



Action Line

Vancouver Education Association

January 2024



A year of change is ahead!

As we look to a new year with a fresh start and a full contract bargain, we know that this year will bring changes to the status quo. TOGETHER, we will do everything possible to ensure that the change is POSITIVE for our members and the students we serve. More than ever, your participation as a member is imperative. We know you are already working through unraveling threads and asking for “one more thing” may seem insurmountable at times. What we can accomplish as a group of nearly 1600 members is much more powerful than the team of leaders sitting at the bargaining table alone.

Bargaining Input: Bargaining Survey is OPEN

The VEA-VPS contract expires August 31, 2024. Member voice is imperative in the bargaining process. VEA is asking **ALL members to complete a comprehensive survey between now and January 10**. Please set aside approximately 30 minutes to complete this survey. This data along with listening sessions will help direct proposals for this bargain. The volume of responses also helps your team illustrate the need at the table. The last full contract survey had over 1000 responses!

Use this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ZBLL67J> or QR Code:



Constituency group perspectives are scheduled for Zoom listening sessions (5:00-6:00 pm). Join via [this link](#) unless otherwise noted below: Passcode #GoVEA24

January 3 Counselors
January 9 Secondary LS
January 11 VAPA
January 17 Nurses
January 18 OT/PT
January 24 Psychologists
January 30 Teacher Librarians

January 4 Elementary LS
January 10 Self Contained
January 16 Instructional Specialists
January 17 ECSE (Via [this separate zoom link](#))
January 23 SLPs
January 25 TOSA/Deans
January 31 CTE

SAVE THE DATE: Highlights from the bargaining survey will be shared with membership on February 6th 5:00-6:00 pm via Zoom.

Self-Care –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. Deer Oaks EAP services is the current provider for all employees and their dependents. 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 is **vansd**. Resources can also be accessed via iConnectYou app (code: **221967**) or email at eap@deeroaks.com

Collaborative Planning Wednesdays

12.16A

“A two-hour early release Wednesday shall be scheduled once a quarter. The early release time **shall be dedicated to educator-directed collaborative planning**. Building-Level Guiding Coalitions may also choose to meet during this time.” Any deviation from this plan on January 10th such as PD offerings shall be at the discretion of the educator with no expectation around content provided during this time.

Calendar Waiver MOU and January 29

There is NO change in intent or use of the semester break day on January 29th unless we have a snow event by January 8th, in which case this day would be utilized as a snow make up day. It is appearing from the forecast that snow before January 8th is unlikely, in which case elementary staff have this day off. Semester based educators may utilize January 29th to prepare for the new term on or off-site as is appropriate. There should not be any requirements, schedules, or expectations imposed on staff on this day.



SPARKS!



Are you a member with 0-10 years of overall teaching experience? SPARKS is a high energy, interactive experience aimed at VEA's newest members. Facilitated by SPARKS graduates and experts in the field, SPARKS provides an opportunity to engage and learn techniques for your classroom/field, engage with the association, and gain deeper insights on your profession. SPARKS is held at the Best Western Ocean View in Seaside, Oregon March 1-3. Applications were sent via interoffice mail to members in this demographic. Applications are due to VEA by January 10th.

Please see your building rep or contact VEA for more information.

The PIR is OPEN

Certificated employees who currently hold a **continuing** contract are eligible to complete the Position Interest Register (PIR) form online for potential movement to a different building for the 2024-2025 school year.

The PIR is currently open to register your requests and will close promptly on **March 14th, at 5:00 p.m.**

Employees other than excess (involuntarily transferred) employees who accept placement through the PIR, are not again eligible to participate in the PIR until the second school year following placement (i.e., the employee will remain in the new placement for a minimum of two years). **As an exception to the two-year rule**, certificated employees who accept placement through the PIR to schools where the designated principal changes after placement acceptance, but before the end of the school year in which the placement is accepted, may request to be considered to be transferred from said building should reduced enrollment and/or reduced FTE be announced, and/or they may register in the PIR the following year.

If you want to move to a different position at your current location, please notify your administrator. The PIR is for movement to a different building. You may register for up to three different sites for positions you are fully qualified for. However, current elementary teachers may register for up to four different sites.

The **PIR is found on VERN**. To complete your PIR via VERN, search for PIR and submit your request. Once your PIR request has been successfully submitted, you will receive an automated confirmation with a copy of your response.



Counselor PIR Survey

Counselors interested in a change of placement for 2024-25 should return [THIS survey](#) to HR – attention Angela O’Leary by March 14, 2024.

Working with the Live Wire of Oppression Offered on January 11th

If you're working to dismantle systems of oppression, you're working with trauma. The more you know about trauma, the more effective, sustainable, and authentic your anti-oppression efforts will be.

VEA has purchased a group ticket for this 90-minute virtual workshop at Roosevelt in the media center. The original date 11/30 was cancelled due to an unforeseen issue with the presenter and is rescheduled for January 11. Food will be provided at 5:45 and the workshop runs from 6:00-7:30 pm with a debrief to follow. We hope you will join us! Please [RSVP](#) /again if you previously signed up for 11/30.



January Equity Focus

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

Lesson plans, activity ideas and other resources to help students put in perspective MLK's life, impact on the Civil Rights Movement, and his significance to American culture and history from our [NEA Resources](#).

Celebrating National Board Certification



VEA members Katie North, Kirstin Ribelin, Chris Brosnan, and Tricia Hoffarth achieved National Board Certification! VEA recognizes their achievement, along with Kareah Nicoson who was not recognized previously due to a glitch in the system. Thank you to Rocky Lahti who served as VEA Cohort facilitator for 2023 for leading candidates through the NBCT process!

VEA Leadership Nominations open at the January 8th Rep Council meeting!

2024 VEA Executive Board. The VEA positions of 2nd VP - Labor Relations, 4th VP - Equity Affairs, Recording Secretary, Intermediate Trustee, Middle School Trustee, and the ESA/TOSA Trustee positions will be filled in this election.



VEA delegates to the WEA Rep Assembly (This one-time event is held in Spokane – April 11-13). VEA covers release, travel, hotel, and meals.

VEA Delegates to the NEA Rep Assembly (This one-time event is held July 3-7 in Philadelphia, PA. Expenses are paid by the association.

Nominations will close at the February 5th Rep Council meeting. Contact cbrown@washingtonea.org for a candidate form.

The Legislative Session begins Jan 8

Much of our realities in public education are determined legislatively. Thank you to 66% of our members who are already contributing to WEAPAC, our funding source for candidate endorsements and lobbying issues that affect us and the students we serve.

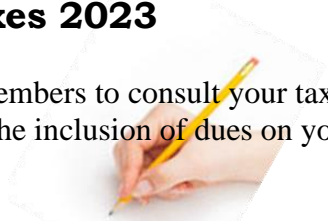
Please consider contributing a one-time WEAPAC donation of \$24 in 2024 via credit card, even if you're already a monthly contributor. [Contribute HERE](#)

[WEA's 2024 Legislative Agenda](#) includes:

- ✓ Support Students Struggling with Behavioral Challenges
- ✓ Fully Fund Special Education.
- ✓ Provide Professional Liveable Wages for Classified Education support Professionals
- ✓ Ensure Every District has the Resources it needs to Recruit and Retain Educators
- ✓ Ensure Every School & College has the Resources it needs to Provide Engaging Learning Opportunities.

Dues and Taxes 2023

VEA encourages members to consult your tax professional about the inclusion of dues on your 2023 taxes.



Members paid the following dues (NEA, WEA, VEA) in 2023:

0.76-1.0 FTE	\$1202.68
0.51-0.75 FTE	\$ 959.52
0.26-0.50 FTE	\$ 624.80
0.25 or less	\$ 336.40

This figure is calculated using the 2022-23 rate for 8 months (Jan-Aug) and the 2023-24 rate for 4 months (Sept-Dec). If you did not work the full year, or changed FTE during 2023, you can calculate your dues using the monthly figures as follows:

	<u>2022-23</u>	<u>2023-24</u>
0.76-1.0 FTE	\$97.25	106.17
0.51-0.75 FTE	\$77.71	84.46
0.26-0.50 FTE	\$50.58	55.04
0.25 or less	\$27.30	29.50



**PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT**

Check out this [course catalog](#) of offerings and registration links for Winter 2024. Some courses of interest include:

TPEP – Developing TPEP Student growth goals with the new rubric (starting Jan 22)

Early Career Educators – Membership Deals and Discounts, Student Loan Forgiveness (Jan 30)

Certification 101 (Feb 15). ESA Certification 101 (Jan 30)

Behavior interventions (Feb 10)

Foundations of Functional Behavior Assessment (Jan 15 and Jan 17)

Classroom meeting strategies (Jan 17) and Safer Relationships with Students (Jan 18)

Sped Law (Jan 22 and Jan 23) or (Feb 5 and Feb 6)

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 2023 and you must submit a request form by January 31, 2024. This is a firm date set by Washington State law. Search VERN for “Application for unused Sick Leave.”

VEA Member Spotlight

Wynne Hurley – Art teacher at McLoughlin MS

[Neurodivergent educators build connections but face unique challenges in Northwest schools – OPB](#)

VEA Member, Wynne Hurley was featured in a recent OPB (Oregon Public Broadcasting) story about educators sharing their disabilities with students to build a stronger relationship and understanding. Wynne utilizes approaches to the educational process that she wished she would have been able to experience as a student. We are so proud of Wynne and our members who go that extra mile to make a difference in their students’ educational journey.

District Budget Cuts

Vancouver Public Schools announced anticipated budget cuts of 8-10% across the board at the December School Board meeting. VEA has scheduled numerous discussions with the district as they review enrollment projections and preliminary staffing scenarios for the 2024-25 school year. Discussions on January 26 will center around contract language and processes. The seniority list will be published by the district on January 31 reflecting only continuing contract holders.

VEA worked with the district to correct clerical errors resulting in over 25 contract corrections. We also reviewed leave replacement contracts to align with members on leave.

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