



Action Line

Vancouver Education Association

October 2025

It's been a VERY Busy start to Fall...

VEA has been ironing out the wrinkles to the start of the school year with changes to reporting platforms via LaserFische (including roadmaps), shuffling and reshuffling of educators to balance classrooms, overloads, ratio of students with IEPs outnumbering those without, translation supports, professional development options at Secondary, curriculum supports for language development at secondary, IEP/IHP/504 access in Synergy, untrained paraprofessionals, security concerns, and more! We are navigating transitions with district level leadership and establishing new working relationships. VEA has also filed and managed grievances on a range of topics. VEA leadership began 1:1 listening conversations and will continue on that trajectory to meet with members at 17 sites before semester break. Thank you for bringing your concerns forward – we cannot act on items we are unaware of.

Our calculations show that the overload situation is actually worse than last year at this same time – we need to let the School Board and community know your realities. The next School Board meeting is October 14th. **Together we DO make a difference!**

October 17 – Required Work Day for Educators/ No School for Students. The District applied for a waiver to offer this new opportunity for PD as a non-student attendance contracted work day and included in your 180 day base contract. Absences on this date will need appropriate leave.

Conferencing Confusion



- **Conferencing is not optional.** Conferences are an educator-directed TRI activity, as outlined in Article 12.2A of the Collective Bargaining Agreement. An attempt must still be made to conference with families in the fall in accordance with School Board Policy 2420 (K-12) and Title 1 conferencing requirements (K-5). The recent changes to contract language were intended to give educators greater control over how and when conferences are scheduled, not to exempt them from being completed.
- **Scheduling:** Building administrators are encouraged to work collaboratively with staff through the SBLT process (Article 15.4) to develop a schedule that includes afternoon and/or evening options. These additional times promote equitable participation for families who cannot attend during the school day.
- **Use of Monday early release time:** The Monday family engagement and communication time *may* be used for conferencing at the discretion of the educator, but it is not the *only* time available for scheduling conferences.
- **Flexible scheduling options to accommodate conferences.** Buildings may also choose to “flip” the PLC and family engagement times to create a smoother and more consistent schedule for conferences, provided this is discussed and agreed upon through the SBLT process. This alteration to the Monday schedule should be used on a limited basis and only for the purpose of completing family conferences.
- **Safety and support:** While afternoon and evening options are not mandatory, they offer the benefit of having other staff in the building, supporting both safety and collaboration.

WEA Professional Development

WEA's Center for Education Quality (CEQ) wants to understand your professional learning priorities. Your membership provides a free ticket to professional development to provide more tools to navigate the behavior challenges realized in the education setting. The new contract allows you to pay yourself with available PD funds for WEA training. Take this opportunity to complete WEA CEQ's survey by November 4th. Click here to [share your priorities](#)



Please note that WEA represents a variety of members (Higher ed and education support) some questions may not be relevant to you.

Community Power and Legal Rights Seminar Immigration Focus

Our colleagues at the WEA-Riverside have invited VEA members to join them for a Seminar with special guests Isa Pena from Innovation Law lab and Jess Montoya, Oregon for All Network Director, who will speak to the PCUN V Noem lawsuit, which NEA joined as plaintiffs. Registration is required

RSVP here:

https://bit.ly/WEA_LegalRights

Date: Tuesday, October 14, 2025

Time: 4:45 pm-6:45 pm

Location: Firstenburg Center
700 NE 136th Ave, Vancouver, WA 98684

2025 WEA LGBTQ+ Educators Conference

[Registration is underway](#) for the 2025 WEA LGBTQ+ Educators Conference. This opportunity will be presented on Saturday, Nov. 1, at Federal Way High School, and is devoted to creating an inclusive educational environment for students and staff to ensure a safe and welcoming school setting for all communities. As professional educators, participants will network and learn ways to create culturally responsive practices within all systems and structures using a lens of diversity, equity and inclusion representing the LGBTQIA+ communities.

2025 WEA Human & Civil Rights Leadership Summit

Registration is underway for this year's WEA Human & Civil Rights (HCR) Leadership Summit on Saturday, Oct. 18, at Ray Reynolds Middle School in Pasco. This free conference is open to all WEA members with an emphasis on BIPOC members and White allies seeking to develop their leadership in their schools and union. Participants will examine how to organize a resilient culture of inclusion and equity through their leadership and advocacy. [Register online](#) by Oct. 16

SpEd Law and Advocacy Conference

WEA-Riverside is hosting a two-day SpEd Law conference October 17-18 and has invited VEA members to attend. This is one of the best PDs that WEA provides. Friday's session offers 6 clock hours. Saturday's session focuses on advocacy for colleagues and students (no clock hours). This does overlap with the VPS in-service PD day on Oct 17. The district is aware of this scheduling conflict and has shared that educators may enter a "professional learning" absence, which admin can approve in Red Rover. Since no sub is required, there should not be any cost deducted from PL funds. Register is open on the [WEA-WIN portal](#).

Know your Contract

Evaluation 8.4E

Certificated educators will be notified within the first thirty (30) days of the beginning date of the school year (or date of hire) of the name of their evaluator and their type of evaluation for that school year

Expanded Assignment Compensation

Article 10.6D. **Secondary Course Prep Supplemental.** This section applies to all employees regardless of FTE. A preparation is defined as a curriculum description/course number. When involuntary expanded assignments are necessary, the affected employee shall receive eight (8) hours of supplemental compensation for each course preparation over three (3) per semester.

Article 10.17 Traveling employees. Classroom teachers serving three (3) or more buildings shall be compensated per Appendix E

Nominate an Outstanding Colleague

Nominations are now open for the 2026 WEA Education Support Professional (ESP) of the year award. Any WEA member can nominate an ESP for this honor (they must be a member for at least three years, are currently active, and have not received this award in the past). [Get full details and nominate your favorite ESP online](#)

VOTE!!!



Soon ballots will be in your mailbox for the November election. This year VEA has made WEAPAC endorsements for local elections, including Anne McEnerny-Ogle for City of Vancouver Mayor, Kim Harless for City Council

Position 1, Erik Paulsen for City Council position 2, and Diana Perez for City Council Position 3. Wendy Smith and Sandra Zavala-Ortega were endorsed for the open School Board positions. These candidates were chosen based on their views regarding public education and unions. For other endorsements statewide, visit the [WEA website](#)

WEA's 2026 Legislative Agenda

Fund Washington's Future

We are in a funding crisis. Washingtonians overwhelmingly value high quality public education that supports our students' and our state's future. The system to fund schools is broken. We find ourselves fighting for scraps as our district teeters on binding conditions with OSPI. Funding from the federal level is being slashed. Will NBCT stipends survive? Class sizes are skyrocketing. Difficult decisions are ahead. We must take steps to fund our future! Step 1: [Contribute to WEAPAC](#)

WEA-Retired Scholarships



WEA-Retired is offering up to ten \$1,000 scholarships! Applicants must be WEA members and not a previous recipient of a WEA-Retired Scholarship. Learn more and apply here: wea.mobi/2026WEARetiredScholarship.

Decline to Sign Initiatives

Brian Heywood and Let's Go Washington continue to file initiatives that would make our public schools less welcoming and inclusive. They have begun paid signature gathering on two initiatives – Decline to Sign! Learn about the negative impacts these initiatives would have from the [Washington Families for Freedom](#)

Fall Shopping at Columbia Sportswear!

VEA members have access through October 13th! Shop the latest styles from Columbia, SOREL, Mountain Hardwear, and prAna at 40% off storewide. Bring your ID and [this flier](#) (also on the VEA website at www.vancouverea.org).

Health Insurance Letter is Real

Members who participated in WEA health plans prior to December 31, 2019 may have received a letter from WEA Select regarding unclaimed funds related to the distribution of their rate stabilization trust account. If you received a letter it is because your disbursement has not been cashed according to WEA's bank records. If there's no record of deposit please follow the instructions in the letter. Questions should be directed to wea.select@aon.com

VEA ALL Member Social Fall into Solidarity -Rise into Gratitude

Grab a colleague and join us for the first ALL Member Social on Friday, October 24th at Los Potrillos (10722 NW Lakeshore Road). VEA will host a taco bar and your first beverage (beer, wine, or soft drink). Come when you can – stay as long as you like. Gather with our newest members and say hello to old friends. Trivia and Door Prizes!!



RSVP For Planning Purposes:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/K62PHT3>

2509 Broadway -- Vancouver, WA 98663 * Phone 360-695-3397 -- FAX 360-694-8337
Jamie Anderson, President * Graham Picklesimer, Executive Director * Cindy Brown, Admin. Assistant
*Sandy Kokko, WEA-Retired Liaison. * www.vancouverea.org * Facebook: Vancouver EA

Getting to know your Executive Board



Bargaining Chair, Amy Spofford. Hello! My name is Amy Spofford and I am the VEA Bargaining Chair. I have been on the bargaining team as the special education representative for three years. I joined the team because a strong contract benefits both educators and our students. This will be my eleventh year with VPS and am currently the Learning Support teacher at Lake Shore Elementary. When I am not working, I like to read, watch TV/movies, and pet all the dogs.



Special Education Trustee, Anna Fenton. Hi! I am the SPED Trustee, and I have 13 years of experience in special education, including 10 years with Vancouver Public Schools and 3 years with ESD 112. I also worked as a paraprofessional for 2 years. Throughout my career, I've worked across a range of settings—4 years in learning support and 9 years in self-contained high school classrooms supporting students with behavioral needs and autism. I am a National Board Certified Teacher and a passionate advocate for students with disabilities. Advocacy is at the heart of everything I do—I believe it is essential to ensure that all students have equitable access to the resources, support, and opportunities they need to thrive. As SPED Trustee, I am committed to lifting up the voices of students, families, and educators, and to pushing for systems that reflect inclusion, understanding, and respect for every learner.



1st Vice President, Charlotte Lartey. Charlotte Lartey (she/her/hers) is a proud Black, gay educator with 13 years experience teaching in public schools, currently assigned at Gaiser Middle School. She wears many hats and has held a variety of elected leadership roles in local, state and National Education Association affiliates. Currently, Charlotte is VEA's 1st VP and a VEA Bargaining team member, and she is the Senior NEA Board Director for Washington, representing 84,000 WEA members across the state.

Charlotte's educational journey has been an ongoing pursuit of justice, liberation, and joy. She brings an explicit racial equity lens to the work she does in our schools, our union, and our community. Charlotte's greatest source of hope for the future; comes from our youth. This work is for them.



Middle School Trustee, Erin Pendergast. My name is Erin Pendergast and I am the Middle School Trustee on your VEA Board. I have taught English 8 at McLoughlin Middle School for 14 years. Before that I taught at Franklin Elementary and Felida Elementary. I chose to be on the board because I wanted to make sure our middle school teachers continue to have a strong voice in what is happening in our district. I am a product of Vancouver Public Schools myself, as are my four amazing children. I believe in our staff and students and want what is best for them. My contact email is erin.pendergast1@gmail.com



ESA/TOSA Trustee, Rachael Mortek. This is my 11th year as school counselor currently at Columbia River High school and entering my 2nd year on VEA executive board. I am an advocate for social justice, individual determination and growth for the students, families and community I serve everyday. I believe in leading with integrity, compassion and a commitment to equity. My passion for leadership and representation stems from a deep belief that every voice matters and deserves to be heard. We are stronger together, through collaboration, we can continue to build our community that uplifts and supports one another.

Coming soon in a future edition: Getting to know your 2nd VP Labor Relations, 3rd VP Member Engagement, HS Trustee, and VP Equity Affair

