

Leading the case was **Emily Murphy** of the Famous Five, five prominent Canadian suffragists who advocated for women and children. She, along with **Irene Marryat Parlby**, **Nellie Moody McClung**, **Louise Crummy McKinney** and **Henrietta Muir Edwards** created a petition in an effort to have women considered legally as a person, so that women could be appointed to the Senate. They asked the Supreme Court of Canada to answer the question: *“Does the word ‘Persons’ in Section 24 of the British North American Act, 1867, include female persons?”* The decision was passed that women are not such persons, but the judgement was overturned by the British Judicial Committee of the Privy Council on October 18th, 1929. This case came to be known and the Persons Case, and was part of a larger drive for social and political equality.



WVTA Scholarships Awarded

A WVTA scholarship of \$1000 was awarded to each of two school graduates that are the daughter or son of a WVTA member. Congratulations to:

Dahlia Naami, daughter of WVTA member **Ahmed Naami** (Sentinel). Dahlia has begun her studies in the Bachelor of Science program at UBC.

Demetri Patterson, son of WVTA member **Sofia Patterson** (Rockridge, TTOC). Demetri has begun his studies in the Bachelor of Arts program at UBC.

The Scholarship Committee looked for dedicated service to school and community as well as academic and extra-curricular achievements. Their task was a difficult one - all this year’s numerous applicants were outstanding, and the committee was particularly impressed with how each and every one was able to maintain high levels of participation and achievement during COVID. We congratulate them all and wish them great success as they pursue their academic and life goals!

Dianne Wanless
 Chair, WVTA Scholarship Committee

