



TACKBOARD

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President's Message

ONCE AGAIN I am sorry to report that despite the hundreds of hours spent in consultation with respect to classes of over 30 students or more than 3 students who require an IEP, Vancouver has over 1200 classes which exceed those limits. As far as I can tell, we again have the dubious distinction of having the **worst number of overloads in the province.**

At the Board meeting on Monday October 15, the Superintendent presented his report on the state of class size/class composition in Vancouver elementary and secondary schools. In the vote to adopt his report, four trustees voted for and four against, with one abstention. Chairperson Denike originally ruled that the motion failed. Then after a recess declared it passed as the abstention should be counted on the "prevailing" side of the question. The COPE Trustees present questioned this decision as do the Presidents of VESTA and VSTA. We do not believe a tie vote has a 'prevailing' side.

What is particularly of concern is the manipulation of by-laws and the ignoring of the generally accepted rules of order. Further, clearly there was not consensus to accept this report which disingenuously states, "that the proposed organization of classes...remain appropriate for student learning" (Chris Kelly, October 15, 2007). Tell that to the teacher with a Grade 11/12 Metalwork class with 27 students, 13 of whom have IEPs, or the teacher with a Grade 9 basic English class with 37 students, 8 of whom have IEPs, a Geography 12 class with 30 students, 7 of whom have IEPs, a Math 9 class with 37 students, 5 of whom have IEPs, and on it goes.

The VSB needs to do better. What good is consultation if there isn't even an attempt at remedy?

Last year we experienced the "hokey-pokey" staffing model-additional teachers being put in mid-year, only for them to be taken away. Support for class size/composition needs to be continuous to be meaningful. Reorganizing schools in January is difficult and disruptive and this was pointed out to both the Superintendent and the Trustees at the beginning of this academic year in our formal letter asking them to fund the class/size class composition section of the School Act properly.

When we issued press releases last week after the Board meeting, there was a fair amount of media coverage in the *The Sun*, *The Courier*, CBC and a couple of the Chinese media outlets. We intend to keep the pressure on this Board by filing grievances and passing our numbers to the BCTF for their provincial grievance. The VSTA will also continue to do class size counts and to widely publicize the serious flaws in the legislation and the untenable number of overloads in Vancouver secondary schools.

A recent Supreme Court decision however, may have a positive outcome for BC teachers and the 2002 stripping of our collective agreement by the BC Liberals heavy-handed legislation. The court's decision in the hospital workers bid to appeal Bill 29 was ground-breaking and here's where we may take heart. The commentary detailing the decision around collective bargaining points to a legal remedy in that what was taken from teachers will be ruled as material interference in the bargaining process. Therefore, our rights to determine class size and composition may be restored and the objectionable sections of Bill 33 may be repealed. The legal department of the BCTF is currently working to interpret and apply the

see "PRESIDENT", inside

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legal challenge necessary to change Bill 33 based upon the historic victory for labour at the Supreme Court of Canada on June 8, 2007.

Finally, we need to thank the staff reps and teachers for the countless hours they put into this process. Your patience and determination to do this properly is greatly appreciated.

Anne

Employee Assistance Program

All VSTA members and their immediate family members have access to the Employee Assistance Program, a confidential and voluntary service that provides practical, relevant support to assist you in solving all types of problems and challenges. There is no cost to use your EAP. You can contact your EAP toll-free at 1-800-268-5211 (24 hours a day, seven days a week) or visit counselling at www.fgiworldmembers.com. A brochure providing further details of the EAP will be distributed to all members in October.

BCTF Advantage: Good News!

On October 13th, BCTF launched **BCTF Advantage**, a brand new affinity program for members across the province. **BCTF Advantage** is a voluntary program that provides unique travel opportunities, retail advantages, and insurance products for BCTF members. For more information, go to www.bctf.ca.

Newer Teachers' Reception



All newer (up to 5 years experience) teachers are invited to attend an informative reception at the VSTA office at 2915 Commercial Drive on **Wednesday, November 21, from 4:30-6:30**. Drop by, meet your colleagues, and learn about a variety of valuable services and resources offered by the BCTF, VSB and VSTA. Speakers will include our BCTF President, Irene Lanzinger, as well as a variety of teacher-consultants from the VSB and the VSTA Executive. Refreshments will be served. We look forward to meeting you all!!

PUB NIGHT



Join your colleagues at the

Montmartre Cafe

4362 Main Street @ E. 28th

Friday, November 30th

2:30-6:00

to socialize and celebrate the end of term one! Arrive early to enjoy complimentary finger food and entertainment.

Stay tuned for further details.

Colourful posters will be sent to schools.

Class Size & Class Composition under the School Act

Class size and composition language was stripped from our Collective Agreement in 2002. In 2005, the provincial government passed legislation, Bill 33, which established some class size and composition limits. These are now included in the School Act, Section 76.1.

Individual Classes Section 76.1(2.2)

A board must ensure that the size of any class for any of grades 8 to 12 in any school in its school district does not exceed 30 students unless

- (a) in the opinions of the superintendent for the school district and the principal of the school, the organization of the class is appropriate for student learning, and
- (b) the principal of the school has consulted with the teacher of that class.

Class Composition Section 76.1 (2.3)

A board must ensure that any class in any school in its school district does not have more than 3 students with an individual education plan (IEP)* unless

- (a) in the opinions of the superintendent for the school district and the principal of the school, the organization of the class is appropriate for student learning, and
- (b) the principal of the school has consulted with the teacher of the class

* Ministry designations covered by this section of the School Act:

- A: Physically dependent
- B: Deaf/blind
- C: Moderate to Severe/Profound Intellectual Disability
- D: Physical Disability/Chronic Health Impairment
- E: Visual Impairment
- F: Deaf or Hard of Hearing
- G: Autism
- H: Intense Behaviour Interventions/Serious Mental Illness
- K: Mild Intellectual Disability
- Q: Learning Disabilities
- R: Moderate Behaviour Support/Mental Illness

You are advised to always have a staff rep. present during your consultation with the principal/vice-principal to discuss your class size or class composition.

Leaves Refresher (Article 10)

Listed below is a partial list of employee leaves under Article 10 of the *VTF Collective Agreement*:

- **Citizenship Court Appearance** (10.F.): Two (2) half-days with no deduction from pay for an employee to attend his/her interview and official granting of citizenship in Citizenship Court.
- **Educational Ceremonies** (10.K.): One-half (1/2) day with no deduction from pay to receive a degree or diploma from an educational institution or to be present when a member of the immediate family receives a degree or diploma. If the educational institution is outside the metropolitan area of Vancouver, an additional one-half (1/2) day shall be granted for travel, if required.
- **Examinations** (10. M.): One-half (1/2) day with no deduction from pay to undergo or write an examination related to his/her employment or, if required, one (1) day with the prior approval of the Associate Superintendent—Human Resources.
- **Funeral** (10.N.): Up to one (1) day allowed with no deduction from pay.
- **Illness of an Immediate Family Member** (10.P.): Up to five (5) days of leave per year with no deduction from pay but with a deduction from the employee's sick leave.

Early Retirement Incentive Plan for June 2008

To be eligible, employees must:

- be on a continuing appointment
- retiring with a pension
- have a minimum of ten (10) FTE years' service with the Vancouver School Board
- be at the maximum of their scale
- have been in active service for the previous four (4) years, with no more than one (1) year of leave during this period
- be a minimum age of 55, and a maximum age of 64 as of June 30th in the year of retirement
- submit their request to retire, in writing, on or before May 31 for a retirement date of June 30

Based on the salary upon retirement, excluding allowances, the minimum salary to be PB(5), step 10, the maximum to be 6M, step 10, minus PB(5), step 3, and to be adjusted by the applicable earnings as at age upon retirement date:

PAY GRADES						
Age	3/EA	4/PC	5/PB	5/PA	6/M	Payout Percentage
55	\$15,745	\$15,745	\$15,745	\$21,594	\$22,344	100%
56	\$14,171	\$14,171	\$14,171	\$19,434	\$20,110	90%
57	\$12,596	\$12,596	\$12,596	\$17,275	\$17,875	80%
58	\$11,022	\$11,022	\$11,022	\$15,116	\$15,641	70%
59	\$9,447	\$9,447	\$9,447	\$12,956	\$13,406	60%
60	\$7,873	\$7,873	\$7,873	\$10,797	\$11,172	50%
61	\$6,298	\$6,298	\$6,298	\$8,637	\$8,938	40%
62	\$4,724	\$4,724	\$4,724	\$6,478	\$6,703	30%
63	\$3,149	\$3,149	\$3,149	\$4,319	\$4,469	20%
64	\$3,149	\$3,149	\$3,149	\$4,319	\$4,469	20%

This information is provided here as a guide only. Your ERIP amount must be confirmed by VSB Payroll.

Supervision

Just a reminder that secondary teachers are not required to provide more than sixty (60) minutes of supervision per month, *averaged over the school year* (Article 9.J.).



Always happy to hear from you!
Anne, Shaun, Debbie, Bill, Kim & Mo

VSTA meetings & events



Council Thurs., Nov. 29, Dec. 20
Executive Thurs., Nov. 8, Dec. 13
Pro-D Mon., Nov. 5, Dec. 3
Health & Safety Mon., Nov. 19
WLC/Bargaining Wed., Nov. 14

Meetings begin at 4:00pm at the VSTA .

Newer Teacher Reception..Wed., Nov. 21
Pub Night (2:30-6pm).....Fri., Nov. 30