



# Action Line

Vancouver Education Association

February 2021



In 1926 the second week in February was chosen to celebrate “**Negro History Week.**”. The week was symbolic in that it was the same week of the birthdays of former President Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass, an escaped slave and prominent abolitionist movement activist. **Black History Month**, also known as African American History Month, grew out of “Negro History Week,” the brainchild of noted historian Carter G. Woodson and other prominent African Americans. Since **1976**, every U.S. president has officially designated the month of February as Black History Month.

## Help Celebrate Black History Month February 1-5: BLM at School Action Week

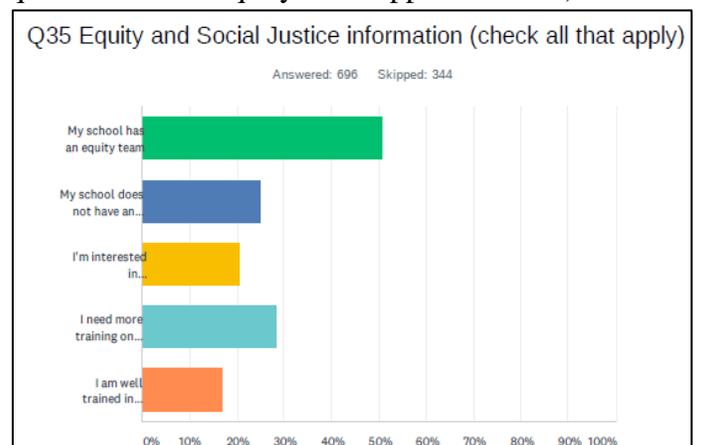
BLM at School Action week brings opportunities to bring awareness to equity and social justice with your students. The VEA Equity team has asked to share some resources that might assist you in acknowledging this week and further your work in social justice awareness and actions.

- [Teaching for change website](#) has some resources for all levels of learners as well as book recommendations
- [Black Lives Matter at School Resource Toolkit](#)
- [Black Lives Matter at School google slides](#) by a teacher in Washougal
- [Anti-racist Art Teachers Website](#)
- [National Black Lives Matter at School Week of Action Starter Kit](#)

## Equity Needs Apparent on All-Member Survey

The VEA all-member bargaining survey asked a couple questions about equity. It is apparent that 1) Some members get dismissed when bringing up equity concerns to their administration 2) Inclusive materials and curriculum are lacking and 3) Members are either unaware of the existence of an equity team at their site or an equity team has not yet been established.

The VEA was awarded a grant from NEA to expand our work around developing or enhancing building-based equity teams. Watch for some exciting ways we can help with development and/or awareness around equity work at the building level.



## "The Hill We Climb" and the 2021 Inauguration

The presentation of the poem "The Hill We Climb" at the 2021 Presidential Inauguration was both beautifully presented as well as written. National Youth Poet Laureate Amanda Gordon has achieved notoriety following this event. Her life story is interwoven into the fabric of this poem. It also brings forward an opportunity to share about creative expression as well as overcoming adversity. Teaching Tolerance has suggested some ways to [use her poem as a teaching tool](#). [Link to the poem and presentation](#)

Ms. Gordon has overcome speech and auditory processing issues, much like some of the students we serve. Learn more about her journey to this pivotal point in history in [this article](#).

### VEA's Equity Event



The VEA Equity Team has been hard at work preparing a new and lively event open to a broader membership and guests! Even though we won't be meeting in person, this zoom event will have activity choices via breakout rooms, inspirational messages and entertainment. Watch for a link to register!!

**Date:** Friday- February 26  
**Time:** 6pm-7:30pm  
**Theme:** "Feeding the Soul"  
**Format:** Zoom



### 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!

## Time to VOTE!

The VEA elections for Executive Board and WEA/NEA Representative Assembly Delegates opens on February 12<sup>th</sup> and runs through February 23<sup>rd</sup>.



The link to vote will be sent via USPS mail as well as via home email. Log in is your user name on the district email system – first name dot last name and your password is your district ID number. Please let Cindy know if you have any difficulties.

## NBCT Certifications

Congratulations to Wesley Ballou, Jaime Bassett, and Anthony Shine on obtaining National Board Certification! We recognize that the pandemic paradigm shift put a huge kink into an already long arduous process.



## WEA-Retired Scholarships for Members

WEA-Retired Scholarships, in partnership with WEA-Retired, is offering up to ten \$1000 non-renewable scholarships for 2021. These scholarships are available for WEA members only. The scholarships cannot be used for previous classes or to cover rent or gas. The application consists of three parts: 1) A cover sheet 2) A narrative based on questions for your classification and 3) A letter of recommendation. Please see the [WEA-Retired webpage](#) for the application.

Applications must be received no later than **March 10, 2021** (email or USPS) to:

Bev at [barwentz@comcast.net](mailto:barwentz@comcast.net)

or

WEA-Retired Scholarships  
51 SE Bayview Lane  
Shelton, WA 98584

## Lobby Day Recap

The VEA was well represented at the WEA Lobby Day on January 18<sup>th</sup>. President Kari Van Nostran, Exec Director Rick Wilson, VEA WEAPAC co-chairs Megan Christopher and Lynn Maiorca as well as VEA Leader Nicole Johnson attended a briefing from WEA and then met virtually with legislators (or their assistants) from the 49<sup>th</sup> Legislative District.

*“When volunteering to participate in the WEA lobbying day, I didn’t know what to expect and certainly didn’t have experience. However, the events and realities our communities have faced over the last year have motivated me to get more involved in the political process. The VEA team shared personal stories and experiences illustrating some of the challenges faced by schools during this time including the need for additional funding, the inequities in internet accessibility, and opening schools when it is safe. Representative Monica Stonier and Senator Annette Cleveland (and their respective teams) heard our concerns and recognized that educators and schools need support now more than ever. Overall, the WEA lobbying day gave me hope that our representatives in the 49th district will support the needs of our students, schools, educators, and ultimately, the community.”*

Nichole Johnson, Jefferson MS

## The VEA Contract – A book study



Knowledge is power! Know what rights and protections you have through your comprehensive professional agreement. VEA will lead members and leaders through an indepth review of the current contract. Please see the links below to register. Participants will be asked to pre-read the sections prior to the discussion sessions.

**Contract Book Study**, 4:00-5:30 pm

- [March 8<sup>th</sup>](#) (chapters 1-6)
- [March 29<sup>th</sup>](#) (chapters 7-9)
- [May 10<sup>th</sup>](#) (chapter 10)
- [May 24<sup>th</sup>](#) (chapters 11-15 and appendix)

The VEA contract and addendums can be found on the VEA website under the Documents Tab ([www.vancouverea.org](http://www.vancouverea.org))



California Casualty, the provider of the NEA Auto & Home Insurance Program, is offering NEA Members **eight chances to win cash in 2021**. The **\$2,500 Educator Jackpot** giveaway was created to bring a little excitement to members across the country. The timing could not be better. Winners for the \$2,500 prize will be randomly selected every three months of the year with two winners chosen each round. No obligation to enter. [www.readyfor2500.com/nea](http://www.readyfor2500.com/nea)

## Individual Contracts

*What is the difference between one-year, provisional and continuing contracts?*

Non-continuing, one-year contracts are offered to first year educators to balance with educators on leave. A district-wide balance is maintained in order to guarantee positions are available for educators when they return from leave. Mid-year, principals are required to evaluate one-year educators and make recommendations for their conversion to provisional status.

Provisional status includes three years of satisfactory performance in Washington Public Schools. One-year contracts are converted to a provisional and fulfill the first year of provisional (if greater than 90 days) employment for new educators. After a third successful provisional contract year, teachers receive a continuing contract. One-year contracts are converted to second year provisional contracts if the educator new to Vancouver has had one-year of teaching experience in another Washington Public School. One-year teachers with additional Washington Public School experience are converted to a continuing contract. Conversions are based upon recommendations from the principal to candidate day and capacity to staff at the school.

Get help shaping your financial future.

Register to reserve your webinar spot.



**The FutureFIT Financial Wellness Webinar Series** is all about making it easy to learn about the financial topics that matter most to you ... whether you're just starting your career or nearing retirement. **These financial seminars are sponsored through your member benefits and Cassie Johnson, AIG. Please note that the times are listed as Eastern Time**

[Choose to attend one or more; reserve your spot today:](#)

**Cash Management — Planning for Financial Security**

**February 2, 2021 at 11:00 a.m. ET**

Get help on reducing expenses and debt, creating a budget and tips for starting a plan to save and invest.

**Tax Planning — The Importance of Having a Solid Strategy**

**February 4, 2021 at 4:00 p.m. ET | February 9, 2021 at 11:00 a.m. ET**

Reducing taxes is generally a good idea, but it's not the only strategy to consider when saving for a secure retirement. Learn more about tax planning in this always relevant webinar.

**Young Professionals — Preparing for a Brighter Tomorrow**

**February 10, 2021 at 4:00 p.m. ET**

Learn tips on how to make saving for your future easier, strategies for taking control of debt and insight on the basics of investing and retirement planning.

**Social Security and Your Retirement**

**February 18, 2021 at 12:00 p.m. ET**

Take an in-depth look at Social Security benefits including estimations, taxes and more.

**Emotions and Your Money: 5 Potentially Costly Mistakes and How to Avoid Them**

**February 24, 2021 at 11:00 a.m. ET**



**Double Check the Accuracy of your Personnel File!**

Is your file correctly reflecting your qualifications and certifications? In compliance with Chapter 14

(Layoff, Leave, and Recall Procedures) of the VEA contract, watch for an email from the district to all members asking you to review your file to ensure that HR has your complete and accurate qualifications and certifications. **This is especially important for those of you with fewer than three years of experience.**

To assist with this review, they typically attach three documents to the email. The first is the VEA seniority list which includes only continuing and provisional contracts. As described in Chapter 14, this list is sorted first by the total number of years of documented service within the state of Washington then sorted by the total number of credits beyond a bachelor's degree.

The second document is a listing of current certifications and endorsements HR has on record. The third document is a FAQ sheet that HR has compiled based on frequently asked questions they receive. It is our hope that these documents will assist you in your file review.

Questions regarding the accuracy of your placement on these listings should be immediately directed to the district HR department. Let VEA know if you need advocacy around this topic.