



Action Line

Vancouver Education Association

Issue 9

May 2023

Introducing Graham Picklesimer as VEA's new Executive Director



Graham's experience in negotiations and program development in both his former work and his current role with the Hillsborough Classroom Teachers Association in Tampa, Florida align directly with what VEA sought in an Executive Director! In his application materials and interview, Graham presented a strong understanding of the needs for racial, social, and economic justice as well as a strong commitment to standing up against injustice and to upholding democratic union values. He brings impressive experience in organizing and leadership development, as well as high-level budgetary and technical expertise. Over his 12 years supporting organized labor and public education, Graham served as chief negotiator for 30+ contract negotiations and as chief union advocate in multiple grievance and interest arbitration hearings.

While Graham completes the terms of his current contract, he will join VEA meetings virtually as his schedule permits, officially onboarding on May 1, 2023. We anticipate opportunities in June to engage in person within a two week window, followed by a move from Florida to the greater Portland, OR/Vancouver, WA area in July. We anticipate full-time in-person services will begin by August 1, 2023. Graham can be reached via email at gpicklesimer@washingtonea.org or phone 1-564-219-2216 (recognizing the three-hour time difference between East and West coast).

VEA Celebrates our Growth Together!

May 8-12 is National Educator Appreciation week. As the end of the year comes into view, we take this time to celebrate the immense growth and accomplishments that we have achieved together as educators, peers and union members. Though the challenges we face are immense, together our combined compassion, expertise and commitment to ensuring future generations of learners allows us to succeed and to flourish in our endeavors. Thank you for being the anchor for your students, the community for your peers and the inspiration to us all, you are truly remarkable.



Refer to next week's VEA updates for winners listed for random drawings and special offers and messages from VEA. Join us Friday, May 12 (3:30-5:30 pm) at Heathen Brewing Feral House to celebrate together! Please RSVP by May 5 for planning purposes:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9GGXMBG>

Are you Planning to Start a Family?

Thursday, May 4, 2023

4:30 – 6:00 pm

Roosevelt Elementary – Media Center

VEA announces a free workshop for members and their significant others on how to prepare and plan for pregnancy and maternity/paternity related leaves. This seminar will also provide information about other available resources you may want to consider when starting a family!

- Maternity, Paternity, and Adoption Leave
- FMLA Benefits
- SEBB/Insurance Impacts
- VEA Contract and Shared Leave Provisions
- Counseling Resources for your Transition
- Financial Planning Member Benefit
- VEA Member-to-Member Shared Experience
- NEA Member Benefits



Please RSVP at [this link](#)
or use the QR code

Primary Trustee Opening



A special election will be held to fill the Primary Trustee opening on the VEA Executive Board, completing the term ending

August 1, 2025. Nominations open at the May 1, Rep Council meeting. Members may nominate themselves or another colleague. Nominations close at the June Rep Council meeting.

Portland Troublemaker School

May 6, 2023 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

McDaniel High School

2735 NE 82 Avenue - Portland, OR 97220

This one-day conference features interactive workshops, panels and meetings, ranging from crucial basic skills like helping your colleagues beat apathy to advanced topics like organizing a winning contract campaign. **Members who attend will get inspired!** Hear from speakers from the front-lines of recent struggles. Register HERE: <https://labornotes.org/pdx>

Time to Elect Leadership

Don't forget! Besides Safety Committee and SBLT leadership, it is also time to elect your contingent of VEA representatives for 2023-24. Each site/constituency group is allocated one rep for every 15 members. The VEA bylaws state the term is two years, but there are no term limits. This team of reps keep you, the member, informed of important information.

All members are eligible to run for a rep position. Training opportunities for new reps will be scheduled in the fall. This is a great opportunity to unleash your leadership potential and receive first-hand information!

Important Deadlines



The 2022-23

Professional Development year is July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023

Application Deadline for 2022-23: June 15, 2023 Submit applications by June 15 to allow for processing and notification by the last day of school. Remember to allow sufficient time for supervisor review.

End Date for Activities Qualifying for 2022-2023 Funding: June 30, 2023 The last day of an activity must be on or before June 30, in order to be reimbursed from the 2022-2023 professional development allocation.

Deadline for Reimbursement Paperwork: July 10, 2023 All reimbursement paperwork must be correctly completed and be in the Professional Development office no later than July 10.

The Professional Development office is located upstairs at the Jim Parsley Community Center and is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. during the school year and 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the summer through July 10.

Annual Evaluation Report

Every certificated employee will be evaluated annually. Evaluation reports for all certificated employees must be filed in the human resources department no later than five (5) school days before the end of the year.

Evaluations are intended to support you with developing your craft and are not supposed to be a “gotcha.” Artifacts are to be considered when formulating the evaluation.

If you receive an overall unsatisfactory evaluation – or a second basic evaluation in three years for those members with more than five years of experience, CONTACT THE VEA OFFICE IMMEDIATELY: 360-695-3397.

Non-Renewal Notice

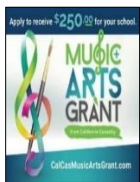


May 15 is the deadline for district notification to employees recommended for non-renewal. Any reductions in force (including a reduction in your continuing contract FTE) must also be communicated by this date.

This document outlines important dates in the contract regarding assignment and evaluation. Contact VEA if you have been notified of a change in contract status.



NEA Auto and Home Insurance



California Casualty Arts and Music Grants are BACK! You too can win a \$250 grant for your classroom or program! Apply by July 2, 2023 for awards in the Fall.

[Quick Entry Link!](#)

This is a very popular member benefit!

SBLT Decisions



Site-based decision making is defined in the contract in chapter 15.4 as the decisions of the staff relative to student learning and delivery at that site.

The certificated staff shall constitute the SBLT leadership. Responsibilities shall be shared by co-chairs made up of the building principal or assistant and a member of the certificated instructional faculty (may be the faculty representative) **who is annually selected by a majority vote** of the certificated staff at that site who are members of the Association's bargaining unit. Each faculty may select more than one co-chair to carry out the diverse instructional decisions within a large staff. The co-chairs will **jointly establish** the agendas and other aspects of governing meetings and customary duties and responsibilities of a democratic organization.

The decision-making process shall include open dialogue in which issues are presented, defined, discussed, and resolved by a confidential vote.

Proposals may be submitted for a vote to only those members of the faculty who are impacted by the vote. When votes are taken, **80% approval is required and the vote shall be in writing**. The decision regarding ballot procedures shall be exclusive to each site or administrative unit. All eligible members are entitled to vote even if they can't attend the meeting. **The VEA building representative(s) shall be responsible for all balloting**. The counting of votes shall be conducted by the SBLT co-chairs and the VEA building representative(s).

The principal and the co-chair will determine the meeting agendas and items to be voted on. This will be communicated to staff at least three (3) days prior to the meeting or less than three (3) days when mutually agreed upon by the principal and co-chair. The principal will arrange to have notes taken on topics discussed and action taken at the meeting. The principal will see that any recommendations and/or decisions are prepared for publication and distribution made to all members of the team in a timely manner.

Legislative Wins!

The 2023 legislative session ended with the passage of a state budget that reflects the input and advocacy of WEA members who visited, emailed, and spoke out for what our students need. Together we helped pass legislation that will improve our schools and our communities.

Most notably, we won **\$371 million in additional funding for Special Education** supports. We recognize this covers just about 35-40% of the current Special Education funding gap, but it's an important down payment toward full funding.

Additionally, lawmakers **increased the cap from funding no more than 13.5% of a district's students for Special Education to 15%**. We continue to advocate for eliminating the cap, but this is a step in the right direction.

In this session we helped pass legislation that sets the 2023-24 K-12 COLA at 3.7% and then after that automatically sets the COLA at the prior calendar year's Implicit Price Deflator. Currently, VEA bargaining team work to negotiate an additional amount to that COLA is under way.

In the budget, school meals received an additional \$59 million. Once again we made a step in the right direction and we're committed to continue advocating until every student has access to school meals.

We need to continue strengthening WEA-PAC and our union, voting, speaking out, and uniting for our students. If you're not already a WEA-PAC member, now is a great time to join. If you are a member, now is a great time to level up to a stronger commitment to our advocacy. We are stronger together.

Is your Certificate Expiring? Understanding the NEW Requirements

In 2022, the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) approved new Cultural Competency, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (CCDEI) standards. The CCDEI standards provide the foundation for the new equity certificate renewal requirement.

As part of the 100 clock hours for certificate renewal, teachers and administrators must complete clock hours, Professional Growth Plans (PGPs) or credits focused on equity based school practices aligned to the CCDEI standards. Teachers must complete 15 clock hours or the equivalent for certificate renewal. Educators can meet the equity-based school practices certificate renewal requirement by maintaining a valid NBPTS National board certificate. Check out the WEA Professional Development page (<https://www.washingtonea.org/home/events/>) for online offerings FREE to WEA members.

WEA Rep Assembly Recap

VEA representatives at the April Representative Assembly in Spokane worked late into the evenings over the course of three days to listen, debate, and vote on a number of new business items, constitution and bylaw changes, and amendments to continuing resolutions, standing rules, and adopted procedures. Topics that resonated with our VEA delegates included concerns around demographic data collection, transparency in political contributions, standardized tests and assessments, better understanding where dues dollars are spent, protections for marginalized groups, NBCT and TPEP cycles, funding for special education, and substitute teaching experience.

At this year's WEA Representative Assembly, hundreds of delegates around the state passed a proposal to adjust the WEA portion of dues to ensure a strong future. This increase of less than 1/100th of a percent will ensure we're strong into the future. With this small increase in dues, WEA members can together continue fighting and winning for our vision of high-quality, equitable public schools led by the voices of front-line educators. While the change starts with the 2023-24 school year, we wanted to be the first to alert you. If you need more information at this time, please contact WEA at wea@washingtonea.org.

Please know that your VEA has worked very diligently to ensure stability in the VEA portion of your monthly dues.



YOU'RE INVITED!

**VEA'S 2ND ANNUAL
PICNIC!**





RSVP BY MAY 26!

FAMILY FRIENDLY
FOOD. GAMES. RAFFLE. PRIZES. KARAOKE!

@ The Vancouver Lake Regional Park
Heron Picnic Shelter/Pavillion

JUNE 2, 2023 * 4-6:30PM

6801 NW Lower River Rd,
Vancouver, WA 98660

Join us for the Second Annual VEA Picnic. ALL VEA Members and their families are welcome to attend!! Food. Games. Prizes. and more... Please RSVP using the QR code above or <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9GYP57K> ASAP – but no later than May 26 for planning purposes.

2509 Broadway -- Vancouver, WA 98663 * Phone 360-695-3397 -- FAX 360-694-8337
Kari Van Nostran, President * Graham Picklesimer, Executive Director * Phil Harding, Interim Executive Director * Cindy Brown, Admin. Assistant * Sandy Kokko, WEA-Retired Liaison. * www.vancouverea.org *

