VEA ACTION LINE

VANCOUVER EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

NOVEMBER 2026

VEA is grateful for our members and the work you do for students every day. We know you are managing enormous class sizes, supporting students with complex needs, and being asked to do more with less. You continue to create meaningful experiencies for students, often at a personal cost. We see that and know that this is not sustainable.

This year, we return to the bargaining table for a full contract opener, with the opportunity to negotiate improvements to our working conditions, contract langauge, and compensation. We know the district's binding condition status will make these conversations difficult, which makes our collective strength even more important.

This is also a big election year, giving us an opportunity to elect local leaders who will champion public education in Olympia. Initiatives that threaten school funding and our students' future are also on the ballot—and we need to vote NO. Make sure your ballot is returned *before* Tuesday, November 3rd! **Educator voices matter at the bargaining table, in our communities, and in the decisions that shape public education.**

Building a strong union takes more than bargaining a strong contract. It means participating, connecting with colleagues, attending VEA/WEA events, getting involved in committees and organizing efforts, and helping other members find their place in our union. You don't have to take on a leadership role or commit to everything to make a difference. Every conversation, every shared concerns, and every member who chooses to partcipate helps strengthen our collective voice.

VEA is a member-driven union, and securing a strong contract will take all of us. As we prepare for bargaining, we'll share opportunities to get involved, speak up about what matters most, and build the collective power we need to make meaningful improvements for educators and students.

In Solidarity, Jamie Anderson, *VEA President*

BARGAINING SURVEY COMING SOON!

What matters most to you as we head into a full contract negotiation? Later this month, VEA will launch our bargaining survey to hear directly from members about the working conditions, contract langauge, and compensation priorities that matter most to you.

This is YOUR opportunity to help shape our bargaining priorities.

A strong contract starts with member voices, and the more members who participate, the stronger our collective voice will be at the bargainining table. Watch for the survey later this month at your personal email and make sure your voice is heard!



Need to contact the VEA office?
Email: vea@washingtonea.org
Office Phone: 360-695-3397

Jamie Anderson, President: janderson@washingtonea.org, 360-836-1790
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KNOW YOUR **CONTRACT**

Staff Meetings (10.4H)

The VEA contract reserves up to three hours per month for staff meetings. These meetings are generally scheduled on Wednesdays, unless an SBLT vote establishes an alternate day.

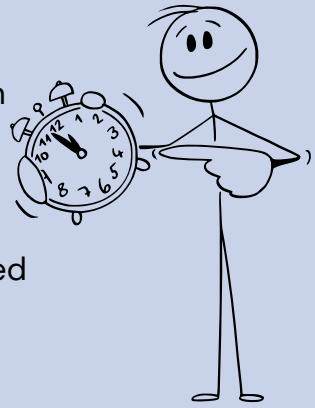
A few important points:

- **Three hours per month:** Principals have up to three hours per month for principal-directed staff meeting time. This time may be used for professional development, collaborative work, and operational needs.
- **Committee meetings:** Principals may use a portion of this time for required committee meetings instead of holding a full staff meeting. Committee engagement is covered under TRI pay, as provided in Article 12.2A.
- **SBLT meetings:** SBLT meetings are open to all staff members and are not classified as standard committee meetings under Article 15.3.
- **Employee-directed time:** Meeting time immediately before the end of a grading period or fall conference week is reserved for employee-directed activities.
- **Your workday still matters:** Mandatory staff meetings cannot extend your contractual workday beyond eight hours.

Preemption of Planning Time (10.4G)

Your contract requires administrators to make every reasonable effort to avoid involuntarily preempting your planning time more than twice per week. Any time planning time is preempted or lost, you must be compensated at your hourly per diem rate, prorated to the time lost.

Keep track of missed planning time and reach out to your building rep or VEA if you have questions about compensation for missed planning time.



Leave Provisions (Chapter 6)

The VEA contract outlines leave available to you and the requirements for requesting it. Before you need it, take a few minutes to review the applicable provisions so you understand your options.

Article 6.2: Illness, Injury, and Emergency Leave
Article 6.3: Bereavement leave
Article 6.4: Jury Duty leave
Article 6.5: Subpoena leave
Article 6.6: Adoption leave
Article 6.7: Military leave
Article 6.8: Religious Observance days
Article 6.9: Educational leave - short term
Article 6.10: Personal leave
Article 6.11: Uncompensated leaves

Questions about your contract?

Visit the VEA website (www.vancouverea.org) for the **full contract**,
Contact your **Building Rep**, or
The VEA office is available to help answer questions

WHAT YOU NEED **TO KNOW**

SPARKS: Learn, Connect, Recharge

Are you in your first 10 years of working in public education? Then **SPARKS is for you!**

This interactive professional development experience is facilitated by SPARKS graduates and gives early-career educators the chance to explore topics that matter to them, build practical skills, connect with the association, and meet fellow educators from across the district.

SPARKS takes place in Seaside, Oregon, each March, and **VEA covers** the cost of professional development, lodging, meals, and mileage. It's a great opportunity to learn, build relationships, and enjoy a weekend at the coast with your colleagues!

Invitations will be going out in November, so keep an eye on your email and interoffice mail. We hope you'll join us!

VEBA Vote & Informational Meeting



Eligible VEA members will soon have the opportunity to vote on VEBA benefits related to accumulated sick leave. This includes members eligible to retire at the end of the school year and members who have accumulated at least 180 days (1,440 hours) of sick leave and who may qualify to contribute to their VEBA account.

Have questions before voting? Join our informational Zoom meeting on November 10 at 5:00 p.m. A representative from Gallagher will explain the options and answer questions so you can make an informed decision.

NAKIA Invitations Coming Soon!

VEA is excited to continue creating opportunities for members to grow as leaders and build connections across our union.

Invitations to participate in NAKIA Academy will be going out this month!

NAKIA Academy is an opportunity to connect with fellow educators, develop leadership skills, and explore ways to get more involved in VEA. Whether you're interested in strengthening your own leadership or finding new ways to make a difference for your colleagues, we hope you'll consider participating.

Keep an eye on your district mailbox for an invitation and more information! We look forward to connecting with members who are ready to learn, grow, and help shape the future of our union.

Important Dates to Know

November 1 - Daylight Savings Time ends, clocks fall back one hour
November 3 - Election Day
November 5 - VEA Contract Action Team (CAT) training
November 10 - VEBA Informational Meeting
November 10 - VPS School Board meeting
__November 11__ - NO SCHOOL, Veteran's Day
November 13 - Bargaining survey launch via home email
November 23 - Open Enrollment ends
__November 23-27__ - NO SCHOOL, Thanksgiving Break

SEBB Open Enrollment: October 26-November 23

SEBB open enrollment is here! Take time to review your benefits, confirm your current coverage, and make any needed changes for the upcoming year. **Open enrollment runs October 26 through November 23, so don't miss the deadline.** Changes will be effective January 1, 2027.

Check your work email and visit the SEBB website for enrollment information and next steps.

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

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Thanks for Joining Us!



Thank you to everyone who joined us for our first VEA social of the year! It was great to spend time together outside the workday, connect with colleagues, and celebrate the people who make our union strong. We loved seeing members come together, and we look forward to more opportunities to connect throughout the year.

Congrats to Bill Graves who won goodies to be delivered to members at Thomas Jefferson Middle School!

Keep an eye out for our next VEA member event on December 4th - we hope to see you there!

Your Voice in WEA: WEA RA

Want to have a say in the direction of our union? In February, VEA members will have the opportunity to run to represent our local at the WEA Representative Assembly (RA) in April. **Delegates help shape statewide union priorities, vote on policy, and participate in the democratic process that guides WEA's work.**

You don't have to be a longtime union leader to get involved! If you're interested in learning more or exploring this leadership opportunity, keep an eye out for information about nominations and the upcoming election, or reach out to the VEA office.

VEA Night at the Blazers - December 12



VEA has teamed up with the Portland Trail Blazers to offer members discounted tickets to games and select events at the Moda Center!

Join us for VEA Night at the Blazers on December 12! VEA members, family, and friends are invited to enjoy a night of NBA basketball together. Get your discounted tickets and make it a fun night out with your union community!

Visit RoseQuarter.com/events/group-tickets and use promo code "VEA" to purchase tickets. The purchase deadline is December 7, so don't wait! Group tickets include early entry to watch warm ups.
More discounts: VEA members can also access discounted tickets to all Trail Blazers home games and select Rose Quarter events through Rip City Rewards. Visit RoseQuarter.com/RipCityRewards and use promo code TBVEA. Offers may change throughout the season.

WEA PoliSPARKS 2027

Are you a WEAPAC contributor interested in learning how to advocate for public education?

Join WEA PoliSPARKS in Olympia March 14-15 for lobbying training, organizing tips, and hands-on opportunities to connect with legislators and decision-makers.
Interested? VEA will be sending one member to PoliSPARKS training this year. **Contact VEA ASAP** to learn more if you want to build your legislative advocacy skills!