



Action Line

Vancouver Education Association

February 2026

Déjà vu – Groundhog Day

February 2nd is Groundhog Day—the moment when the Farmer’s Almanac predicts either six more weeks of winter or an early, bright spring. It’s also the setting of the 1993 romantic comedy *Groundhog Day*, where weatherman Phil Connors wakes up each morning reliving the same day over and over. This spring, many of us are experiencing a similar sense of déjà vu.

With each passing day, the district’s budget crisis feels more severe. We now know that the estimated \$28 million deficit will bring significant disruption and loss for our members, our colleagues, and our students. As we brace for the storm ahead, it’s understandable that stress is running high. Knowing your rights and the procedures in place—and leaning on your union membership for advocacy—will be critical to navigating this process and addressing issues as they arise.

Seniority Lists The district will make available the seniority list of all Continuing and Provisional employees noting Washington State experience, which is the measure by which retention is determined when enacting a reduction in force (RIF). Please note that these lists will reflect experience through the end of the 2024-25 school year and do not reflect the current contract. Also included in the data is the number of credits earned beyond a BA degree as this is used as a tie breaker. A second document noting certification and endorsements is also provided. This data will be used to reassign potentially affected individuals.



Double Check the Accuracy of your Personnel File!

Is your file correctly reflecting your qualifications and certifications? You can review your file to ensure that HR has your complete and accurate qualifications and certifications. **This is especially important for those of you with fewer than three years of experience.**

Questions regarding the accuracy of your placement on these listings should be immediately directed to the district HR department. Article 14.8B states that **All experience to be computed for seniority must have been claimed on or before February 15 of each year.** Let VEA know if you need advocacy around this topic.

Individual Contracts

One-year “Leave replacement” contracts: Leave replacement contracts align with educators on leave (as per RCW 28A.405.900) in order to guarantee that positions are available when they return from leave. Those currently on a leave replacement contract are **NOT GUARANTEED** employment beyond the current year. VEA closely monitors the alignment of those on leave with those holding a Leave Replacement contract.

Continuing Contracts (provisional status): Provisional status is assigned for the first three years of continuing employment in VPS (or first year in VPS with at least two years of successful experience in another Washington district.) An exception to this provision (Article 11.1A.ii.a) allows an employee who completes two years of service at a highly diverse and high poverty school (see Chapter 14) who receives a “Proficient” or “Distinguished” summative evaluation rating on TPEP to be removed from provisional status. Following successful completion of provisional status, contracts are converted to a continuing contract.

Assignment and Rebalancing

Once the district determines the workforce that will continue into the 2026-27 school year, staffing at many sites will be unbalanced (either too many employees or not enough). Article 7.4 outlines how the staffing plans are developed. Article 7.5 outlines the procedures for in-district rebalancing/reassignment of employees:

- On or before April 15, principals will survey staff to indicate personal preferences for next year.
- The principal will tentatively assign staff considering personal preferences, course prep distribution, training and skills, evaluation ratings, and seniority. Preferences will not have the result of causing an involuntary position reassignment.
- Principal and SBLT co-chair will discuss staffing plans no later than May 1.
- An individual not assigned in the initial staff placement plan will be notified in writing that they may be involuntarily transferred from the site due to rebalancing. *District seniority is reviewed building wide – not within specific grade levels.
- Nobody will be placed in the unassigned pool if there's a volunteer that would prevent that placement.

Rebalancing exemptions

In some situations, an individual can be considered “exempt” from being rebalanced. Those situations may include:

- Educators whose transfer would harm underserved or marginalized students by reducing culturally responsive teaching or support
- Educators who have demonstrated high-level multilingual abilities that are important to their assignment or to the school's student population
- Anyone who has already been involuntarily transferred within the past two years.
- Staff whose teaching assignments include essential co-curricular programs such as middle and high school music, high school journalism/yearbook, and high school drama/stage are protected from rebalancing.

- A principal may recommend protection for an educator whose position is essential to keeping a critical or legally required program running with continuity.
- A **less senior employee will not be kept** over a more senior employee **unless**:
 - The less senior employee qualifies for one of the protections listed above, **or**
 - The more senior employee does not have the required qualifications for that specific position.

Eyes on ICE

The crisis unfolding in Minnesota has a lot of our members asking what can be done... what are our rights... how do we protect our students and their families? We know students and their families across the nation, and here at home, have been assaulted by federal agents, detained and separated from parents, causing untold trauma. We also know that fellow educators have been detained without explanation and without due process. Americans should be able to exercise their First Amendment rights to peacefully assemble and express themselves about what they want and don't want their communities being met with lethal force.

NEA is coordinating with Shared Futures, ACLU, labor and progressive partners, and immigrant rights organizations. During the national call January 26th covered the latest updates on ICE and CBPs out-of-control and dangerous operations as well as your rights when documenting and recording law enforcement encounters. View this recording of the session.

<https://www.youtube.com/live/zqka9fUTwdA?si=ZYNDexsjqveXkGt2>

Local organizations (LuLAC and Latino Leadership NW) are spread thin. One of the best ways to help out is to be trained to be part of the Rapid Response trained or to become a trainer for WAISN (WA Immigrant Support Network) to further the work being done. Find more information about how to get involved here: [WAISN | Get Involved](#)

Know your rights when protesting: [Quick Tips](#)

Last call for Nominations!

Nominations for VEA leadership at the Executive Board level as well as local delegates to WEA and NEA RAs will close at the **Rep Council meeting on February 9**. Contact Cindy at VEA for nomination forms. Balloting begins on February 17th and closes February 20th for these local elections and the bylaws considerations. Your link to the ballot will appear via home email.

Statewide Nominations Close Soon

WEA President, Vice President, and NEA Board Director positions will close on February 9. Nomination forms and details can be found at <https://www.washingtonnea.org/about/ra/wea-leadership-elections-guide/>

New Year, New Benefits, New UNION Dentist — For VEA Members



Members of the Vancouver Education Association and their families have even more reason to smile in the new year with Sunrise Dental. Sunrise Dental offices are proudly unionized throughout the Pacific Northwest. Locally in Vancouver, they are represented by BCTGM Local 114, and in Oregon, by the Machinists (IAM). Because these offices are unionized, VEA members can feel confident that they are receiving care from professionals who share the same values of fairness, quality, and respect on the job.

Sunrise Dental's mission is to protect and preserve the independent dentists, support and care for their employees through union representation, and provide deep discounts and affordable dental care to union members and their families.

What this means for VEA members:

- Zero out-of-pocket costs through fillings
- Deep union discounts on larger dental services
- Affordable, transparent, and member-focused dental care close to home

When you choose Sunrise Dental, you're not only taking care of your health, you're supporting union labor and independent small businesses.

Additional Savings with Union Perks


VEA members also have access to Union Perks, an exclusive discount website available to union members and their families.

Union Perks provides discounts on:

- Car rentals
- Hotels and travel
- Flights and more

These savings help stretch your household budget throughout the year. Go to unionperks.com to sign up for free!

If you have any questions or need assistance regarding Sunrise Dental or Union Perks, please contact Shannon A. Myers, our Sunrise Dental and Union Perks representative.

 360-589-0198

 labor@sunrisedental.com

www.sunrisedental.com www.unionperks.com

Your VEA membership works for you—at school, at home, and at the dentist.

Rainier Educators of Color Network

RECN is inviting WEA colleagues to join them Feb 6 & 7 to move equity work from awareness to action. Spend two days engaged in collaborative learning, courageous conversations and strategic planning focused on dismantling barriers, strengthening partnerships and creating systems that will serve all students, families, and communities.

The RECN Conference runs Friday, Feb 6 from 5-8 pm at the Puget Sound Skills Senter in Burien. On Saturday, Feb 7th the conference will be held from 8-4:30 pm at Highline College in Des Moines. There is a Zoom option available.

VEA has limited support for members to attend in person. Contact VEA for more details.

[Register for Friday's session.](#)

[Register for Saturday's session](#)

February 13 -

**Friday, February 13th is a day off for everyone!
Enjoy your four-day weekend!**

WEA Certification and TPEP PD

WEA is holding a series of free TPEP professional development opportunities for members.



Remember that WEA members can utilize available PD funds (\$1250) to pay yourself to attend.

Introduction to Professional Growth Plans (PGPs)

Feb 2nd 4:30-6:30 pm

<https://wea-win.org/events/1203>

Developing TPEP student growth goals.

February 9th 4:30-7:30 <https://wea-win.org/events/1044>

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Certification 101 (Teachers and CTE).

March 9th 4:30-6:30 <https://wea-win.org/events/1195>

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The Legislative session is in full swing

VEA was represented at Lobby Day on January 20-21 in Olympia by WEAPAC Chair Brian Dunlap, 1st VP Charlotte Lartey, and Executive Director Graham Picklesimer. They met with legislators from the 49th and advocated for a progressive revenue system to support our public schools. The funding crisis in VPS, and student and staff needs were a major focus of the discussions. Members are encouraged to follow budget proposals and take action by [signing in on legislation](#), or [testifying on legislation](#) to make your voice heard.



VEA Social

VEA invites all members to enjoy great conversation centered on our diverse community at a social on Friday, February 20th from 4:15-6:15 PM at Los Potrillos (Lake Shore location 10722 NW Lakeshore Ave - Vancouver). Drop in when you can to enjoy a taco bar, hosted beverage and great conversation! Win a door prize too!

#MembershipMatters #TogetherWeAreBetter

Please RSVP for planning purposes:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/B9DG2ZR>



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