



# Action Line

Vancouver Education Association

January 2021

## 2021

### A New Year with Additional Priorities

#### BARGAINING

While your VEA continues to tackle the ever-changing landscape around COVID-19 we also need to begin to look at our bargaining priorities. The current contract expires on August 31, 2021 and the first set of proposals are due to the district in February. In the last bargain we were successful in improving many areas of the contract including a revamp of the salary schedule, but it took a grand effort by the majority of our membership leading up to and including a labor action. As we look at our successor contract we have to cast a wide net to confirm what the pulse of the membership is saying. In 2017-18 we had almost 1200 members complete an extensive survey. We are asking ALL VEA members to contribute your voice to another comprehensive survey that will take about 35 minutes to complete. Please take this survey using the perspective of an in-person model, which we all hope will be our reality for the 21-22 school year! All responses are due by 5 PM on January 6<sup>th</sup>.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PXWCCLY>

**SAVE THE DATE:** January 21<sup>st</sup> @4:00 pm for a general membership meeting where the results of the survey will be shared with you!

#### LEGISLATIVE

The Washington State legislative session begins on January 11, 2021 and we anticipate that this session will be held remotely. WEA Lobby day is scheduled for January 18<sup>th</sup> where our voice will be collectively heard. WEA has announced its 2021 legislative priorities.

- **Fully fund and support equitable, just schools for our students, families, and communities**
- **Fully fund schools.** This includes NO CUTS, fully funding special education, create a more equitable tax structure to ensure full funding of education, and early learning and higher education resources.
- **Improve equity by dismantling racism and meeting the needs of all students.** Anti-racism training, opposition to high stakes tests that are inherently biased, eliminate barriers to a more diverse workforce, implementation of anti-racist discipline policies and restorative justice practices, and supports for students who are unhoused.
- **Address the challenges presented by COVID-19 recovery in schools.** Increased staffing, guaranteed voice on bargaining rights and staff due process, continued funding/support for health and safety protections including nurses, custodians, PPE, cleaning/disinfecting, HVAC and physical space.
- **Ensure every school is safe for students.** Policies and practices for mental health and behavior supports to maintain a safe learning and work environment, fully funding the prototypical schools model with a focus on the social, emotional and safety needs of students including communication for families and wraparound services



### Text VEAINFO to 41411

Bargaining will begin soon. Make sure you are subscribed to the new TextMarks format. This important communication component was very critical to instant communications during our last bargain and labor action. JOIN TODAY!

### Dues and Taxes 2020

According to the TurboTax website FAQs, teacher union dues are no longer deductible in tax years 2018 through 2025 due to the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act that Congress signed into law on December 2, 2017. Previously dues were deductible as a miscellaneous deduction under the 2% rule. Turbo Tax answers the following question: Do teacher union dues qualify for the Educator Expense deduction? No; only unreimbursed expenses for books, Supplies, and equipment that you purchased for classroom use qualify for the \$250 Educator Expense deduction. VEA encourages members to ask your tax professional about the inclusion of dues on your 2020 taxes.

Members paid the following dues (NEA, WEA, VEA) in 2020:

0.76-1.0 FTE	\$1097.68
0.51-0.75 FTE	\$ 875.84
0.26-0.50 FTE	\$ 566.32
0.25 or less	\$ 301.24

This figure is calculated using the 2019-20 rate for 8 months (Jan-Aug) and the 2020-21 rate for 4 months (Sept-Dec). If you did not work the full year, or changed FTE during 2020, you can calculate your dues using the monthly figures as follows:

	<u>2019-20</u>	<u>2020-21</u>
0.76-1.0 FTE	\$90.58	\$93.26
0.51-0.75 FTE	\$72.29	\$74.38
0.26-0.50 FTE	\$46.75	\$48.08
0.25 or less	\$24.88	\$25.55

### Annual Sick Leave Buyback



Annual Sick Leave Buyback requests are processed by the district in February. In order to participate in the program, you must have a

minimum of 480 hours of sick leave accumulated in 2020 and you must submit a request form by January 31, 2021. This is a firm date set by Washington State law. Forms are found on the Payroll home page on the portal. Sick leave balances are noted in employee access under 'time off'.

### VEA Equity Work

VEA was recently awarded a \$5,000 grant from the NEA to further our work to develop and enhance site-based equity teams! Watch for some exciting opportunities to contribute both as an equity team site leader or as a participant.

The VEA's Equity Team is planning a virtual event in February. This will be a great opportunity to engage in equity-focused discussions, specifically centered on education, where we can learn from one another and socialize together! Watch for a formal invitation soon!!!



### Nominations Open in January!

Nominations for VEA positions will open on January 5<sup>th</sup> and close February 2<sup>nd</sup>. Please contact Cindy for a nomination form:

- **The VEA Executive Board positions of President, 1<sup>st</sup> VP, 3<sup>rd</sup> VP, Treasurer, Intermediate Trustee, and MS Trustee** will be filled in this election. Terms are for two years.
- **VEA Delegates to the WEA Rep Assembly** (virtual). This one-time event is April 15-17.
- **VEA Delegates to the NEA Rep Assembly** (Denver CO – a virtual option has not yet been determined) This one-time event is July 2-6).

