WEST VANCOUVER Teachers' Association

WVTA Newsletter Vol 48 No 5 Jan 2026

Notes from your President – *Spencer Capier*

Happy New Year! January is a busy month, with lots of things are going on in and outside of the classroom.

January General Meeting

Please come to our January General Meeting on Thursday the 22nd, as we have a special guest. **Carole Gordon the President of the BCTF will be our speaker!** The timing could not be better for Carole to attend our GM: negotiations with the province are at a standstill.

Carole is a great communicator and will have the very latest information about the state of bargaining, the possibility of job action, and what progress has been made at the table on workload and salary. Carole will also be at our wine and cheese reception following the meeting, and you would have the opportunity to speak with her one on one.

Bylaw Motion on Term Limits

Another important item at the January General Meeting is the notice of motion on term limits published below. A motion to remove term limits was narrowly defeated in September. This new motion proposes to extend the term limit from five to ten years. I will keep my thoughts to the supporting statement below and the debate at the GM, but members should know I am at my term limit, I am willing to continue in the role, and currently no one has expressed interested in becoming a full time table officer.

January 30th District Professional Development Day

Your Pro D Chair Adrienne Gruber has done a stellar job organizing the district Pro D day with the district. I'm blown away by the depth and variety of workshops on offer. Sarah Ward is returning this year as keynote speaker, too. Teachers have told us how useful Sarah's keynote and seminars were for their practice when she came to our district a few years ago.

I look forward to seeing you at the GM and the Pro D!

In solidarity, *Spencer*

WVTA General Meeting January 22, 2026

Our next WVTA General Meeting will be **at Kay Meek Theatre on Thursday January 22nd, 2026, at 3:45**. We will elect our delegates to the BCTF AGM at this meeting. Featuring a Special Guest, there will also be Door Prizes, and stay for a **Wine & Cheese Social** following the meeting!

Carole Gordon, President of the BCTF will also attend as a guest speaker to give an update on bargaining and other issues!

Motion to the General Meeting: That bylaw 4.b) be amended

4.b. A member elected to the position of WVTA President shall be limited to a maximum of ~~five (5)~~ ***ten (10)*** *consecutive years of service as President.* (Revised, AGM 2018-05-24)

- Moved Capier, Seconded Emadi

Supporting Statement:

A motion at the September general meeting to remove term limits was narrowly defeated. This motion is an attempt to reflect the discussions at that meeting while ensuring continuity in the WVTA office.

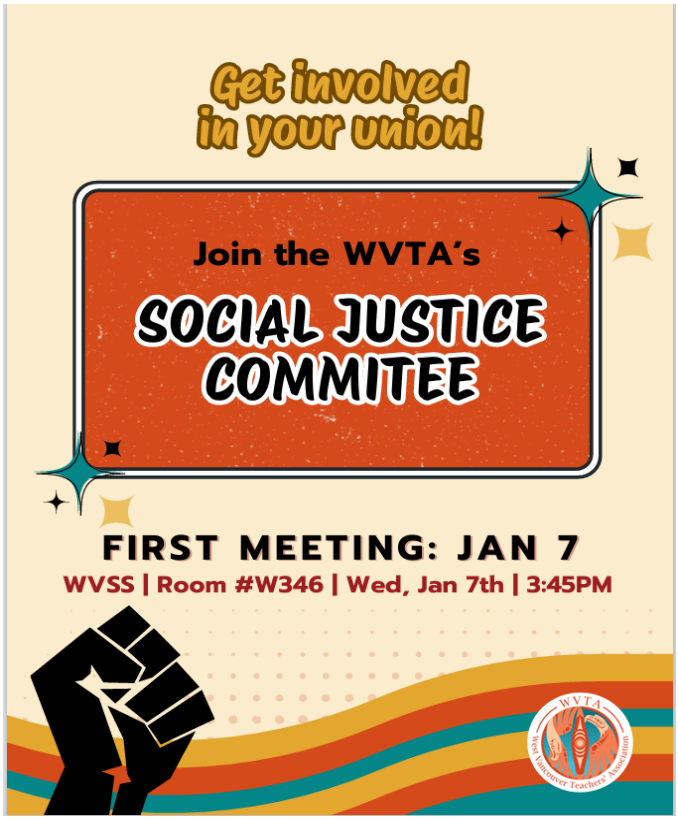
This bylaw was introduced in 2018 to enshrine capacity building. It was soon realized this made the WVTA an outlier. There are only two other small locals with term limits in the province.

It's a challenge for smaller locals like ours to recruit new leadership. Management, on the other hand, does not have term limits. Term limits put the WVTA at a disadvantage at the labour/management table.

Larger locals have multiple full time elected positions, and people spend many years in union leadership, moving from one position to another. Thus, locals retain institutional knowledge.

The current President is willing to continue in the role, and the Vice President does not wish to take on the full-time work of President. Extending the term limit to ten years would give more time for members interested in union leadership to gain experience and training.

There are members who have expressed interest in the role of President and Vice President, but at a later stage in their careers. In the meantime, they are volunteering as staff reps and executive members, engaging in BCTF training on weekends or during Spring and Summer Breaks.



Professional Development Opportunities

BCTF 2026 New Teachers' Conference
February 6-7, 2026

This conference is designed specifically for teachers and teachers on call in their first five (5) years of teaching, as well as teacher candidates.

- ntc@bctf.ca
- View our website

Register at Spring Conference 2026

New BC Sick Note Legislation

The province recently enacted legislation regarding employers requesting sick notes from employees on sick leave. Employers cannot ask you for a sick note when you take:

- A short-term sick leave of five days or less, and
- It is one of your first two such absences in the **calendar** year.

Generally, this will not change the current practice of the school district. Please reach out to the WVTA if you have any questions, or believe you were unreasonably asked for a sick note by your Administration or HR.

Members are reminded that timely booking of sick days in the Atrieve system supports your colleagues and students. Please endeavour to book your absences as early as possible.

Pensions and Retirement

Teachers' Pension Plan Website:
The Teachers' Pension Plan website is your best source of information about the Teachers' Pension Plan and your account. Visit the Teachers' Pension Plan Website

BCTF information about your pension:
Allan Lee—Assistant Director, Pensions and Group Benefits
604-871-1935 or toll free at 1-800-663-9163 (local 1935)

Where can you get more information?
Pension and Retirement Advice from the Teachers' Pension Plan
Learn more about how your pension works, and how life events and career decisions can affect your pension. Includes information on applying for your pension, divorce and separation, investing, health coverage and more.
Pension and Retirement Glossary from the Teachers' Pension Plan
Pensions can be complicated. This A-Z glossary can help you understand the language.
Webinar: Introduction: Getting to Know Your Pension
This 15-minute online course can answer your questions about having a pension and being a member of BC's Teachers' Pension Plan.
Webinar: Making the Most of Your Pension
Are you establishing your career or several years away from retirement? This will help you plan for retirement and understand how the decisions you make in your career can affect your pension.
Webinar: Approaching Retirement
Are you planning for or within five years of retirement? This will help you understand the important decisions you need to make about your pension.