



Action Line

Vancouver Education Association

January 2022



It's a New Year and New Beginnings!

The new year is here to remind us that it is never too late for a fresh start. It is a chance for all of us to come together, regroup, and move forward together supporting each other in the wonderful work of educating children! Together we can make an impact through collective efforts. While the new contract is still so new and packed full of some great improvements, there is still work to do!

Bargaining

Our COVID MOU is moving closer to final approval. VEA received the most recent counter from VPS just before departing for winter break and is working to secure follow up discussion with VPS early this week. Please complete [this VEA survey on masking](#) by Friday, January 7th at 5:00 pm. We are already starting to gear up for the interim bargain where each party can propose up to three non-monetary items. Even though the interim bargain does not contain any monetary considerations, improvements to your working conditions or process and procedures can be clarified. Your VEA leadership has noted some areas of the contract still needing to be addressed and is launching a survey to seek member priorities. Please complete [this interim bargaining survey](#) no later than January 11th at 5:00 pm.

Self-Care – New Employee Assistance

Self- Help Programs, Workplace concerns, Mental Health and Emotional Issues, Counseling services and more are available to you through the Employee Assistance programs. The current provider of Employee Assistance, Kit Corey and Solutions retired on December 31st. Effective January 1, 2022, the Employee Assistance Provider will be Deer Oaks EAP services. The EAP services are provided to all employees and dependents of Vancouver Public Schools. Similar to the previous provider, this benefit covers 6 confidential short-term counseling visits and is at no cost to employees and their families. Contact Deer Oaks at 1-888-993-7650. Their online access is www.deeroakseap.com password: **vansd**. Resources can also be accessed via iConnectYou app (code: **221967**) or email at eap@deeroaks.com

Legislative Outlook Looks Promising

The Governor's budget is a starting place headed into the legislative session that begins January 10th. While we are encouraged at the early revenue forecast of \$3 billion more than expected, we know that our advocacy around spending priorities will need to stay strong. Some highlights from the Governor's budget include:

- Significant investments in **school nurses, counselors, social workers, and psychologists** in support of the growing mental and behavioral crisis among students.
- Flexible resources to school districts for **accelerated learning opportunities** coming out of the pandemic. Uses could include before school, after school, additional days, and additional enrichment opportunities.
- Recruitment and retaining educators bolstering the BEST program (mentors).
- K-12 salary adjustments (COLA) for the 22-23 school year to reflect updated inflation estimates.

Dues and Taxes 2021



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 2021 taxes.

Members paid the following dues (NEA, WEA, VEA) in 2021:

0.76-1.0 FTE	\$1125.76
0.51-0.75 FTE	\$ 897.68
0.26-0.50 FTE	\$ 580.32
0.25 or less	\$ 308.28

This figure is calculated using the 2020-21 rate for 8 months (Jan-Aug) and the 2021-22 rate for 4 months (Sept-Dec). If you did not work the full year, or changed FTE during 2021, you can calculate your dues using the monthly figures as follows:

	<u>2020-21</u>	<u>2021-22</u>
0.76-1.0 FTE	\$93.26	94.92
0.51-0.75 FTE	\$74.38	75.66
0.26-0.50 FTE	\$48.08	48.92
0.25 or less	\$25.55	25.97

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 2021 and you must submit a request form by January 31, 2022. 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".

New Certification Requirement: Cultural Competency Standards



Starting on July 1, 2023, all teacher certificate renewals must include at least 15 clock hours of professional development focused on equity-based practices. The 15 required clock hours count as part of the 100 total hours required for recertification. The Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) has created cultural competency, diversity, equity, and inclusion standards, they will align the current PD to the [cultural competency standards](#). The STEM PD requirement remains in effect as well.

Certification Requirement PD via PGP process

VEA has partnered with VPS to bring the WEA's Professional Growth Plan PD (7 hours) to you via zoom. This qualifies for payment through individual PD funds. **District course 8263**

PGP 1 January 20, 2022 (4:30-7:30)

PGP 2 February 17, 2022 (4:30-6:30)

PGP 3 April 21, 2022 (4:30-6:30)

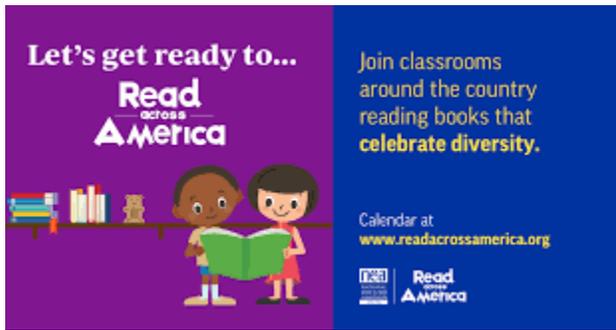
Participants learn how the Professional Growth Plans created by the Professional Educator Standards Board impacts their professional lives. They receive hands-on instruction and work on their PGP. In addition, they review how PGPs fit with STEM and TPEP professional development requirements for certificate renewal and learn about the role of PGPs in the Washington state certification landscape.

VEA Equity Work

The VEA's Equity Team is continuing work around a community of practice and now has a home page linked to the VEA website. If you haven't attended a Drinks and Dialogue session, there's another opportunity on January 13th. [Register](#) for the zoom link today! Join with other educators to have an open and honest conversation about Race and Social Justice within our community. Grab a drink and/or dinner reimbursed by the VEA (\$15 max). All members are encouraged to come and share their ideas and experiences in this safe space.



NEA Read Across America Resources



January is National Braille Literacy Month

The VEA Equity Team encourages you to [learn more about Braille](#) at the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Try titles from our [Read Across America Booklist about Dr. King](#) and others who stood up for what they believe in and acted to make a difference.

Governor Inslee Delays Long-Term Care (Cares Fund) Premium

Delaying implementation of the Washington Cares Fund premium assessment through the 2023 legislative session allows the Legislature time to pass the policy reforms that are ready to go now and to consider further recommendations from the Long Term Care Commission

Governor Inslee ordered the state Employment Security department NOT to collect the premiums from this program before April. The delay gives the legislature an opportunity to make improvements to the Fund during the 2022 legislative session. Legislative leaders support employers pausing premium collection from employees so lawmakers can take necessary action to pass legislation extending implementation dates until later next year.



Human Civil Rights Conference
Save the Date:
Feb 12, 2022
Format will be online. Watch for registration information mid-January

VEA Leadership Nominations Close in January!

Nominations for VEA positions opened on December 6th and will close at the Rep Council meeting on January 10th. Please contact Cindy for a nomination form:

- **The VEA Executive Board positions of 2nd VP ESA/TOSA Affairs, Recording Secretary, Primary Trustee, and Senior High 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 7-9
- **VEA Delegates to the NEA Rep Assembly** (Location Chicago – a virtual option has not yet been determined) This one-time event is July 2-6). VEA pays expenses for in-person participation (flight, hotel, meals).



VEA Leadership Opportunities Continue at the WEA and NEA level

WEA will be conducting elections this year for the WEA Board, NEA RA State Delegates, and NEA Board positions. Please make sure VEA's voice is heard by filling our allocated WEA Board seats! The State delegate positions to NEA RA are additional opportunities for VEA members to participate – the only difference is that the state delegates are elected for a two-year term (2022 and 2023 NEA RA) and WEA pays the expenses. Nominations will open on January 17th. Please let VEA know if you are interested so that we can assist you with the application process.

*Pick me!
Pick me!
Pick me!
Pick me!
Pick me!*

Implicit Bias Series – Professional Development

VEA has a slate of cultural competency professional development courses lined up in 2022! Approved courses through VPS will allow for payment via individual PD funds. Some courses are still in process, so please Save the Date!

January 12th Wed (3 hours): **Implicit Bias – How to Be a White Ally in the Fight for Racial Justice** (VPS Course # 8276)

- How to be a White Ally in the Fight for Racial Justice is a comprehensive look at what white educators can do to be an ally to the BIPOC community. First-person stories, experiences and scenarios will be shared about how to navigate situations in the classroom, with colleagues, school administration and the community. Participants will be expected to examine their own level of awareness and level of practice as an ally, as well as engage in courageous dialogue about how to be an ally. Those who attend will have a better understanding of how to be an ally in the work of racial equity and social justice as an educator and while working with diverse students, families and educational communities.

January 22nd Sat (6 hours): **Implicit Bias – Race & Ethnicity, Moving Past our Biases** (Save the Date)

- This research-based course for educators explores the difference between race and ethnicity through an analysis of definitions, real-world examples, group discussions, and collaborative work strategies. This course also examines the myths of race and how developing sustainable relationships can improve the outcomes of educator experiences with students, families, and peers.

February 9th Wed (3 hours): **Implicit Bias - LGBTQ Identities and Microaggressions** (Save the Date)

- In this course, participants are introduced to implicit bias research, resources, and concepts, including microaggressions and micro-insults. During the other portion of this

course, participants develop an understanding of [1] how our beliefs, values, and experiences inform implicit biases related to LGBTQ issues and [2] how our implicit biases and behaviors impact others (students, colleagues, families, etc.). Because student success is dependent on a sense of belonging, participants work on strategies to make the classroom and school system more inclusive. Participants will learn how to help provide students from the LGBTQ community a safe environment to learn with the goal of increasing student engagement and academic success.

March 5th Sat (4 hours): **Implicit Bias - Interrupting Discrimination Against LGBTQ Communities** (Save the Date)

- This research-based course for educators explores vocabulary to help educators understand gender terminology, binary gender systems, and student perspectives about their experiences as LGBTQ+ youth

April 30th Sat (4 hours): **Implicit Bias - Using Restorative Justice Practices in Education** (Save the Date)

- The objective of this course is to create a space where educators can learn to understand the positive impact that restorative justice can play in building relationships and developing community with students daily. Educators will learn how restorative justice implementation can repair harms and restore relationships that could be jeopardized between students, peers, or other educators by participating in small group activities.

Asynchronous professional development courses now available

WEA's Inclusionary Practices Project (IPP) is providing 36 professional development courses up to 166 hours of professional development credit, including 60 hours of STEM. The courses are free, provide clock hours, and available to all! For more information including the list of courses and registration links, please visit the [Asynchronous Courses page](#) on the WEA website.

Nominate an Outstanding Education Support Professional



Nominations are open for the 2022 WEA Education Support Professional of the Year. [Complete nomination packets](#) are due no later than 5:00 pm on Friday, January 14th. Think of your ESP/classified peers whose contributions to your school, community, and profession. This is the chance to recognize our union siblings and their positive impact on our students in VPS

VEA Social –SUCCESS!

VEA hosted an all-member social on November 19th. Over 60 members attended and enjoyed appetizers and their first beverage hosted by VEA. There were table games, lively conversation, and new networks formed. The new VEA Weingarten cards were distributed, and participants earned two stamps towards earning their UNION prize



(one for attending and one for filling out representative and trustee information). Feedback was strong that members want more of these events...



The next social will be held on Friday, January 21st from 3:30-6:30 pm, location TBD. All members are welcome to attend and celebrate our colleagues in Special Education.

[RSVP](#) no later than January 19th
(<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/KK8GCCG>)

Celebrating National Board Certification



Congratulations to Shannon Stewart (iTech) Kristen Briem (Washington Elementary) and Merri Gonsalves-Johnson (Bay) for obtaining their National Board Certification!!

This journey was especially difficult last year navigating through a COVID impacted year with so many obstacles to the delivery of instruction.

SPARKS!



Are you a member with 0-7 years of overall teaching experience? SPARKS is a high energy, interactive experience aimed at VEA's newest members.

Facilitated by SPARKS graduates, SPARKS provides an opportunity to engage and learn techniques for working with students and colleagues, engage with the association, and gain deeper insights on your profession.

SPARKS will be held at the Best Western Ocean View in Seaside, Oregon March 18-20. [Applications](#) were sent to members in this demographic via the interoffice mail right before Winter break. Please see your building rep or contact VEA for more information.

