

VEA Action Line

Vancouver Education Association

November 2024

We are More & More thankful ...



VEA is thankful for an active membership who believes in the power of what we can accomplish together. Already this year we have received two favorable Arbitration results regarding transfer followed by four grievance settlements satisfactory to the affected members over evaluation contents, compensation for course preps, loss of planning time for pre-school teachers, and failure to appropriately staff learning support at an elementary. We are grateful for the improvements in the language in the Collective Bargaining Agreement and the expertise of our Executive Director that result in favorable outcomes for our members and better learning conditions for the students we serve.

We know that at times contract language doesn't always fully mitigate a difficult situation or get you through the day-to-day. Union siblings are there for each other to bring a smile to your face and put a little pep in your step. They provide that "little extra something" that we are More & More thankful for. VEA will help express your gratitude in the form of a personalized message and treat to another VEA member. You can note a couple ways this VEA member has supported you this school year by using suggested messages or typing in your own.

Simply fill out this survey – we will do the rest!
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PDY3GM5>
Responses needed by November 12th



Bargaining Team 2024-25

The VEA Rep Council affirmed the 2024-25 Bargaining Team at their November meeting:

Amy Spofford (SpEd), Sunny Selders (Intermediate), Charlotte Lartey (At-Large), Rachael Jarnagin (HS), Erin Pendergast (MS).
The Specialist position is currently unfilled.

This team will work to develop skills and engage with members in the interim to better define bargaining priorities for the future.

Watch for opportunities to engage with the association through building visits, stand-up meetings, constituency group and equity listening sessions.

VEBA Yearly Vote

VEA members who are eligible to retire at the end of this school year have the opportunity to vote to receive the benefit for their unused sick leave via a VEBA account. Likewise members who have accumulated 180 days (1440 hours) of sick leave can elect to contribute additionally to their VEBA account with a yearly cash out of accumulated sick leave. A link to an electronic vote has been sent to these specific members identified by the district as qualifying for this vote. Votes due by noon on November 13th. An informational Zoom meeting is scheduled for 4:30 pm on November 12th with a VEBA rep to answer questions. Please [Register in advance](#) for Zoom access.

SEBB Open Enrollment Oct 28-Nov 25 DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE!!

Open Enrollment for SEBB insurance begins October 28, 2024, and ends November 25, 2024, with changes effective January 1, 2025. Information about upcoming changes for 2024 are now posted on the SEBB open enrollment website. (<https://www.hca.wa.gov/employee-retiree-benefits/open-enrollment-sebb>)

Reminder – if you want to participate in a Flexible Spending Account (FSA) or in the Dependent Care Assistance Program (DCAP) for the 2025 plan year, you must re-enroll during the Open Enrollment period.

If you missed the benefits fair at Clark College, a **VIRTUAL BENEFITS FAIR** (<https://www.hca.wa.gov/employee-retiree-benefits/sebb-virtual-benefits-fair/virtual-benefits-fair-sebb>) or webinar (<https://www.hca.wa.gov/employee-retiree-benefits/open-enrollment-webinars-sebb>) are also offered.

Get your Game On!

VEA has teamed up with the Portland Trailblazers for member access to games and Rose Quarter shows at the Moda Center at discounted rates.



Rip City Rewards – Discount on ALL home games and select events like Disney on Ice at the Rose Quarter this season.

www.rosequarter.com/ripcityrewards **Promo Code: TBVEA.** Please note that the offer may change throughout the year, but the initial deal includes at least a 10% discount on ALL home games this season!

VEA's 2nd Night at the Blazers This special group night on January 30th. You will get early access to the game vs. Orlando allowing you to shoot a free throw on the court after the game! * Fan experience is subject to hitting the minimum of 50 tickets purchased by the VEA group. Visit: Rosequarter.com/groupnights Promo code: VEA2025. Order deadline is January 27.

Member Engagement

In a large urban district it feels like we work in isolation from others. VEA has hosted a variety of socials to gather members across the district for some food, a hosted beverage and great conversation. The VEA was awarded a grant to assist us with engaging our membership. We will utilize portions on leadership training and 1:1 member listening sessions. The VEA Member Engagement team would like to hear what format or focus would meet your needs. Please complete this quick survey (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/KFLZCNJ>) to assist in their planning.

Certificate Renewal Change

Reminder from OSPI's Professional Certification Department: **Educators must now apply to renew their certificates on or before January 1, 2025 if you have a certificate expiring on June 30, 2025.**

Check out the WEA-WIN Certification 101 courses for teachers (December 9) or ESAs (November 20 or December 2). Your membership provides a free ticket to professional development addressing the challenges realized in the education setting. The new contract allows you to pay yourself with available PD funds for WEA training. All members have access to the WEA-WIN system (<https://wea-win.org/>).

Micro-credential Opportunities

Learn how to improve your practice as an educator for free. WEA members now have access to more than 200 micro-credentials in topics from Climate Justice to Creating a Safe and Equitable Learning Environment to Working with Adult Learners and more. A micro-credential is a short, competency-based recognition that allows an educator to demonstrate knowledge or skill in a particular area. Micro-credentials are available to substitute teachers, teachers, ESAs, ESPs and other educators. [Get details and check out all of the titles available.](#)

Know your Contract

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| October 15 – July 15 | During the period October 15 to July 15 a vacancy will be externally posted for a minimum of five (5) working days to allow maximum opportunity for in-District and out-of-District candidates to make an application. (7.3A) |
| November 1 | The district will make every reasonable effort to implement the advancement of all individuals on the salary schedule at one time, on or before the November 1 payroll. (11.19B) |
| November (within 90 days of first date of service) | Employee will be evaluated at least once for 30 minutes within 90 calendar days of employment. Preliminary reports due in human resources no later than 105 calendar days from the first date of service. (8.4Lvii) |
| November (within 90 days of first date of service) | Employees NEW to the TRS system in Washington state have 90 days to choose between TRS2 and TRS3 retirement plan. TRS2 is the default plan if you do not choose. |

WEA PAC Drive



VEA leadership has set a goal of adding 100 new WEAPAC contributors between now and June. Please know that NO regular dues dollars from

VEA are used to support candidates or initiatives. Only WEAPAC dollars are used for these state and local endorsements. For each NEW WEAPAC membership and leveled up to a \$5.00 or \$10.50 per month contribution, the member will be entered into a drawing for a special treat delivered to their site.

In October, member participation at the Social, various phone bank and doorbell opportunities were entered into a drawing... Congratulations to Ogden Elementary!! Watch for a treat delivery soon.

Emergency Student Discipline Rules

The Collective Bargaining Agreement defines maintaining a safe and supportive learning environment in Chapter 10.21. This section of the contract outlines procedures for classroom exclusions as was outlined in the October Action Line Newsletter. The [Classroom guide to WAC 392-400](#) clearly allows for the professional judgment of the educator to exclude students in emergent situations or non-emergent situations with intervention. The student is not to return to the classroom setting without the consent of the teacher or until the principal or their designee and the teacher have conferred. New language in 10.21Avii. defines the term “**confer**” as “*the teacher and the administrator discuss the student’s behavior and develop a plan for returning the student to the classroom.*” The administrator has the final decision regarding the plan and whether the student is subject to discipline under district policy and procedures.

Looking for District -Level Guiding Coalition VEA Representatives

VEA is seeking members to serve on the District Guiding Coalition representing *Elementary and High School*. Meetings currently are scheduled monthly via Zoom. Any meetings scheduled outside of the contract day shall be paid at a member’s respective hourly per diem rate from a funding source other than a member's Individual PD funds. The District Guiding Coalition will develop a playbook for Building-Level Guiding Coalitions and collaborative teacher teams to refer to for guidance and to promote coherence with District-wide PLC work. Contact VEA if YOU are interested!

Middle School Civics Bee

The Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring a Civics Bee for Middle School students. Check out this [Student flyer](#) and [educator flyer](#) for more information.

