

Winter Update

Rest, Unplug, and Stay Safe!

Thank you for all you have done and continue to do to make learning accessible and engaging for VPS students. As we approach likely the hardest earned winter break of our careers, we hope you can find rest, the opportunity to unplug as much as possible, and activities to share with your loved ones that keep you all safe and healthy.

Soon departing 2020, a challenging year of persistent change, we wish you a safe and happy New Year. We don't yet know what 2021 will bring, but VEA is proud to tackle it alongside you!

Latest Update re: Onsite Services Expansion

Thank you to those members who've shared your personal experience with remote and/or onsite instruction with VPS Admin and School Board Directors via email. It's important they continue to have the full context – good, bad, and otherwise – around our current experience as VPS prepares to expand onsite learning beginning in January.

Since the Governor's announcement and DOH's release of [updated guidance for schools](#), VEA met with VPS Admin to discuss our respective interpretations. **VEA has issued a demand to bargain the respective impacts and our first negotiation session is scheduled for Wednesday, 1/5 after we return from break.**

The previously announced start date for categorical staff to begin onsite support of at-risk 1st-12th grade learning pods (January 7th) remains in place. A generic announcement also came out in [VPS' weekly Smore communication](#), indicating their interest in accelerating the expansion of elementary small groups during the month of January (in consultation with Clark County Public Health). VEA awaits specific details and as discussion with VPS Admin proceeds, we will keep members informed!

Special Message from Erica Reich with California Casualty



(Click the image above)

SpEd Updates

VEA is grateful to Special Education leaders and members alike for your outreach and advocacy! Based on inquiries you've brought to our attention, you should know:

VPS Special Education Teacher Listening Sessions: VEA is grateful to those Learning Support and Self-Contained teachers who were able to attend and provide input to VPS SpEd Admin around what's going well, what needs to change/improve, and what suggestions may help. If you were unable to attend, please email your input to Laura.Bergeron@vansd.org and kvannostran@washingtonea.org to have it considered!

Sessions for SpEd ESAs are tentatively scheduled for January 5th and 7th from 4:00-5:00 PM as well, with more details to follow!

SpEd Paraeducator Vacancies and Para Sub Rate Payment: While VPS has acknowledged the workload impact ongoing para vacancies have on any classroom program. Last week, they presented a VPS Counterproposal #1 for a slightly broader compensation consideration but still for a short window of time to be considered for self-contained teachers. VEA is again collaborating Special Education VEA leaders to draft a VEA Counterproposal #2 for VPS' SpEd Admin's consideration and will report back to membership when we receive their response.

Again, we still suggest Special Education teachers continue tracking para vacancies, as we will continue to advocate around retro-pay. Thank you for your patience – we will continue to provide updates as this work proceeds forward.

VPS Superintendent Survey: Respond TODAY!

All certificated staff (other VPS staff and Vancouver community members at large) are encouraged to respond to [this brief survey](#). If you haven't already responded, please do so before [the survey](#) closes TODAY! VEA has also reached out to the School Board requesting a second live Zoom session for certificated staff to provide direct input and received confirmation from VSP School Board members this second session is in the works.

Please also share [this VPS Superintendent Search Page link](#) far and wide to help us provide as much community input as possible as the search begins for our next superintendent! From [this page](#), the survey is **available in both English and Spanish**.

Goodbye December/2020, Hello Giveaway\$!

VEA wants to continue to express our gratitude for the time and effort our members put in to support VPS students and their families! Congratulations to the following members (names drawn at random) on your forthcoming \$25 gift card to a local Vancouver restaurant - #TreatYourself on us! Please email kvannostran@washingtonea.org to confirm you'd like it inter-officed to your worksite or please confirm your home mailing address if you'd prefer to receive it in the snail mail!

Audrey Abbot, iTech Prep; Carolyn Bakula, Walnut Grove; Callie Barish, King; Chris Carder, Jason Lee; Nancy Cary, Flex; Kevin Coffey, Anderson; Meghan Crozier, Harney; Leah Hoodes, Roosevelt; Jane Klaasen, Fort; Martha Miller, Washington; Lisa Rhodes, Lieser; Dayna Robbins, MAC; Jon Selby, Lieser; Evelyne Tumanoff, Roosevelt; Ken Wiggins, Skyview.