

COVID-19 Update

Clarifying Weekly Meetings

VEA is grateful for the hard work of our members as we support students and families during this closure! We also recognize our work around remote learning is more difficult and takes longer to complete, even compared to the above and beyond work we were committed to before this situation! Current workload, coupled with the emotional toll our separation from students and colleagues is taking on us, leaves many of us feeling anxious and overwhelmed on a professional level. In addition, many of us are caring for children and/or elderly family members on a personal level.

From the beginning, VEA has collaborated with VPS around a flexible and compassionate approach to our work expectations. Based on member feedback, on Friday, VEA sought to clarify the number of meetings we are required vs. invited to participate in. To support members in drawing boundaries as needed, we reminded you that, per the VEA-VPS contract and our newest MOU you are only required to participate in:

→ PLCs on Mondays for 40 minutes (the work is directed by members of the PLC and admin are welcome to observe) and

→ Staff meetings on Wednesdays for 60 minutes (the meeting is directed by admin)

Other meetings admin or colleagues invite you to attend, while encouraged, should be considered voluntary in order to protect your time and your sanity! VEA certainly encourages you to continue collaborating with admin and colleagues around support for students and families, but please commit to additional meetings only according to a schedule you feel you can manage. Give yourself grace and ask for it from others as well – you, your students and your colleagues will be better off as a result!



Phone Calls to Families

VEA recognizes we must use as many means of contact as possible to connect with families under these unique circumstances. Reaching them by phone may work better when email or learning platforms don't prove fruitful. Still, we want members to remain protected as you conduct district business from home and encourage you to do so via district devices.

VPS is still working to identify a formal option that enables members to use a district device to "phone" families. In the meantime, two options you might consider include:

→ creating a Zoom meeting that allows a family to call in to join you (perhaps you could prearrange it via email)

→ creating an all new personal Google account only for work use during the closure to enable Google Voice as a phone dialer option. While this is not VPS' preferred means of communication, in the absence of another district-supported option, it remains an option.

Q&A with VEA

As a reminder, VEA invites VEA members to **join us for our first session of "Q&A with VEA" via Zoom on**

Wednesday, April 22nd beginning at 4:30 PM. Please [RSVP using this link](#) and share any question or concern you'd like to see addressed during the meeting. In response to your RSVP, VEA will share access details to the Zoom call. "See" you then!



Member Stories to VEA and WEA



VEA knows our members are skilled professionals working creatively to connect with and to serve students and families during this time! **Please share a photo and a blurb describing how you or your team is providing creative and positive communication, instruction and/or other services to remind the community how amazing our educators are!**

Send photos and blurbs to kvannostran@washingtonea.org, including the full name and contact information for the educator(s) highlighted so VEA and/or WEA can help make the work of our membership known!

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