



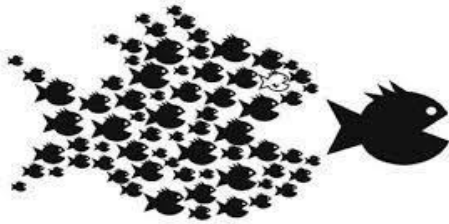
Action Line

Vancouver Education Association

Issue 8

April 2023

Putting the YOU in Union!



ORGANIZE!

There are many opportunities for active member participation in the work we do together as a union: serving in grade/subject level/building level/constituent group leadership, providing member voice on your building's safety committee, supporting the bargaining team, contributing to committee work, participating in WEA-facilitated PD, attending a social, responding to member surveys and

VOTING in VEA elections! Our collective voice is what makes VEA strong: we can accomplish far more together than what we can accomplish alone!

Opportunities to share YOUR opinion, like those below, are prime examples of a member-benefit. At present, VEA members are making their voices heard regarding PLC work, a VEA Office mural, and the VPS transition from Skyward to Synergy.

MEMBER INPUT: CLARIFICATION NEEDED



Work on interim bargaining proposal language began during an all-day work session on March 23rd. The VEA team is asking for more clarity from members regarding PLCs.

Please complete **THIS SHORT BARGAINING CLARIFICATION SURVEY**
(<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SCG5H7Y>)

MEMBER INPUT: CONCEPTUAL DESIGN FOR VEA MURAL

In a previous survey, VEA asked members to help determine key attributes for a future VEA building mural. Following that member feedback, VEA launched a call to mural artists to submit mural design proposals by March 15th. The VEA mural committee then reviewed artist submissions and have now narrowed them to two finalists for member consideration!

Please review the two conceptual renderings from our finalists: <https://tinyurl.com/yfmez7za>

In **THIS MURAL SURVEY**, please select your preferred conceptual rendering AND suggest any final considerations VEA might bring forward to the final artist. **Your feedback by April 20th** will help guide the VEA Executive Board in contracting this work. <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/R9QY3JF>

MEMBER INPUT: TRANSITION TO SYNERGY

The district has management rights to change digital programming from Skyward to Synergy. The association can then bargain impacts on wages, hours and/or working conditions affected by the District change. While VEA has participated in initial conversations with VPS around this transition, we have also heard through Trustee reports from VEA Rep Council of lingering member concerns. **Your feedback via THIS SYNERGY SURVEY by April 14th** will help strengthen VEA member voice with the District.

The Democratic Process in Union work

Your union is a member-driven, democratically governed organization at the local, state, and national levels. Representing YOUR voice as local, state, and national decisions are made include:

VEA Representatives to the WEA Rep. Assembly (April 13-16 in Spokane)

VEA President, Kari Snow (Van Nostran)
VEA Representative to the WEA Board, Cam Swarts
VEA Delegates: Jamie Anderson, Eric Silvey, Lynn Maiorca, Angel Sierra Figueroa, Jesse Affeldt, John Rafanelli, Robert Salazar, Maggie Harshaw, Sara Bishop, Tricia Hamann, Brian Dunlap, Karina Rocha, Adrienne Lee-Kernell, Yvonne Romero, and Shadbreon Gatson

VEA Representatives to the NEA Rep. Assembly (July 1-6 in Orlando, FL)

VEA President, Kari Snow (Van Nostran)
VEA Delegates: Eric Silvey, Cam Swarts, Shannon McClelland, Angel Sierra Figueroa, Karna Rocha

VEA Executive Board for 2023-24

VEA President (WEARA and NEARA): Jamie Anderson

1st VP: Cam Swarts

2nd VP ESA/TOSA Affairs: Shauna Guinn-Burnett

3rd VP Member Engagement: Maxwell Merchant

4th VP Equity Affairs: Amanda Clow

Recording Secretary: Jackie Kozlowski

Treasurer: Shannon McClelland

Primary Trustee: Carl Gibson

Intermediate Trustee: Lisa White

Middle School Trustee: Keith Lloyd

Special Education Trustee: Anna Fenton

Specialist Trustee: Kierstin Eaton

WEAPAC Chair: Jesse Affeldt

Bargaining Chair: TBD

WEA Board Director: Cam Swarts

SPARKS 2023

After a three-year hiatus due to COVID, 18 Vancouver Education Association members with 0-10 years of experience met for a professional development retreat March 10-12 in Seaside, OR. The shared learning experience revolved around stress & time management, team-building in the classroom, rules of discipline, classroom management, VEA/VPS contract questions, retirement clarity, political action, collaboration, NEA benefits, bargaining, and more!



Participants made new connections, the mystery tour helped them “stay grounded,” and the beach weather was spectacular!

WEA-Retired Outreach and Membership Discount

VEA’s representative to the WEA-Retired Board, Joe Balin, recently provided a little pick-me-up message and treat to VEA members. In addition, WEA is offering a \$50 rebate on the \$550 lifetime membership fee for new members that join WEA Pre-Retired in APRIL. VEA will also match that rebate with a \$50 VISA gift card for the first ten VEA members who take advantage of this offer:

[JOIN HERE](#)

Retiring this year? Check out [this retirement checklist](#). There are important dates and tasks you don’t want to miss.... Starting April 1st!

Spring Certification Training Opportunities

WEA's Spring Certification courses are open for registration. All courses are online, in real-time, via Zoom. Clock hours are available through WEA. These courses are FREE to WEA members! Visit the [WEA Certification Webpage](#) or review [THIS FLYER](#) for more details regarding:

- Teacher Certification 101 & ESA Certification 101 (2 clock hours)
- Professional Growth Plan (PGP) Support – 3 sessions
- NBCT Information 3 sessions
- NBCT Summer Jump Start Events (June 26-30 and August 7-11)

Special Education Support Center: Inclusionary Practices PD

The courses below have been released by WEA for the April-June 2023 timeframe. Check out [THIS FLYER](#) for more details and registration information regarding:

- Assistive Technology for the Inclusive Classroom (6 hours)
- De-Escalation Strategies for Educators (3 hours)
- Universal Design for Learning 101
- Strengths-Based Environments FOCUS (3 hours)
- Designing a UDL Lesson Plan (1.5 hours)
- Special Education Law 101
- Sensory Strategies in the Inclusive Classroom (6 hours)
- Beyond Intrinsic Motivation: Building Reward Systems
- Successful Inclusion of Students with Significant Disabilities (6 hours)
- Effective High-Quality PLAAFPs for strength-based IEPs (9 hours)
- Coaching and Mentoring for Universal Design for Learning (6 hours)

Special Education Law Course

District Course # 9034



WEA's Center for Education Quality will present Special Education Law in a session for VEA members on Saturday, April 29th via Zoom. This course will qualify for 6 clock hours and utilization of available PD funds. Understanding the Federal and State laws for providing special education programs in our public schools is imperative to ensure the compliant delivery of services to qualified students. This course provides an overview of the rules and regulations required for providing special education services. Based on WAC 392-172A and specific court cases, instruction provides participants with the tools needed to provide compliant services.

Participants will gain awareness of the definition of Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) as it applies to students eligible for special education, walk through the IEP process – from referral through IEP development and implementation, gain awareness of the law as it applies to least restrictive environment (LRE), know the importance of parent and student participation in all program decisions, and gain awareness of procedural due process.

ADIDAS EMPLOYEE STORE ACCESS SPRING SHOPPING!



VEA members and their guests (up to 4 additional friends or family) can purchase items at the Adidas Employee store through April 17th! You will need to bring your work identification, business card or pay stub, photo ID and [this invitation letter](#).

Preparing for the Next School Year **NOW!**



BUILDING-BASED PLACEMENT OF STAFF

Seniority guidelines are not dispositive for in-building placements. However, building administrators are expected to consider seniority in making in-building assignments unless there are objective reasons for not doing so. Such reasons will be communicated to the employee, the employee will have the opportunity to respond to the reasons, and such responses will be considered.

- Upon completion of tentative in-building placements, but before activation of PIR placements by the District, the principal will share information with the faculty regarding openings to be released for PIR placement.
- In-building staff who express interest will be given consideration consistent with this article. This action may require relatively short turnaround (i.e., one to three days) to avoid delaying the PIR process.
- Educators who possess the qualification but cannot be placed in their preferred assignment will be given consideration for a preferred assignment should an opening become available after completion of the building assignment process and before the beginning of the next school year.
- Placement in such an opening is dependent upon the ability of the District to otherwise assign all other excess and /or newly hired employees.
- It is not the District's intent to displace a currently assigned teacher to place a newly hired teacher unless there are no other reasonable options that would avoid such displacement.

Article 7.8E v. *"When the District becomes overstaffed District-wide (More staff than funded for), they may place staff members involuntarily into positions for which they are qualified to meet the urgent needs of the District in an attempt to prevent layoff of staff."*



INVOLUNTARY TRANSFER DUE TO BUILDING OVERSTAFFING

During the first week of May, the building principal will meet with Association faculty representatives and/or building staff to review and discuss projected student enrollments and faculty and student deployment plans for the next school year (Article 10.19 CPA). As staffing numbers arrive to principals, an idea of which buildings may find themselves overstaffed becomes clearer. What happens if the building is overstaffed? (Article 7.8C CPA)

1. The principal will review the qualifications of the staff currently assigned to the school and tentatively place each staff member into identified positions in programs while considering personal preferences of each educator. The principal will meet with their SBLT co-chair and VEA building representatives to discuss the program and staffing plans as soon as information is available for discussion purposes, but **not later than the first week in May**.
2. If overstaffed, the building principal will ask for volunteers whose certification aligns with the areas of programming requiring reduction in FTE. While employees may be encouraged to volunteer, they should not to be **pressured** into volunteering.
3. If volunteers are not available, selection for administrative transfer (also referred to as "excess") must be by seniority within the required qualifications (e.g., you would not administratively transfer a less senior Spanish teacher if your overstaffing was in Language Arts unless both employees were equally certified in both areas.) The only other exceptions are protected situations (e.g., an employee who has been administratively transferred and involuntarily placed within the past two years or a head coach)



Have you checked your personnel file lately?

April is a good time to check the contents of your personnel file BEFORE placement considerations.

Article 7.4 states: "To be assured full consideration in obtaining desired placements, an individual is responsible to regularly inspect and update your personnel file by submitting current official transcripts, certificates, credentials, evaluations of experience, and other pertinent documents regarding your qualifications."

Other things happening soon to prepare for the following school year...

May 1 – (6.12d) Employees on surplus or otherwise unassigned will be provided a list of all current opening and be given preference by seniority prior to new employment placement.

Site Based Leadership Team: Co-chairs are typically elected in the spring for the following year. See your VEA building rep for more details.



Building Budgets will soon be drafted for next year. See your building rep, SBLT co-chair, and/or principal if you have specific budget needs to be addressed.

Safety Committee. WAC 296-800-13020 charges us to establish a safety committee at each site that employs 11 or more employees. Members of the Safety committee are to be **employee-elected**. Employees selected by the union qualify as employee elected. **The term of the employee-elected members must be a maximum of one year** (There is no limit to the number of terms a representative can serve). If there is a vacancy, a new member must be elected prior to the next scheduled meeting. Each committee has an elected chairperson. The committee determines how often, when, and where the committee will meet.



Elect your VEA Reps



VEA's governing documents allow for the election of representatives at each worksite or constituent group based on a ratio of one (1) representative for every 15 members or fraction thereof. Terms are two years, and there is no limit to the number of terms a rep can serve.

Building/constituent group representatives should be elected by the building/group membership and communicated to VEA prior to the first rep council meeting (September) in the fall. New and Advanced Rep Training will be available.

Washington Cares Fund (Long-Term Care) Fee to Begin

Workers in Washington State will begin contributing to the WA Cares on July 1, 2023 and benefits become available. The premium for 2023 is 0.58 percent of an employee's gross wages. As of January 1, 2023 exemptions are allowed if you live outside of Washington or meet other criteria, but you must apply! [Check out this tool kit](#) for more details.

VEA Social



The March 24th social was a great success! Over 50



VEA members met at the WheelHouse Taproom to network, enjoy hosted appetizers and a beverage, play board games, and win raffle prizes. They also earned a punch on their VEA Weingarten UNION card... Stamp all five letters in UNION to earn a VEA insulated tumbler and a gift card for something to put in it!



Save
the
Date

The next VEA social is slated for Friday, May 12th

CCGS – The Work Continues

Thank you for your support to help pass the 2023 VPS Replacement Levy! As we all breathe a sigh of relief, the realities of a VPS Replacement Technology Levy in 2025 are just around the corner. Help will be needed to replenish the funds expended as the cost of running the 2023 levy campaign was greater than previous campaign efforts. Look for messages reminding the community what these levy dollars provide to our students at sporting events and activities. Here's the link to Citizens Committee for Good Schools website: <https://ccgsvancouver.com/>

Quick Guide to Unlocking the Full Potential of your NEA Membership

1. Start by registering on the site: www.neamb.com/START
2. If you already have an account, sign in with your **personal email** address and NEA Member Benefits password.
3. If this is your first visit, click “**Register Now**” and complete the registration process. This is how we verify your membership.

STAY IN THE KNOW!

Here are the top **SIX** ways to **save money** and maximize your membership:

- ☐ Make sure to **name/update your beneficiary** for the NEA Complimentary Life Insurance Program. This is an automatic benefit of membership!
- ☐ Shopping! Find exclusive deals and earn cash back from over 2,500 top retailers and online stores through our newest discount program, the **NEA Discount Marketplace**.
- ☐ Check out the financial tools in the Retirement Learning Center, download the Educators’ Guide to Retirement Planning, and get monthly access to the Kiplinger’s Retirement Report for **FREE!**
- ☐ Planning your spring or summer break? Save on tickets to movies, theme parks and more. NEA members get up to 40% off tickets to movies, theme parks, attractions, concerts, sports, live events and much more through the **NEA Discount Tickets Program**.
- ☐ Sign up for NEA Member Benefits **newsletters** to get the inside scoop on the hottest member-exclusive deals on travel, financial education, and the insiders’ shoppers guide.
- ☐ Claim your \$500 Travel Dollars by enrolling in the **NEA Travel Program**. Plan your next getaway with NEA Travel and use your NEA Travel Dollars as partial payment to save on car rentals, hotels, airfare, resorts, cruises, tours, and more.



Questions?

Email Ask-us@neamb.com or call 800-637-4636 M-F 8 am – 8 pm, Sat 9 am -1 pm EST

Sign up for a chance to win a \$50 gift card!

NEA Member Benefits will give ten lucky members a \$50 Gift Card as a thank you for registering on the NEA Member Benefits Website www.neamb.com/start

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