



WEST VANCOUVER Teachers' Association

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Notes from your WVTA President – *Spencer Capier*

Dear Colleagues,

Happy December! Thank goodness report cards are done. We've heard a lot (a LOT!) of feedback from you about the **New Reporting Order**. The WVTA intends to create a more formal survey instrument to gather feedback on your experience writing report cards this fall.

The anecdotal feedback has been clear: there are a lot of wrinkles to iron out. Not least is the kludgy nature of MyEd. Additionally, many of you report being urged to write considerably longer comments, resulting in hours and hours of extra work. We've heard several other issues, and we'll offer members more focussed feedback through a survey, early in the new year.

The majority of the blame for the difficult report card season should be placed on the Ministry of Education and Child Care. The ministry gave little direction to districts, gave little thought to how their new approach to reporting would work with existing legacy software, and gave little time to roll it out. Stakeholders in our district have been trying to make the transition as smooth as possible.

Your union is regularly voicing your concerns to management and governance about the NRO and working with District Leadership to improve your experience next round of reporting. My hope is that things will be better in term two.

➤ **Professional Development**

As we announced earlier this year, members now have access to a Major Conference Fund of up to \$2000 every five years. Additionally, members can

now roll over their \$350 yearly allowance for up to three years.

We've heard a few questions from you:

- Can I access the roll over amount now and not access my yearly funds for two years in the future? **No. We are not a bank.** 😊
- Can I combine the yearly Pro D funds and the Major Conference Fund? **Yes! That could be up to \$3050 (\$2000 MCF + \$350 x 3 years)!**
- How quick is the turnaround for Pro D applications? **It depends. The review of applications to the Major Conference Fund may take a several weeks. The President, Vice President, and ProD Chair meet to assess applications and this usually occurs monthly. Don't apply the week before a conference! The approval process for the regular ProD fund with potential funding up to \$350, takes less time. Allow for several weeks as the office can be inundated with a stack of applications, and it can take a while to process.**
- How do I get the cheque if my application is approved? **Via the District Pony. That can take a while. We are not set up for electronic deposit.**
- What are the criteria for the two ProD funds? **Go to WVTA.ca for more details.**

➤ **Sick Leave:**

I wish our collective agreement had a provision that allowed members to take paid leave for medical appointments. The BCGEU has the provision of two hours paid leave for medical appointments, for example. **WE DO NOT.**

What does this mean? You should schedule regular medical appointments outside of work hours. The employer has in the past been reasonable about specialist appointments. You do not need to share private medical information.

In view of this, be aware that HR might question you about a sick day or half sick day booked in advance.

As we approach another round of bargaining you may want to make paid leave for medical appointments a priority when surveyed by the provincial union - I know I will.

➤ **Winter Break:**

On that cheery note, I wish you all a well-earned rest over the holiday season. The break starts late this year, but I don't mind a stretch of days off in January as a gentle entry to the new year. I hope you take time for yourself as well as time with family and friends. Teaching can be all consuming, so it's good to be well and truly away from it when school is not in session.

From myself, **Chantalle Wigley** and **Karen Straith**, we wish you the very best of the holiday season and a great winter break!

In solidarity, Spencer

You can be a delegate!

BCTF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
March 16 - 19, 2024, Hyatt Regency Hotel

Attend the AGM and learn about your BCTF, discuss and debate issues that matter to you and your colleagues, hear guest speakers discuss education and labour issues locally and worldwide, elect Executive Committee members, and connect with over 680 teachers from around the province. High quality childcare at no cost to delegates will also be available throughout the AGM.

We will elect our WVTA Delegates at our next WVTA GENERAL MEETING, Thursday, January 25th, 2024. Any BCTF member, regardless of union experience, can let their name stand to attend their BCTF AGM as a delegate.

Salary Indemnity Plan

You may be eligible to save about 1.50% of your salary.

Why? Because you are no longer entitled to long-term disability benefits under the Salary Indemnity Plan (SIP) when you attain any of the following milestones:

- 35 years of contributory service, with a minimum age of 55
- Age 61, if you reach "Factor 90" before age 61.
- "Factor 90" if you are between ages 61 and 65.
- Age 65

Ensure that in the event of serious illness or accident you have sufficient accumulated sick leave, which, when combined with 120 days of benefits from SIP short-term, will protect your salary to the end of the month in which you meet one of the above milestones.

**To apply call BCTF Income Security
at 604-871-1921**

Professional Development Opportunities

Teacher Inquiry Program

Teacher Inquiry is a teacher-organized, teacher-led professional development. Find and view the [online webinar](#) to answer most questions you may have about Inquiry. You will also hear stories from the field, success stories on how Inquiry is helping and transforming the teaching practice.

Watch all videos:

[Living Inquiry - Stories from the field - YouTube](#)

Apply for Teacher Inquiry Project:

[Teacher Inquiry Program \(bctf.ca\)](https://bctf.ca)



NEW TEACHERS'

CONFERENCE 2024

Refracting the Light:

AI and Technology in Education

**January 27, 2024 – Coast Coal Harbour
Vancouver Hotel, 1180 W. Hastings**

Keynote speaker – Dr. Vanessa Andreotti

An optional welcoming reception will be held at Preston's Restaurant (in the hotel) on Friday, January 26th, 2024, from 5:00 to 7:00 pm. Places are limited, and participants must select the welcoming reception during the registration process in order to get access to the restaurant.

Registration is open [here](#) on the BCTF website. \$75 for BCTF members in their first five years of teaching \$60 for BCTF members who are TTOCs.

Alternate AEA Challenge and Change Feb 14 to 16, Sheraton Vancouver Wall Centre The 2024 BC Alternate Education Association's Conference features **Dr. Shimi Kang** as keynote speaker along with many other sessions on a wide variety of topics of interest to teachers, administrators, youth care workers, and others engaged with at-risk youth in an alternate education setting. Visit [their website](#) for conference registration and more details.

Call for Nominations: G.A. Fergusson Memorial Award

The G.A. Fergusson Memorial Award may be made annually at the BCTF Annual General Meeting to a BCTF member (or former member) who has made an outstanding contribution to public education. Exemplary service to colleagues through activism in the BC Teachers' Federation is a major avenue for making such an outstanding contribution.

Nominations of candidates may be made by any member of the Federation or by a local.

The nomination should consist of a summary of the basis for the nomination as per the aforementioned criteria and should not exceed three pages in length. The nomination may be accompanied by no more than three supporting letters.

Nominations should be sent by mail or email to [Amber Mitchell](#), Executive Director at the BCTF by **February 9, 2024**.

DEADLINE: February 9, 2024

Complete the [nomination form](#) and send it by email to the attention of [Amber Mitchell](#), Executive Director amitchell@bctf.ca



***WVTA General Meeting
January 25, 2024***

Our next WVTA General Meeting will be at **Kay Meek Theatre on January 25th, 2024, at 3:45**. We will elect our delegates to the BCTF AGM at this meeting. **Door Prizes**, and stay for a **Wine & Cheese Social** following the meeting!



The Vancouver Canucks Educators Night is back and taking place on March 13th, 2024, as the Canucks take on the Colorado Avalanche at 7 PM!

Tickets start at \$55 and include a \$20 Rogers Arena gift card with every ticket. This special office is a way to show appreciation for educators and is available to anyone in the education community as well as family and friends. [Get Your Tickets Here.](#)

