



Action Line

Vancouver Education Association

Issue 6

February 2023

Raising our Collective Voice for our Students and our Schools!



Together we have a powerful voice for our students and our schools. That's why it's critical we use our voice in solidarity with fellow VPS colleagues – administrative, certificated, and classified staff alike. Vancouver voters will be deciding whether to give Vancouver Public Schools (VPS) the funding we need to support students' futures or whether to force deep budget cuts that we know will hurt Vancouver students and educators for years to come. Ballots dropped in mailboxes on Friday and Vancouver voters need our help! Spread the word... get out the vote!

We all agree that our students' futures shouldn't depend on a vote and that we need a far more reliable and equitable funding system for public schools. As VEA members (VEA members included) unite in Olympia to fight for sustainable funding from the state legislature, let's make sure our students have the freedom to pursue their dreams by also ensuring every Vancouver levy passes, including this one, coming up on February 14th, 2023.

You can reference these Levy Facts and FAQs [found here on the VPS website](#) with Vancouver friends and family. You can also promote a **#VoteYesForVPS** by following and reposting from the Citizens Committee for Good Schools (CCGS) Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages and/or sharing your own posts using images [found here on the CCGS website](#). Sign up to volunteer and/or request a yard sign at <https://www.ccgsvancouver.com/connect/>

Renewing this VPS Levy is not just good for students, it's also good for educators: TRI funds that comprise one part of an overall compensation package for every VEA bargaining unit employee are funded with Levy dollars. In addition, **12% of VEA bargaining unit employee positions** are currently funded with Levy dollars.

Let's Flock together!



February 3, 2023
3:30-5:30 pm

Come when you can –
stay as long as you like!

Ghost Runners Brewery and Kitchen
4216 NE Minnehaha Street #108
Vancouver, WA 98661

[Please RSVP](#)



**Break out of isolation and
flock together as a Union to
build upon and create new
experiences!**



- VEA will host pizza to share (including gluten free) and your first beverage.
- Walk away with some VEA swag!
- Win giveaways from local BIPOC-owned businesses!
- Enter a Jackpot Drawing to win a breakfast for you and fellow members at your worksite!
- Play trivia, pool, ping-pong, corn hole or just relax and build community

Double Check the Accuracy of your HR/Personnel File!



Does your HR/personnel file correctly reflect your qualifications and certifications? In compliance with Chapter 14 (Layoff, Leave, and Recall Procedures) of the VEA contract, VPS HR sent an email on January 31, 2023 from the district to all

members suggesting you 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, the district attached three documents to the email: 1) a VEA seniority list which includes only members with 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.

2) a certifications and endorsements list based on HR current records and 3) an 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 VPS HR department (360-313-1080, hrdesk@vansd.org). Article 14.7A states that **members must report any concerns/changes to HR no later than February 15th**. Please let VEA know if you need support/advocacy around this topic.



Nominations Open for VEA and WEA positions.

Nominations opened at the January 9th Rep Council meeting for VEA Executive Board positions as well as member delegates to the WEA RA (April 13-15 in Spokane) and NEA RA (July 1-6 in Orlando, FL). Executive Board positions open include President, 1st VP, 3rd VP Membership Engagement, Treasurer, Special Ed Trustee, and Specialist Trustee. RA participation is a one-event commitment. VEA pays expenses for in-person participation (flight, hotel, meals, release).

If you are interested in state-level work, WEA will be conducting elections for WEA President, WEA Vice President and one NEA State Director

Please contact Cindy at the VEA office for candidate forms! VEA nominations close at the Rep Council meeting on February 6th. WEA positions close at the WEA RA.

Taking Action in Olympia

Together in WEA we have a strong voice for our students and our schools. WEA members, like you, need to share YOUR reality with those making decisions in Olympia. Coming up the first week in February:

Inclusive Learning Standards and Curricula: Consider signing in “PRO” for both bills, [SB 5441](#) and [SB 5462](#)

A bill around **Special Education evaluation and access** ([HB 1305](#)): Educators may agree that timelines need to speed up, but we can't accommodate that without additional staff and funding.

[SB 5024](#) is on **parents' rights**. We support parents' rights and their involvement in their child's education, but parents already have access to much of what the bill addresses and it's prescriptive in a way that would increase educator workloads.

Read about proposed changes to transitional Kindergarten and more in [Taking Action in Olympia](#)!

Unions Meet with Congresswoman Gluesenkamp-Perez in Vancouver



In the photo from left to right –

Corey McCrady, Paraeducator, Longview SD; Roxann Ortega-Murillo, Custodian, Vancouver SD; Jesse Affeldt, Elementary Teacher, Vancouver SD; Sherry Parsons, Paraeducator, Longview SD; Congresswoman Marie Gluesenkamp-Perez; Charlotte Lartey, Teacher on Special Assignment supporting Social and Emotional Learning Implementation, Vancouver SD; Erin Smelser, Paraeducator, La Center SD; and Richard Taylor, Maintenance Staff, VSD.

WEA members joined members of SEIU 925 to meet Congresswoman Marie Gluesenkamp-Perez from the 3rd Congressional District. The meeting provided members of both unions the opportunity to highlight issues affecting those in the public education system and students across the state. Congresswoman Perez listened intently and supported finding solutions to the following concerns.

- They discussed funding shortages in Special Education and urged Congresswoman Perez to work with her to colleagues to fully fund the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
- Concerns were raised about the critical, ongoing staffing shortages across public education, particularly the shortage of paraeducators and bus drivers. They also raised concerns about the lack of mandated sick leave and explained the detrimental impact this has on educators who are working in a time when numerous illnesses are forcing employees to stay home.
- Some schools & districts are now qualifying for free lunches for all students (if they hit 40% or more students who qualify for the federal program), but many districts across the state are not qualifying for this program. In Clark Co, Washougal missed the

qualification by 1%. They know they have students going hungry at lunch because they don't qualify for the federal program, which in itself is too restrictive and doesn't serve all of the families experiencing food insecurity & poverty.

All of the issues discussed are interconnected, exacerbate the educator shortage, and raise concerns about the future of public schools.

Who is Making a Difference?

The WEA Human and Civil Rights Committee is accepting nominations for individuals or groups who are involved in exceptional work in the areas of community partners, cultural awareness, international peace and understanding, and student involvement in Washington state. [Nominations](#) are due by Monday, May 1, 2023. Recipients will be presented with a special Human Rights Award, a \$250 check and local/state recognition.

Individual Contracts

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

Non-continuing, one-year contracts are offered to educators in their first year with VPS 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. WEA continues to monitor the FTE numbers of those on a Leave of Absence and the issuance of "One year Only" Contracts.

Provisional status includes up to three years of satisfactory performance in Washington Public Schools. A single year provisional contract is also noted if the educator in their first year with VPS has completed at least one year of experience in another Washington Public School. Following successful provisional status, contracts are converted to a continuing contract. Continued employment is typically based upon recommendations from the principal to candidate day and capacity to staff within a school and/or program. This year candidate day will be combined with two certificated career fairs (February 23 and one on March 2).

WEA-Retired Scholarships for Members

[WEA-Retired Scholarships](#), in partnership with WEA-Retired, is offering up to ten \$1000 non-renewable scholarships for 2023. These scholarships are available for WEA members only. 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 noon on **March 10, 2023**. Questions? Contact Linda McGee at mcgee4748@gmail.com.

VEA Contract 101 (4:30-6:30 Zoom)



Feb 8 (Chapters 1-7)

Feb 15 (Chapters 8-10)

Feb 22 (Chapters 11-15/Appendices)

<https://tinyurl.com/2s3mah67>

Please join us for an in-depth review and understanding of the various sections of the agreement. You can choose one or more sessions to attend. Please note, a minimum of 10 participants is required to hold a given session.

Chapter 1: Definitions - Rules
Chapter 2: Management Rights
Chapter 3: Association Rights
Chapter 4: Negotiations and Communications
Chapter 5: Grievances
Chapter 6: Leaves
Chapter 7: Placement -Openings –Movement
Chapter 8: Evaluation
Chapter 9: Employee Rights –Academic Freedom
Chapter 10: General Conditions (catch all calendar, work day – class size – overloads – safety – etc)
Chapter 11: Compensation – salary schedule placement
Chapter 12: TRI and PD
Chapter 13: Supplemental Contracts
Chapter 14: Layoff and Recall
Chapter 15: SBLT, Budget Oversight
Appendices

Knowledge
is power 



Black History Month BLM at School Week

Please see [this list of resources](#) compiled by Charlotte Lartey, VPS MTSS and SEL Specialist for Black History Month and

the National Black Lives Matter at School Week of Action (Feb 6-10). You can see the new SEL specific resources at the top, and the last page includes resources from across VPS for all age groups from early education to adulthood.

VEA Mural – Call to Artists

The VEA Mural Committee is asking for your assistance in advertising a Call to Artists to submit a proposal for painting a mural on the VEA office building. Please consider the following attributes developed from VEA member responses to the Mural Survey released prior to Winter Break.

Location – Vancouver Education Association 2509 Broadway – Vancouver, WA 98663. North facing wall along Fourth Plain Blvd. (space approximately 13 feet tall by 25 feet wide). The VEA is open to the artist's interpretation encompassing more of the wall over the door frame and window features and/or utilizing the East facing wall along Broadway Street.

The project bid should be all-inclusive: permits if needed, products including vandal guard topcoat or other similar non-sacrificial coating for graffiti proofing, paint, ladder or rolling scaffolding, artist time on the project as well as their vision/sketch for consideration.

Design should include the following attributes:

- VEA or Vancouver Education Association
- Union values (eg. representation, advocacy, together, unity, strength)
- Historical perspective of public education in Vancouver. The VEA website lists some historical facts at <https://vancouverea.org/history-of-vea/> (eg. could include the original school or objects such as style of desks, computers, etc.)
- Representation of diverse VEA membership and VPS students we serve (a range of cultures, ethnicities, abilities, and/or other identities, inclusive of teachers and other members such as nurses, therapists, counselors, librarians, etc.)
- Timeless. Balanced. Simple.

Statement of interest as to why the artist wants to be chosen for the project should be included in the proposal remitted to VEA by March 15, 2023. Proposal form requests and submissions should be directed to Cindy at VEA: cbrown@washingtonea.org. **Costs** shall not exceed \$10,000. **Targeted project completion date:** August 30, 2023 (first day of school for the 2023-24 school year).

Connect with your NEA Member Benefits to be Financially Fit in 2023

If you have not done so already, first things first, get registered on www.neamb.com/connect in order to access all the benefits mentioned below.

Connect to Safeguard Your Loved Ones

Get some help to **figure out how much life insurance you need** based on your family's particular circumstances. Find the article [here](#). And, if you have not yet named your beneficiary for Complimentary Life Insurance, now is a great time to do it at www.neamb.com/connect

Connect to a Healthy Retirement

Peace of mind comes from planning ahead—**The NEA Retirement Plan** is designed specifically for NEA members and provides both traditional and Roth 403(b) retirement savings. Go online to www.neamb.com/connect and scroll down to the bottom of the page to find the NEA Retirement Program. Click on the “Learn about investment options” link and discover a treasure trove of retirement planning tools and information, including:

- **Five-Minute Retirement Checkup** to review savings goals and strategies [here](#).
- **An Educator's Guide to Retirement Income Planning**. Go to the Guide directly by clicking [here](#).

Don't delay in building your retirement savings plan—the sooner you begin, the more you can look to the future with confidence and a positive outlook! Again this Spring, VEA's WEA-Retired team will use Zoom to offer three sessions covering a variety of topics important to your retirement planning. The registration form will ask for you to rank your choice of dates for each of the sessions. Space is limited so please register as soon as possible. [Click here for the registration form](#)

Connect to Sound Money Management **5 Money Mistakes Educators Need to Avoid**

explains how you can use your membership benefits to make a plan now that can help protect your finances and your family in times of financial difficulty. Go to the article [here](#).

Build Your Budget in 6 Easy Steps is a downloadable workbook that helps you organize your finances and figure out where your money goes each month. It's a very practical tool—no scolding involved! Find the workbook [here](#).

The **NEA Personal Loan**[®] offers consolidation loans up to \$30,000 with no application or processing fees, terms from 36 to 72 months, no pre-payment penalties, very competitive fixed rates, and affordable monthly payments. Learn more [here](#).

Embrace the new year with a commitment to take control of your finances. All the best to you for a healthy, financially fit and prosperous 2023!

If you are looking for tax prep discounts, visit the NEA Discount Marketplace. Here is a video to get started.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n-H5ij7k-9c>

VITA and RBG Elementary Schools

Planning is underway for Vancouver Innovation, Technology and Arts (VITA) and Ruth Bader Ginsburg (RBG) Elementary Schools to open for the 2023-24 school year.

VITA Elementary is hosting two open houses on Feb. 16. (currently full) and Mar. 15 at 5 p.m. as an opportunity for parents (no children please) to learn about the school. Please RSVP by responding via [this form](#). VPS anticipates phase one applications will open in late February.

More information about primary school Programs of Choice including dates for the application process and details about the selection process will be available after the Feb. 14 meeting of the VPS School Board.

PTA Presents “GIRL DRAMA”

Supporting your daughter through the Ups and Downs. Friendships and social dynamics can be complicated. It can be difficult to know what to say and do to support their child. February 8, 7:00-8:00 pm FREE but registration is required www.tinyurl.com/VanGirlDrama

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

TPEP Artifacts

March 16, 2022 4:30-6:30 pm VPS Course #8702
Clock hours and available individual PD funds apply to this course. Participants will understand the overall structure, philosophy, and policy authority of TPEP and instructional frameworks. They will understand the role of artifacts and evidence in teacher evaluation, and will make concrete connections between your practice, your framework and a natural harvest of artifacts and evidence.

STEM Offerings

WEA STEM professional learning now available. Meet the STEM certificate renewal requirements with courses from the WEA. WEA's Inclusionary Practices Project (IPP) is providing professional development via Zoom. Courses and clock hours are at no cost. Check out [these course offerings](#) and **Register here:**

<https://www.washingtonea.org/events-training/pd/stem-certificate-renewal-requirement/>

More WEA IPP Courses

[Check out the spring courses](#) that include Inclusionary practices, Classroom management and Social Emotional Learning with Simulated Practice, Universal Design for Learning framework through a PLC perspective, Trauma Focus, Specially Designed Instruction, Effective High-Quality PLAAFPs for Strength Based IEPs, Data Collection, Restorative FOCUS, De-escalation Strategies, etc! [The course flier](#) includes registration links. Courses and clock hours at no cost.

Attorney Referral Program

The Attorney Referral Program is a service provided to NEA members (active, life, educational support, and retired and their spouses and dependent children) who need the services of an attorney on personal legal matters (not employment related). Participating attorneys provide each member with two free 30-minute consultation sessions each year (September 1 through August 31). These two free consultations are taken separately and deal with two different questions.

This benefit allows you to discuss your situation with the attorney to determine whether you need additional legal services. Don't expect the attorney to draft or review documents during a consultation. It is important to discuss any fee arrangements at your initial meeting. The following areas of law are then discounted 30 percent should you choose to be represented further: Real estate matters, Wills and estates, Domestic relations, Consumer protection, Traffic violations (including DUI citations)

You may discuss almost any subject during one of your 30-minute conferences, although certain matters are excluded: Members business dealings, Preparation of income tax returns, Bankruptcies, Defense of criminal violations (other than traffic)

Upon your initial visit to the attorney's office, you must present some evidence of NEA membership. Payment for all legal fees is the responsibility of the member.

In Vancouver, the participating attorney is Grant Broer. Located at 8904 N.E. Hazel Dell Avenue. Telephone: 360-576-7947.

New!! Shahzad Qadri is a partner at Wong Fleming in Redmond, WA and is also licensed to practice in Oregon. Telephone: 425-869-4040 or email: sqadri@wongfleming.com