



WEST VANCOUVER Teachers' Association

Vol 45, no 1 Sept 2022

Notes from your President – *Spencer Capier*

Hello Colleagues,

I hope you got some rest and a chance to not think about teaching for a few weeks this summer. It's my hope that this year will be a partial return to normal, but I also acknowledge that we won't ever return to what normal looked like pre COVID.

While we don't know what the fall will bring in terms of another COVID wave, we have had over two years of experience to know how to deal with any eventuality.

In the Spring the Ministry of Health changed its protocols to reflect this new normal. Health and safety documents speak of communicable diseases in general rather than COVID in specific. There is no mask mandate at this time but of course you can wear one if you wish. The BCTF is advocating for free access to masks at school and a continued stringent cleaning regimen. Here are my takeaways from the WVTA's meeting this week with the head of Vancouver Coastal Health:

- COVID hospitalizations and deaths are low and stable. What that means is that when we saw a rise in COVID cases this summer the hospitalizations and deaths did not rise with it. This is because of high vaccination rates and hybrid immunity. Over 50% of adults in BC have had COVID at some point now.
- A new booster will be available in the Fall that will address the Omicron 1 variant. There is a booster that will specifically address Omicron 4 and 5 later in the Fall but VCH suggests taking the first one you can get as they both will increase protection against infection and serious disease.
- If you had COVID in the summer, you have been exposed to BA 4&5. You should wait to get a booster for several months as your antibodies don't need a boost yet.

- There are no restrictions on public gatherings other than what local regulations stipulate. There are no restrictions on spacing in classrooms or other school environments.
- People who are immune compromised should return to whatever safety measures they used before COVID. There are now many other layers of protection such as vaccines, and better treatments.
- If you are sick, there is no need to test when you are symptomatic. You should stay home until symptoms have resolved.
- If under 18 and are vaccinated you should stay home for five days, ten days if not vaccinated.
- If you are exposed to COVID but are asymptomatic you do not need to isolate.

Our office renovations are complete! Okay we are still half in boxes and our land line doesn't work yet, but our renovations were on time and on budget. Kudos to our contractor, **Trevor Gustavson**. He was outstanding. Here are some photographs of the Reno:





A big thank you to our sister union **the WVMEA** and its president **Connor Payne** who along with his colleagues picked up, stored and redelivered all our office furniture and equipment. ***On behalf of all the members of the WVTA we thank you very much!*** Look for photos of our new and improved WVTA office in the October newsletter or come and visit the office and see for yourself!

I know a few teachers have had to shift assignments last minute because of a reduction in some divisions. There have been longstanding funding issues for school districts in BC and we are seeing the effects here in West Vancouver. Previously our international students program shielded us from the worst effects of a poor provincial funding envelope. Our school district relied more in their budget on international students than any other district as a percentage (11%). This reliance did keep us from

counting photocopies and provided more teacher FTE, but a longer-term solution can be found in better and more reliable provincial funding. I have offered to work with Trustees to push for better funding for school districts. I give full credit to district leadership who have worked hard to absorb shortfalls through retirements and means other than layoffs. It is rare indeed to see a continuing contract teacher let go in SD45, but unless we see a full return of international students or a better funding envelope, we may see that in coming years.

On that cheery note I wish you the very best in the coming weeks as you settle in for another year. If you're a brand-new teacher, welcome to the profession! I look forward to seeing you in staff rooms and hallways across the district. Please reach out to me via email or phone if you have questions, comments or concerns.

A reminder that the **WVTA Fall General Meeting** will be at the Kay Meek Studio B theatre at 3:45 on Thursday September 22nd. Hope to see you there!

Sincerely, Spencer

Notice:

WVTA GENERAL MEETING
Thursday, September 22nd, 2022
3:45 – 5:00 pm, Kay Meek Studio Theatre

AGENDA ITEMS

- President's Report; Important updates
- Committee Reports
- Election of ProD Committee Chair
- 2022-2023 Budget Report – Recommendations from Staff Rep Assembly:
 - (a) Adoption of WVTA fee – remain at .80%;
 - (b) Adoption of 2022-2023 Budget

Door Prizes!
Wine and Cheese Social following!



**Wear orange on
September 30th
in the Spirit of
Reconciliation**

On **September 30, 2022**, teachers and communities are encouraged to participate in **Orange Shirt Day**, an opportunity for schools and communities to come together in the spirit of reconciliation and hope for generations of children to come. The organizers created Orange Shirt Day as a legacy of the St. Joseph Mission residential school commemoration event held in Williams Lake, BC, in the spring of 2013, where one survivor told her story about “having her shiny new orange shirt taken away” on her first day of school at the Mission. The event gains momentum each year with the hope it continues to be an opportunity to keep the discussion on the legacy of residential schools and the need for reconciliation moving forward.

WVTA Professional Development Fund: QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q: What is the WVTA ProD Fund?

A: The Pro-D fund is a trust fund administered by the Association, primarily the WVTA office with direction from the Pro-D Committee chair and the WVTA president. The fund receives an annual contribution from the Board based on a formula in our contract, and a Teacher on Call pool of up to 120 days is allocated annually for Professional Development purposes. The Association makes an annual contribution of \$8000 to the fund.

The School Effectiveness Fund no longer exists! This program was discontinued several years ago and its previously designated monies incorporated into the ProD Fund, also based on a formula in the contract.

Q: What is my allotment?

A: Any teacher with an assignment in the district, including part-time teachers and teachers on leave, is eligible for up to \$350 funding and two TOC days per school year (one day for .4 FTE and under). Non-enrolling teachers **who do not require TTOC**

coverage are eligible for up to \$500 of funding per school year, and TTOCs employed by the district are eligible for up to \$150 of funding per school year.

Q: Can I get TTOC coverage for day-in lieu, or be paid by the fund if I attend a Pro-D event or collaboration on a non-working day?

A: TTOC coverage will not be approved for a day in lieu. Much of the Professional Development teachers undertake is scheduled during non-teaching hours or days (including evenings, weekends, summers). *The special program offered last year for paid collaboration time on non-teaching days will be repeated this year. More information on this program will be coming soon!*

Q: Where can I find the WVTA ProD Fund Application Form? [WVTA Website](#)

Q: Can I have my PD funding paid directly to the conference or event I am attending?

A: We prefer to make payments directly to the person who has applied for the funding to simplify the accounting records for audit process. If there is a group of teachers paying a special group fee, each teacher should submit an individual application form for their share of cost.



TeachBC

What is TeachBC?

- Online resources of teaching materials, lessons, and research relevant to the K-12 BC curriculum.
- Allows users to download, upload and share resources.
- Search by subject, grade, resource type, title, description, language and more.

Who can use it?

- Everyone! The website is public.
- Teachers, provincial specialist associations, and other organizations.

How can teachers contribute?

- Upload your favourite lesson plans, unit plans, activities, resources, or research and make TeachBC the go-to site for K-12 BC resources.
- Tell your colleagues about TeachBC and help build the site.

In the spirit of teachers helping teachers, visit [TeachBC](#) .

Professional Development Opportunities

Provincial Intermediate and Middle Years Teachers' Association (myPITA)

Friday Oct. 21 – North Delta Secondary and Online

The 2022 myPITA Fall Conference features **Dr. Gordon Neufeld** and over 100 in-person workshops presented at North Delta Secondary and over 60 online workshops. A selection of workshops will be presented in-person and streamed online, and others will be delivered online and streamed to the in-person audience. Regardless of the format, all participants will be able to ask questions and participate in activities.

Early bird rate until September 30, 2022. Price increases October 1. The first 1,000 online conference registrants will receive an envelope of goodies in the mail. All in-person registrants will receive a goody bag. In-person registration closes at noon on October 16. Online registration closes at noon on October 21.

BC Association of Math Teachers (BCAMT) October 20-22 – Whistler, BC

The BCAMT Fall Conference welcomes speakers from BC and across Canada. Keynote speakers are **Lisa Lunney Borden** and **Dan Finkel**, with many other featured speakers such as **Peter Liljedahl**, **Allison Hintz**, **Pam Harris** and **Nat Banting**. Enjoy a weekend in Whistler, BC, reconnecting and finding inspiration.

- October 20, 9:00 am – 4:30 pm
- October 21, 9:00 am – 4:30 pm
- October 22, 9:00 am – 4:30 pm
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Specialist Association of Gifted Educators in British Columbia (SAGE BC) October 20-22 – In person

With low prep strategies, you can create opportunities for your high ability learners. Learn from one of the best differentiation experts, **Laurie Westphal (Ed.D)** from Houston, Texas. Essential for gifted – good for all! This conference will reach K-12 classroom teachers and support teachers.

BC Science Teachers' Association (BCScTA) October 21 – Rick Hansen Secondary

This year the BCScTA is bringing you a hybrid conference. Attend in-person at Rick Hansen Secondary and get access to ALL our workshops; get some great swag; network with colleagues; and enjoy some great food and prizes. If you just can't make it work, then choose to attend virtually and get access to a selection of online workshops from some amazing presenters. Hope to "see" you there.

BC Association of Teachers of Modern Languages (BCATML)

October 21 – Executive Hotel Vancouver Airport in Richmond, and online

BCATML will host its first in-person conference in two years. Join them this fall for Celebrating Languages 2022 featuring **Trevor Mackenzie** as this year's keynote speaker. Trevor will lead teachers diving into the fascinating world of inquiry learning for the second language classroom. All attendees will receive a copy of Trevor's latest book.

With over 30 workshops throughout the day, there will be a wide range of sessions in French, German, Japanese, Mandarin, Punjabi, Spanish, and general sessions from which to choose. There is something for everyone - [Celebrating Languages 2022 info](#)

Those unable to travel to the hotel in Richmond can participate remotely and attend three Zoom workshops at a reduced price. Early bird pricing ends September 30th with prices increasing October 1.

Visit and register at www.bcatml.org

Environmental Educator's Provincial Specialist Association (EEPSA)

Classroom to Communities: Reconnecting Ourselves with Landscapes, Waterways and Each Other

Join us for this 2-day, in-person conference as we reconnect ourselves with landscapes, waterways and each other in the mountains and rivers around Revelstoke. The conference will convene at the Revelstoke Mountain Resort for two days of diverse and dynamic activities.

For more event information as it becomes available, go to [Event Calendar \(bctf.ca\)](#)

The WVTA office is not part of the district email system. Please note the following:

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Stephen Price vp@wvta.ca
778-833-2792 (cell)

Karen Straith kstraith@wvta.ca
(General & ProD) 604-926-1617 (WVTA office)

We recommend emailing Spencer and Stephen from your private email accounts.