



# WEST VANCOUVER Teachers' Association

Vol 44 no 4 Nov 2021

## Notes from the President – *Spencer Capier*

### **Colleagues,**

As November hurtles towards December and the prospect of a break, many of you have reached out to say things are still far from normal in our workplaces. I encourage you to find those moments in the day to take care of yourself.

The BCTF has many resources on health and wellness, and they are quite good. I've used them and have been grateful they were there for me and my family. [Here](#) is just one example of a mental health and wellness toolkit provided by the BCTF.

Our work is important, our health and wellbeing even more so.

### ➤ **Bargaining**

We've begun local bargaining. Normally, provincial bargaining occurs first, local bargaining second. This round, it has flipped. This new ordering of bargaining has placed locals at a disadvantage when it comes to communicating with members. While the membership was surveyed in the Spring and at the start of the school year there has not been the opportunity to communicate bargaining priorities at a general meeting.

I therefore want to offer a **Q and A session via Zoom on November 25th at 7pm**. Your bargaining team will be there to summarize local and provincial bargaining priorities and to answer questions. Many thanks to the team, who are **Stephen Price** (chair), **Jane Standfield** (Westbay), **Adrienne Gruber** (WVSS), and me.

### [Join Zoom Meeting](#)

**Meeting ID: 873 0021 1381**

**Passcode: 575325**

### **Attend by phone - [find your local number](#):**

**Meeting ID: 873 0021 1381**

**Passcode: 575325**

### ➤ **Bargaining Split of Issues Reminder:**

- The Provincial table bargains issues like:
  - salary and benefits (anything with a dollar attached)
- The local table bargains issues like:
  - Health and Safety
  - Staff Meetings
  - Space and Facilities
  - Post and Fill Language

### ➤ **Minutes of Instruction Audit:**

The WVTA engaged in a comprehensive audit of minutes of instruction. Big thanks to **Michelle Ahoy** (Rockridge), **Dave Gibson** (Sentinel), and **Stephen Price** (VP) for their stellar work on this!

We can say with confidence that the High School minutes of instruction comply with our collective agreement. However, while minutes of instruction and prep time look good *on paper*, the WVTA is aware that X block/FIT/Learning Hub puts a significant burden on teachers to delineate and preserve prep time. This is an ongoing discussion with District Leadership, and I thank Staff Reps for being strong advocates on this issue.

The audit raised several questions about Elementary minutes and we are working with the BCTF to answer those questions. Expect to hear more in the coming weeks.

### ➤ **Health and Safety:**

Last month I predicted an imminent vaccine mandate for teachers. I was wrong. Recently, the government issued a formidable guideline for instituting vaccine mandates in school districts. Consequently, many districts have said they will not introduce mandates. I do not expect West Vancouver Schools to buck this trend.

*(cont'd...)*

Staff reps report many parents are exempting their children from mask wearing. The district is unwilling to engage further with those parents, and so I spoke with Vancouver Coastal Health to see if the district is in compliance with ministry guidelines.

While VCH says that the risk of even 20% of students not wearing masks in school is minimal, they did say that it would be reasonable to respond to an exemption by suggesting “an alternate type of mask or using a mask for a portion of the day.” We will keep working for a better response from the district.

➤ **BCTF Bargaining Conference Oct. 28<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup>:**

Your Bargaining Conference delegates were **Adrienne Gruber, Jane Standfield, Stephen Price and Spencer Capier**. During the three day zoom conference the WVTA was able to lobby successfully for provincial priorities around maternity leave and benefits harmonization. However we were not able to convince a majority of delegates that salary harmonization should be a priority at the provincial table.

➤ **BCTF Fall Rep Assembly Nov. 5<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>:**

Many of the local resolutions around bargaining priorities were brought to this meeting from the previous weekend’s Bargaining Conference. Along with further debate on bargaining, motions were passed on climate activism and curriculum, and the removal of gender from class lists. An in-depth presentation on the Teachers Pension Plan showed that our pension is in very good health.

➤ **District Diversity Survey:**

The district recently sent out a survey in order to determine how diverse their workforce is. I have heard from many of you concerned about the personal nature of some of the questions. I support the survey and its goal to increase equity and inclusion in the workplace. We have been assured that responses are anonymous and that the purpose of the data is only to improve equity. While I’d encourage all who are comfortable doing so to complete it, if you find the survey intrusive, don’t respond to it, that is just fine.

***As always, if you have any questions or concerns, reach out to your amazing staff reps (thank you staff reps!!!) and/or you can contact Stephen and me at any time at the office phone number or by cell.***

*In solidarity, Spencer*

Spencer Capier  
President, WVTA



**Develop New Teachers.  
Become a School Associate.**

SFU’s Faculty of Education, Professional Programs has multiple opportunities for elementary and secondary teachers to mentor student teachers in their teacher education programs – PDP, PLP, PQP and HEART.

If you are an experienced educator who’s willing to collaborate and share your classroom with one of BC’s brightest future educators, please speak to your school administrator or contact the [Placement team](#). [More Information Here](#)



**BCTF Peer Support Service (PSS)**

**What is Peer Support Service?** BCTF Peer Support Service (PSS) is designed to provide support to teachers who are on plans of assistance (i.e., have received a less-than-satisfactory teacher evaluation), prior to a teacher evaluation where concerns about teaching competence have been raised, or to teachers who request assistance with their teaching (i.e. are self-referring).

**Who will provide the service?** The peer support will be provided by teachers, known as BCTF peer support consultants, who have an extensive background in teaching, and training in planning, consultation, classroom observation, analysis, and feedback skills. Peer consultants will offer support in a collaborative and

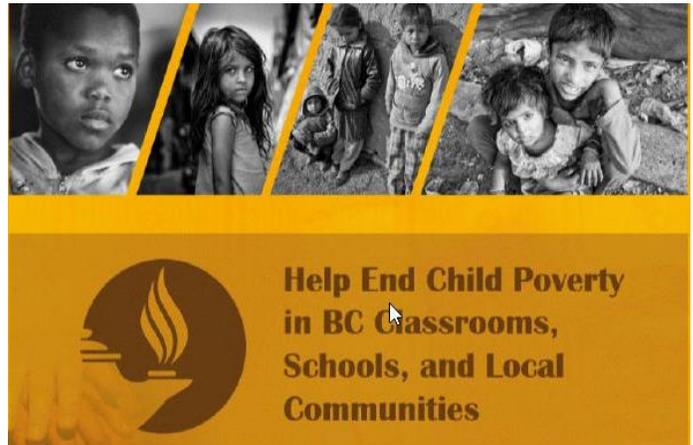
non-judgmental environment. Peer Support Service consultants support the growth of a teacher's professional practice, through a non-evaluative, peer coaching model.

**How can a member access the service?** An active member who desires help with her or his teaching, or who is on a plan of assistance, may request PSS by contacting their local president, who will direct the request to the BCTF Peer Support Service coordinator. Alternatively, a member may call the PSS program coordinator directly for information and request the forms to begin the process for assistance.

**Who will pay for the service?** The cost of the service is supported by the BCTF and in some cases, the teacher's school district. It is expected that the cost of the service to a member on a plan of assistance will be the responsibility of the member's school district. The Federation will pay the cost of the service for a member who requests assistance with her or his teaching (i.e., self-referral). Cost sharing with the district is also negotiated case by case. The BCTF does not cover LOA costs for the member receiving assistance.

**What is the role of the local in the delivery of the service?** The local president or designate agrees to work with the peer consultant in the delivery of service, and the local agrees to provide or obtain follow-up support, as needed, for the teacher. The local is responsible for negotiating the terms of payment with the school district personnel where appropriate, and to ensure the leave of absence for the member as necessary.

For more information about the service contact the Peer Support Services coordinator, **Sherry Payne**, at 604-871-1803 or toll free at 1-800-663-9163, local 1803, [spayne@bctf.ca](mailto:spayne@bctf.ca) or **Miranda Light**, admin assistant at 604-871-1807 or toll free at 1-800-663-9163, local 1807, [milight@bctf.ca](mailto:milight@bctf.ca)



## November is Anti-Poverty Month

The Bctf has named November as Anti-poverty Month. As teachers, you know the firsthand effects of poverty on your students. Please take time to look through available resources to help affect change. Anti-poverty workshops (and more) can be booked via the BCTF website: [Book Professional and Social Issues Workshops \(bctf.ca\)](http://bctf.ca)