



TACKBOARD

Volume 22 Number 1

2007 September 27

Welcome back to everyone.

The start-up this year seems to have been a smoother one generally. Part of that is the projection around enrolment for this year had relative accuracy so re-organization of schools should be minimal. Once again however, we are faced with the challenge of Bill 33 consultations and the time and effort they take. It is important to note that accurate collection of the data around class size and composition is hugely important in our case for additional staffing. In our instructions to staff rep teams we stated that all teachers should ensure that a staff rep is present during this process. We want to ensure there are no 'drive-by' consultations, (those conducted in classroom where students are present, or in hallways during class). We know that doing the consultations is both onerous and time consuming, but it is vitally important and does bear results. After the collection of data last fall and after conducting our own Bill 33 campaign, we were successful in getting additional blocks of staffing for 2007.

The Educational Facilities Review which began last year has been revised somewhat. Currently, the Board is without a Facilities Director as Les King accepted another job this summer. Additionally, the Superintendent met with stakeholder groups last week and proposed a representational committee of stakeholders be formed to provide direct input, feedback, and advice to the District Management Team as guidance for the Facilities Review. VSTA and VESTA have agreed in principle to be part of this committee and the terms of reference, scope and sequence and timelines will be part of the early discussions.

Additionally, we are faced with the Bills 20, 21 and 22 passed last Spring in the legislature. Bill 20

notably created the Superintendents of Achievement (or the 'ubers' as we fondly refer to them) who are accountable to the minister and **who may enter schools and interview employees and students, and scrutinize board decisions and records.**

(For an amusing take on these 'ubers' see www.youtube.com Part I Preparing for School Visit, Part II School Visit) Additionally, it allows SPC's with board approval to create special academies for which fees may be charged. Bill 21 requires the BC College of Teachers to establish public and employers' registries. The registry will contain any suspensions or cancellations of certificate (including non-payment of fee) and any college discipline and the reason why the discipline was taken. Bill 22 requires all schools to have a code of conduct for students (already required by most districts), but which now must comply with yet to be defined **ministry standards**. Finally, this bill allows the minister to designate educational activities including those conducted by private organizations, for **which students can be reimbursed**.

These changes seem clearly designed to undermine the local education authority (Boards), invite further privatization of public education and to undermine and diminish the professional status of teachers. The BCTF and VSTA will be monitoring the issues around these bills and will keep you informed.

Lastly, the In House table officers at VSTA (Anne, Shaun, Bill and Debbie) plan to visit every school for informal meetings this fall and we look forward to seeing and chatting with members. Have a good year.

Anne

School Walkabouts

Teachers are reminded that attendance at Walkabouts during the first few weeks of school is voluntary. Walkabouts are not meetings or informal reports in respect of students' school progress nor are they meetings or conferences called by the principal as defined by *School Act Regulations*. However, Walkabouts do provide an opportunity for teachers to meet and talk to parents about their classes, including information about class sizes and composition. As a matter of common courtesy, teachers unable to attend a Walkabout evening should notify their principal.

“88 and Out” — Save up to \$800. Per Year

BCTF Salary Indemnity Plan regulations provide for a member who has reached age 64 or a total of age plus contributory service of 88 to withdraw from the long term portion of the plan. You may wish to continue the plan, however, if your accumulated sick leave and BCTF Short Term SIP (120 days) will not protect your salary until you reach the age of 65 or factor 90. Members who withdraw from the Long Term portion of the plan will still receive the 2% SIP allowance. Call the Income Security Division at the BCTF at 604-871-2283 or VSTA for an application form or more information.

Pension Buy-Back Now Limited to 5 Years

Since March 31, 2007, the time window for the purchase of pensionable service for leaves of absence has been set at five years by the Teachers' Pension Plan. This means that when a teacher takes **any** leave of absence without pay or with partial pay, including maternity and parental leaves, she/he has only five years from the end of the leave to purchase the service for that leave. It is generally less costly to purchase leaves of absence soon after the end of the leave, but individual circumstances will vary. Members can find additional information on the purchase of leaves of absence from the TPP website, www.tpp.pensionsbc.ca. Go to Teachers' Pension Plan and find *Purchase of Service* under *Tools*. The Tools also include a *Purchase Cost Estimator*.

School Team Training

The VSTA School Team Training Session will take place on **Wednesday, October 17**, at the Delta Vancouver Airport Hotel. Each school is allowed a maximum of **5** registrants, excluding facilitators and members of the Executive. Registration materials will be forwarded to the schools. Stay posted for further information.

VSB/VTF Collective Agreement on the Press

The new provincial and local language is currently being melded with the 2001-2004 Collective Agreement to create a new edition of the **complete K-12 VSB/VTF Collective Agreement**. Upon completion, the document will be printed and made available to members for their individual reference.

Teachers' Pension Plan Seminars 2007-08

All teachers are invited to attend one or both of the following seminars, *Your Pension, Your Future* and *Thinking About Retiring*. Presented by the Teacher's Pension Plan, the seminars are free of charge and take place from October until May throughout the province. Pre-registration is required and forms are available from their website at www.tpp.pensionsbc.ca. Check your staffroom for specific information regarding dates and locations.

Change in Process: PB+15 Applications

The BCTF and BCPSEA have reached agreement on the provincial criteria for Category 5+ (popularly known as PB+15). Consequently, the VSTA office will no longer be processing requests for reclassification to Salary Category 6/PA (as it is known in the VSB/VTF Collective Agreement). **All new applicants must apply through TQS**, the Teacher Qualification Service. Go to the TQS website at www.tqs.bc.ca for information or call TQS for information at 604-736-5484.

2007/08 VSTA Executive

Table Officers

<i>President</i>	Anne Guthrie Warman anne@vstaweb.ca
<i>1st Vice President</i>	Shaun van der Hoop shaun@vstaweb.ca
<i>2nd Vice President</i>	Debbie Pawluk (TEMP) debbie@vstaweb.ca
<i>Treasurer</i>	Susan Gallpen (TEMP)
<i>Local Reps</i>	Anne Guthrie Warman Tom Ross (KILL) Marcy Toms (TEMP)
<i>Past President</i>	Bill Bargeman bill@vstaweb.ca

Members-at-Large	Rory Brown (VT) Maira Ekdahl (DLS) Sue Inglis (PG) Alita Krickan (CT) Sylvia Metzner (JOr) Michael O'Neill (JO) Katharine Shipley (WC)
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Standing Committee Chairs

<i>Pro-D</i>	Brin MacIntyre (TEMP)
<i>WLC/B</i>	Peter Hill (UHS)
<i>Social Justice</i>	Rosalind Kellett (EH)
<i>Health and Safety</i>	Louis Jefferson (WC)
<i>Teacher on Call Rep</i>	Treena Goolieff (EH)

PB+15 Eligibility for Red Seals

Teachers who have Red Seals (trades certifications) can apply to TQS (Teacher Qualification Service) for Salary Category 5+ if their qualifications/category placement warrant. TQS will, in turn, direct the teacher to BCIT or another similar institution to have the apprenticeship program equated to university credits. Questions or concerns may be directed to George Taylor or Lynne Sinclair at the BCTF, Field Service Division, or to Shaun van der Hoop at VSTA.

Monitor Changes to Loads

Teachers are encouraged to monitor within their departments for any additional blocks being added to assignments through internal reorganization. Any additional assignments **of more than one block** must be posted and cannot be assigned internally (Article 2.L.2 (c)).

In addition, please pay attention to attempts to change loads that were posted in the spring or August postings. Assignments can not be altered after they have been posted except as a direct result of enrolment/program changes (Article 7.A.6).

Staff Meeting Language: Important Changes

The VSB/VTF Collective Agreement has developed new local language around staff meetings. The language reads as follows:

1. Staff meetings are called by the school principal. Staff meetings are distinct from Staff Committee meetings which are provided for in the Collective Agreement (Article 11.D).
2. Employees shall attend duly called staff meetings as per the *School Act and Regulations*. Part-time employees shall not be required to attend staff meetings which are not contiguous with their instructional assignment. It is the responsibility of every employee to apprise himself/herself of the Staff Meeting agenda and minutes.
3. Notice of staff meetings, including the agenda, and Staff Meeting minutes shall be provided under the Principal's direction with consideration of advice from the Staff Committee, except in cases of time sensitive information or situations.
4. Staff Meetings shall be limited to a reasonable number a year and will not be in conflict with Professional Development activities, with the exception, in either case, of time sensitive information or situations.

It is understood that **one Staff Meeting per month is a "reasonable number."** In addition, it is recommended that schools review and discuss these changes at the first meeting of Staff Organization; subsequently, the teachers' advice should be forwarded to the next upcoming Staff Committee meeting.

**Teachers' Salary Grid
July 1, 2007**

Step	Prov Cat 5+			TQS 6
	Cat 4	Cat 5	Cat 6/PA	Cat 6/M
0	\$ 40,863	\$ 44,869	\$ 48,542	\$ 49,292
1	\$ 42,907	\$ 47,118	\$ 51,009	\$ 51,759
2	\$ 44,952	\$ 49,368	\$ 53,476	\$ 54,226
3	\$ 46,996	\$ 51,617	\$ 55,943	\$ 56,693
4	\$ 49,041	\$ 53,866	\$ 58,409	\$ 59,160
5	\$ 51,085	\$ 56,115	\$ 60,876	\$ 61,627
6	\$ 53,129	\$ 58,365	\$ 63,343	\$ 64,093
7	\$ 55,174	\$ 60,614	\$ 65,810	\$ 66,560
8	\$ 57,218	\$ 62,863	\$ 68,277	\$ 69,027
9	\$ 59,263	\$ 65,113	\$ 70,744	\$ 71,494
10	\$ -	\$ 67,362	\$ 73,211	\$ 73,961

Newer Teachers' Reception

The VSTA in-house table officers and Executive would like to invite all 'newer' (up to 5 yrs. exp.) teachers to a reception at the VSTA offices at 2915 Commercial on Wednesday, November 21 at 4:30pm. Come and have a chat with your colleagues, meet the Executive and enjoy some refreshments. We look forward to meeting you all.

VSTA meetings & events



Council..... Thurs., Oct. 25, Nov. 29
Executive..... Thurs., Oct. 11, Nov. 8
Pro-D Mon., Oct. 5, Nov. 5
Health & Safety Mon., Nov. 19
WLC/Bargaining Wed., Nov. 14

Meetings begin at 4:00pm at the VSTA office - 2915 Commercial Dr. at E. 13th.

School Team Training Wed., Oct. 17
at the Delta Vancouver Airport Hotel

New Teacher Reception..Wed., Nov. 21
more details to come

Vancouver Technical: Class of '76 Reunion

The class of '76 is celebrating its "30+1" reunion on Saturday, October 20/07 at the Laguna Blue Restaurant at the New Westminster Quay. If you, or someone you know, taught at the school between the years of 1970-1976, please contact Mary Ringwald (nee Rossi) at mringwald@sd43.bc.ca or by phone at 604-522-7806 for more details.



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

Office Updates

The office welcomes **Kim Pereira** as our new Administrative Assistant. Please feel free to call or email Kim.

Office hours are from Monday to Thursday 8:30-4:30 and Friday from 8:30-3:30. The phones are open for member assistance starting at **7:30am**.