



# Action Line

Vancouver Education Association

Issue 10

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## Union Strength

**Look Closely... If it sounds too good to be true,  
it usually is!**

#Membership Matters

As we head into the summer break, we want to remind our members that not everyone shares our union spirit. Anti-union factions such as the Freedom Foundation and Choice for Teachers have used mailers, email, leafletting, and other means to coerce members into dropping their membership. Don't be duped! They lobby to weaken our collective bargaining rights and are funded by out-of-state interests. As we bargain around working conditions and increased salary for you in this interim bargain, we need our union to stay united! Our collective voice achieves powerful results for our students and ourselves. With a strong, united membership, we have the power to improve and protect our rights and economic security, and to fight for the best interests of our students.

Some of the tactics that these union-busting entities employ include targeting the WEA or NEA. Members may not realize the high level of support we receive from both the WEA and NEA. WEA provides on-going training for staff to improve our tool-box to advocate for you. WEA's legal department assists VEA in representing members at large when unexpected things happen and helps clarify legal issues that arise. WEA's research department provides detailed information on district finances around the state. WEA's bargaining and advocacy department assists VEA in grievance, arbitration, and unfair labor practice filings. The WEA office in Olympia provides details on legislation that could cause harm, as well as legislation that improves public education. We rely on NEA for training and research as well!

While the duty of fair representation applies to everyone in our bargaining unit, regardless of their membership status, legal benefits through WEA and liability insurance through NEA are member benefits, neither of which extend to potential members. Potential members within VEA have experienced a denial of legal services when incidents occurred during their period of non-member status... You can't get insurance after the barn burns down!

## THANK YOU !!

As we near the end of the school year, VEA extends a heartfelt thank you to our member leaders who have kept the cogs of union work turning all year. First, a huge shout out to President Kari Snow (Van Nostran) who served during some of our most tumultuous times with strong leadership and grace! We also thank Lynn Maiorca and Mona Rominger who have served on the Executive Board for countless years, wearing a variety of leader hats along the way, as well as Carl Gibson who stepped up to represent our Primary educators but will soon be relocating out of state! Thank you to VEA building and constituency reps, Executive Board, Zone leaders, and SBLT co-chairs who have communicated and advocated for you too! Delegates to State and National Rep Assemblies, WEA Board, WEAPAC Board, Safety Committees, as well as VEA committees including Negotiations, Blue Book (Standing rules/Bylaws), Finance, Mural, Equity, Member Engagement, and PR&R (Grievance) amplified the member voice in our democratic organization. Thank YOU, the members of VEA, for your engagement and support for our collective work to improve our wages, hours and working conditions and the learning conditions for the students we serve!

## It's never too soon to plan for retirement!

When people talk about retirement, there is often a wide range of emotions. One thing is for certain: the more planning you do, the better chance of having the retirement of your dreams! Whether you are one, five, or more than fifteen years from retiring, it is never too early nor too late to begin that plan. Learn what you can do now to prepare for the next chapter of your life!

Next fall, WEA-Retired will once again offer its pre-retirement seminar. There will be three different sessions, 3 hours each, all offered via Zoom.

- Session 1: financial planning and estate planning
- Session 2: Social Security, state retirement plans, and timelines,
- Session 3: Medicare, health care options, and VEBA

There will be a choice of dates for each session. Sign up for the sessions of interest to you on the dates that fit your schedule. If you are planning to retire at the end of the 2023-24 school year, there will be additional information for you at the end of Sessions 2 and 3. **The registration form will be available in early September. Space will be limited.** If you have any questions, please contact Sandy Kokko at [skokko1946@gmail.com](mailto:skokko1946@gmail.com) or Karla Kragelund at [karlakragelund@icloud.com](mailto:karlakragelund@icloud.com).

## Congratulations to our Retirees!

WEA Member Benefits/Corebridge Financial have invited our retiring members and a guest to a special reception in their honor at Say Ciao! On June 15<sup>th</sup>. This open house social has no sales associated with it... its just a chance to toast your career!

**Congratulations to:** Rita Arden, David Armstrong, Lisa Bires, Sally Doss, Janet Goforth, Janet Griffin, Tom Griffiths, Carin Henderson, Tracey Knotts, Jon Lauderbaugh, Carl Leonard, Mary McCarthy, Molly McLachlan, Vicki Moody, Susan Murphy, Robert Salazar, Lynn Schedler, William Sizour, Tami Tucker, Bracy Wevers, Linda Wilson, and Michael Wood!



## 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](#) will close at the June 5th Rep Council meeting. Members may nominate themselves or another colleague.

## Don't Forget to Sign Your Contract

Your employment contract does not become effective until you deliver it to the Office of Human Resources within fifteen (15) days of the date of issuance: To continue serving in the 23-24 school year, you must have (1) a valid Washington State professional certificate required for the position identified; and (2) the contract bearing the employee's signature. Per contract, in the event you fail to sign and return your contract within the time specified, you shall be deemed to have waived any right to employment with the district.

### What does Provisional/Continuing Mean?

Educators with Washington experience who are new to VPS will be on a provisional contract for one year. New educators without prior experience will be on a provisional contract for up to three years. Once completing provisional status, members can be converted to continuing contract status. Any reduction in FTE for 23-24 to a provisional/continuing contract should have been communicated prior to May 15.

### One Year /Leave Replacement Contracts.

One-year leave replacement contracts (OYLR) are place holders for members on a full-year leave of absence (the district is obligated to place them back in our system upon their return). There should be a 1:1 match-up of members on leave and OYLR contracts. OYLR contract holders have no guarantee for placement in the subsequent school year and should apply/express interest in openings through HR. After excess employees have been placed, HR typically begins to look to OYLR employees for potential employment. Contact VEA if you have any questions regarding your contract.



## **WEA National Board Jump Start**

WEA Jump Start is a multi-day comprehensive seminar designed to provide National Board candidates with important information about the certification process, time to examine component and Assessment Center requirements, the opportunity to plan how to meet requirements, and time to collaborate, gather resources and information needed to pursue certification. All this happens in a supportive, constructive, and collegial environment.

WEA is currently planning to offer two, on-line National Board Jump Start events this summer. Registration is \$75 and open for WEA members only. Please see the [WEA website](#) for possible discounts for and/or scholarship assistance with the registration fee. Foundations I must be completed as a pre-requisite before taking the component options within an approved cohort.

- June 26 - 30 [Registration](#)
- August 7 – August 11 [Registration](#)

### **VEA NBCT Cohort Facilitator Opening**

VEA is seeking a facilitator for our 23-24 cohort. Please contact VEA ASAP if you are interested in this opportunity! Training is available June 26-28 or August 7-9 (8:00 am- 12:30 pm) through OSPI – [Register here](#). Facilitators MUST complete the training.

## **Feeling Blah? EAP**

You are exhausted. We get that. Understandably, your herculean efforts may have an unintended consequence on your mental health. Please take time to take care of YOU!

Don't forget that members are provided free confidential counseling sessions for help with mental and emotional stress, personal/family stresses, job difficulties and burn-out. Contact Deer Oaks at 1-888-993-7650 or [eap@deeroakseap.com](mailto:eap@deeroakseap.com). Online tools are available at [www.deeroakseap.com](http://www.deeroakseap.com). (password is vansd). Resources can also be accessed via the iConnect You app (code is 221967).

## **VEA Special Shopping Days**



Just in time for summer break, your membership provides special Employee Store access for you and up to 4 guests!!

**Columbia Sportswear** access ends on June 4<sup>th</sup>. [Bring this pass](#), photo ID, and proof of affiliation to shop Columbia, Sorel, Mountain Hard Wear, and PrAna.

**Adidas Store:** June 9-22. [Bring this pass](#) and your VPS identification!



## **Last Call for the Music and Arts Grant**

California Casualty offers great coverage for you and promotes opportunities for educators. The Music and Art grants are awarded to K-12 Classrooms in the amount of \$250. VEA members have received these awards at Jefferson MS, King ES, and Hudson's Bay HS. These grants will be awarded in the Fall in September or October.

**The entry deadline is June 30, 2023.**

[www.calcasmusicartsgrant.com](http://www.calcasmusicartsgrant.com)

## **WEA PAC in Action**

Members who also contribute to WEAPAC are in the process of interviewing candidates for VPS school board for potential endorsements. Having a voice with local elections that directly impact our membership is one benefit of contributing to this funding mechanism and it is separate from membership dues.

A strong PAC is how we elect pro-education, pro-labor candidates to school boards. Increasing your monthly contribution gives us a greater voice in policies that affect our profession. Dues have been \$2.25 for more than 20 years, Now, you have the option to contribute \$5 of \$10.50 per month. Just [fill out a new form](#) to change your contribution level!

## Preparation for Beginning of School, Grading, and Closing of School Year:

As part of the standard expectations of a professional educator and enrichment TRI responsibilities, certificated staff will complete tasks associated with preparing for the beginning of the school year, grading, and closing the school year during non-contracted time.

## Special Calendar Days



Aug 14-Aug 28 – Window of time available for mandatory VPS training.

### Mandatory PD/Professional Development Training Days Learning (TRI PL) Days:

Employees being compensated for attending mandatory training must complete supplemental contracts. All certificated employees are paid based on the negotiated hourly rate. Certificated employees, whether on fractional or full-time contracts, are required to attend the entire in-service session. Notice of mandatory attendance must be published prior to the last day of the previous school year to allow for appropriate planning. Leave compensation does not apply.

### TRI/State Mandated Professional Learning Days (CPA Chapter 12)

- Professional Learning Day, all levels – Wednesday, August 23
- Principal or Program Administrator Directed Professional Learning Pre-duty Day, all levels – Thursday, August 24\*
- Both August days are paid through Part A of the Time, Responsibility, and Incentive (TRI) supplemental contract in the October payroll.
- Leave compensation does not apply
- Absence must be recorded in Absence Management

- Fractional contract certificated employees are required to attend and are paid for eight (8) hour days.

### \*Principal or Program Administrator Directed Professional Learning Pre-duty Day:

There is a total of eight (8) hours (Article 12.4A) for this professional learning. If a site votes to split the eight hours into two (2) four (4) hour days (August 24 and August 25), a **staff-wide SBLT** vote will be required (per Article 15.4).

## Community of Practice PD

This August during the professional development window, VPS is hosting 7 hours of training for all grade and content area educators on August 21 (elementary) and August 22 (secondary). These 7 hours are district directed and are paid using individual PD funds. Attendance is mandatory. If you cannot attend on your assigned day, notify your principal/program director that you will not be in attendance and which COP day you will attend as an alternate. Please see [this reference document](#) for common questions, the schedule, and conflicting district directed events.

### PD \$\$\$ Deadline Reminder

Don't forget that there are deadlines in June to complete PD and submit for reimbursement from this years PD allocation. More details were provided in the [May 2023 Action Line Newsletter](#)

## Dues for 2023-24

Dues deductions are comprised of local (VEA), state (WEA), and national (NEA) funds as well as special assessments for purposes directed by the WEA Rep Assembly. Due to increased costs to do business, there will be increases in WEA and NEA funds collected next year. The VEA Rep Council followed recommendations from the VEA finance committee and Executive Board to HOLD the VEA portion of dues at the current rate for 2023-24. Note: VEA dues have remained the same since 2018.

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