



WEST VANCOUVER Teachers' Association

WVTA Newsletter Vol 47 No 1 Sept 2024

Notes from your President – *Spencer Capier*

Hello Colleagues,

Welcome back! There is a lot going on this fall! If I were still in the Social Studies classroom, I would be tempted to chuck the curriculum and just do current events all day. I will leave aside international and national issues and focus on provincial and local:

The stakes got a lot higher in the provincial election with the collapse of BC United and the rise of the Conservative party of BC. Take a look at some of the links in the Political Action section following to hear what the leader of the provincial conservatives suggests for K-12 in this province. Class sizes of 40 will not solve the many challenges facing public education, for example.

Provincial and local bargaining are on again this school year. For most of us it will seem like we just did that - we got the printed copy of the new/old contract just last month! In reality it's a good thing that the cycle of bargaining a new collective agreement comes round every three years or so. There are always ways to improve the salary and working conditions of teachers in this province and in West Vancouver.

We will send you a survey in a few weeks to discern the priorities of members for local bargaining. We did survey you last year on provincial issues and successfully presented those priorities at the BCTF bargaining conference. Local issues are far more constrained (we can't bargain salary or other money issues) but your WVTA bargaining team

reflect your priorities when our local table starts meeting in December.

Chantalle and I want to know how reporting goes in this second year of the new reporting order. Staff Representatives will want to hear from you at WVTA portions of staff meetings, what challenges and increased work loads are going forward.

I know you are just settling into your classrooms and workspaces at this time of year, but I want to encourage you to come to our **first General Meeting of the year, Thursday September 19th, 3:45pm at the Kay Meek**. We will be voting on several important issues. I will give a more detailed 'state of the union' than this newsletter can provide, and there will be door prizes. It's a great opportunity to connect with colleagues and meet and welcome our new members, while enjoying the wine and cheese reception after the meeting!

Thanks to all of you who volunteer as Staff Representatives and Executive Members! If your staff has not elected a Staff Representative(s) by the end of your first staff meeting, please let [Chantalle](#) know.

Oh, and one more thing, we finally have swag! The new logo has been very popular and so we are about to do a run of high-quality t shirts. Stay tuned.

In solidarity, *Spencer*

POLITICAL ACTION

Provincial Election, Oct. 19, 2024 Very different visions of K-12

The Provincial Election will be held on October 19th, 2024, and the outcome may **directly affect your classroom.**

Conservative Party of BC leader **John Rustad** has pledged to:

- [Increase class sizes](#) to save money, and do away with portables
- [End SOGI](#) as he believes teachers are using pornographic materials, and compared this [education to Residential Schools.](#)

Mr. Rustad also does not believe [Climate Change](#) is a crisis, and has pledged to repeal the province's commitment to the United Nations Declarations on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, or [UNDRIP.](#)

According to a recent Angus Reid Poll, the race between the NDP and Conservative Party of BC could be very tight. Your Vote Matters!

The current NDP government has built schools to address overcrowding, supports SOGI education, restricted digital devices in schools, and [banned protests on school grounds.](#) The 2020 Green party Platform on education can be [found here.](#)

Please take the time to familiarize yourself about the issues in this election, and make sure to vote.



Notice:

WVTA GENERAL MEETING Thursday, September 19th 3:45 – 5:00 pm, Kay Meek Centre, McEwen Theatre

AGENDA ITEMS

- President's Report; State of the Union
- Committee Reports
- 2024-2025 Budget Report – Recommendations from Staff Rep Assembly:
 - (a) Adoption of WVTA fees
 - (b) Adoption of 2024-2025 Budget

Door prizes!

*Wine and Cheese Social following the meeting –
Welcome new members!*

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A message from your Pro-D Committee Chair, Adrienne Gruber:

Welcome back everyone! I hope you all managed to have some down time this summer and enjoy a slower pace of life. I joined the Bowen Island Slo-pitch League this year and had a blast playing softball all summer. It has been a bit of shock to the system to leave my ball glove at home and pick up my classroom keys instead, but it's also nice to get back into it.

I am excited to be back as your WVTA Pro-D Chair for the 2024/2025 school year and am looking forward to supporting all the school Pro-D reps in this important work, as well as working with the district team. This year the focus is teacher wellness, with the idea that if teachers are doing well, we can better reach all learners.

As many of you know, this is the second year of our Major Conference Fund, and we have already received applications. If there's a conference you're hoping to attend this year, please get your application in as soon as possible so you can

receive funding! Last year we funded ten-member conferences, and we look forward to doing the same this year.

Please read through the Pro-D Q&A section of the newsletter, especially if you are new to the district, and reach out to me any time if you have any questions or would like to chat.

Sincerely, **Adrienne**

WVTA Professional Development Fund: QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q: What is the WVTA Pro-D 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 does not exist!

This program was discontinued several years ago with its previously designated funding incorporated into the Pro-D 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 TTOC days per school year (one day for .4 FTE and under). Non-enrolling teachers **who do not require TTOC coverage if absent** 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: Is there any rollover of unused funds?

A: A change to the funding criteria beginning in the 2023-24 school year now allows individual members to carry forward their eligible funding amount for up to three years, a maximum of \$1050 for enrolling teachers, \$1500 for non-enrolling teachers not replaceable by a TTOC, and \$450 for TTOCs. *Please note: Only the full amount a member is eligible for in a given year can be carried*

over. This option does not apply to unused balances of eligible funding.

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 for a day in lieu will not be granted. Much of the professional development teachers undertake is scheduled during non-teaching hours, and the fund could not support reimbursement for this time. However, the Paid Collaboration program is offered again this year and will approve one day of pay for teachers collaborating on a weekend or non-teaching day, is offered again this year.

Q: Where can I find the WVTA Pro-D Fund Application Form? On the [WVTA Website](#)

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

A: The fund is for individual applications, and to simplify records, we only make payments directly to the individual who has applied for the funding. Where a group of teachers has organized to pay a special group fee, each teacher should submit an individual application form for their share of the cost.

Professional Development Opportunities

Oct. 25-26th, Provincial Intermediate and Middle Years Teachers' Association (myPITA)

Royal Bay Secondary, Victoria, BC, and Online

The 2024 **myPITA** Fall Conference features **Julianne Harvey** (Teacher Wellness), **Tom Hierch** (Trauma-Informed Classroom Management) and **Kenneth Oppel** (Canadian YA Author). Friday features over 80 workshops for Grades 4-9 teachers. Plus, five hands-on learning experiences on Saturday. 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 benefits until September 30, including discounted rates and a chance to win a class visit by author Kenneth Oppel!. Prize draws. Mailed goodies to the first 1000 online conference registrants. Registration closes October 30th. Visit [myPITA](#) for information and to register.

**Primary Teachers Association (BCPTA)
Fall Conference, October 25th, Victoria, BC
Inspiring Engagement for Learning.**

Dr. Gordon Neufeld and his team, plus many more great presenters like **Charlotte Diamond, Sharon Jeroski, Lauren MacLean** and more!

[More information, register here.](#)



**Camp Suzuki at Chá7elkwnech:
WALKING WITH THE SQUAMISH
October 25-26, 2024**

Are you an educator interested in learning more about Indigenous education, culture, and ways of knowing? If you are, this professional development retreat is for you! Coinciding with the province-wide Pro-D day, a Professional development retreat for educators of all backgrounds and grade levels (K through to post-Secondary).

Interactive and engaging seminars in Skwxwú7mesh Nation history, language, ethnobotany, culture, stories, and stewardship in a welcoming, encouraging outdoor-education setting.

Hosts: Longstanding partners the Skwxwú7mesh Nation, David Suzuki Foundation, Sea to Sky Outdoor School and Camp Fircom

[MORE INFORMATION](#) [REGISTER NOW](#)
Questions? info@fircom.ca



**Fill YOUR CUP
at coffee talk**

3:30 Last Thursday of most months

Drop by **myPita's** virtual teacher coffee talk where you may ask questions, listen, offer suggestions and support or hang out while doing your grading and lesson planning. There will be current and former teachers available to help and others around to chat with, but you'll be left alone if you want to work quietly.

3:30 4:30 pm on Thursdays:

2024	2025
September 26	January 30
November 7	February 27
November 28	April 24
	May 29

To receive the Zoom meeting link, join the monthly e-newsletter at [myPita Coffee Talk](#).



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

On **September 30th**, teachers and communities are encouraged to participate in **Orange Shirt Day**, for 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.