



# TACKBOARD

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## President's Message

**"Summer afternoon - summer afternoon.....the two most beautiful words in the English language"** *Henry James-*



Despite the new distinctly elegiac feel of that quote, it is I think, fair to say that we did have a lovely summer in terms of both the weather and the extended summer break this year. However, we are all now back at it in earnest and we wish you a positive and smooth start-up

to the school year. This feat of course is not helped by the funding announcements now coming out of the new Minister of Education's mouth on a daily basis. And by announcements I mean cuts. In the last week we have been told that the Annual Facilities Grants to School Districts has been removed, leaving crucial work started over the summer incomplete. At the same time as Minister MacDiarmid was visiting False Creek Elementary School on the first day of school to announce some spurious grant for "Olympic Spirit," she was announcing funding cuts to after school sports programs stating that instead students could replace this with "walking or dancing or playing in the parks." This would be funny were it not grimly ironic. Our coaches and PE teachers should be rightly angry with this cavalier approach to their sports program funding.

Further cuts were announced on the day school opened to PAC Gaming Grants taking them from \$20 per child to \$10. Parent groups are doing a good job advocating on this issue and teachers are all too aware of how much this will affect the so-called "extra" things they are able to do with respect to their classroom activities and beyond.

The Board's Advocacy Group (with your President in attendance) has already met and we will be looking further at ways to counter these cuts and the messaging about funding coming out of the Education Ministry.

The province wide arbitration on class size and

composition (Dorsey) wound up over the summer with a decision around violations of Section 76 of The School Act. Dorsey ruled that of the 81 classes considered, 21 were in violation, not frankly a great win for us, but he also ruled in other ways in our favour around the consultation process. Remedy has not yet been set, but we will keep you informed when it is and will be asking to be included. Once again we are asking staff reps and teachers to conduct these consultations on the violations (and details of the award and the new rules will be provided at the Staff Rep training on September 15<sup>th</sup>) We know this is an onerous and seemingly thankless task but we do have to keep up the pressure on this issue. We have a progressive Board who campaigned on making class size and composition a priority so we have some leverage there. I can't imagine it will be acceptable to this Board to have the Superintendent stand up and report that with 1500 classes in violation of the guidelines that they are all "appropriate for student learning."

Finally, I add that our current collective agreement expires in 2011, June 30, and while that may seem far away at the moment it is important that everyone stay involved so that you can give us feedback on what you see as the issues as we go into another round of bargaining. We will also be reviewing the Mid Contract Modification on the Spring Transfer process with Human Resources in November and will be looking for feedback from teachers through their staff reps so that we can tighten up and improve some of the process for next year. Our early analysis tells us that it has been a success in creating mobility, having positions posted as vacated, and that HR has been respectful in ensuring that post and fill guidelines on qualifications/experience and seniority have been enforced.

Keep up the good work and best wishes for a great year.

*Anne*

## First Council Meeting

Important Reminder...The first VSTA Council Meeting of the year will take place on **Wednesday, September 23**, at 4pm at the VSTA office, 2915 Commercial Drive (@ E. 13<sup>th</sup>). Meetings from October 2009 to June 2010 will be held on the last *Thursday* of each month.

## 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 regarding 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 size and composition. As a matter of common courtesy, teachers unable to attend a Walkabout evening should notify their principal.

## VSTA Executive Committee 2009-10

President	Anne Guthrie Warman
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President	Debbie Pawluk
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President	Shaun van der Hoop
Treasurer	Moira Ekdahl (DLS)
Local Representatives to the BCTF	Sylvia Metzner (JO) Anne Guthrie Warman
Members-at-Large	Victor Choy (WC) Mary Filleul (WRE) Susan Gallpen (TEMP) Susan McIntosh (GLAD) Raza Mirani (GLAD) Lisa Pacheco (GLAD) Christine Stewart (BRIT) Young Cheng (PG)
Teacher on Call Rep	
<i>Standing Committee Chairs</i>	
Professional Development	Brin McIntyre (TEMP)
W/LC & Bargaining	Carollyne Ramsey (TEMP)
Health & Safety	Louis Jefferson (WC)
Social & Eco-Justice	Rosalind Kellett (EH)

## Salaries - July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010

Step	Prov Cat 5+		TQS 6	
	Cat 4	Cat 5	Cat 6/PA	Cat 6/M
0	\$ 42,932	\$ 47,141	\$ 50,999	\$ 51,788
1	\$ 45,080	\$ 49,504	\$ 53,591	\$ 54,379
2	\$ 47,227	\$ 51,867	\$ 56,183	\$ 56,971
3	\$ 49,375	\$ 54,230	\$ 58,775	\$ 59,563
4	\$ 51,523	\$ 56,593	\$ 61,366	\$ 62,155
5	\$ 53,671	\$ 58,956	\$ 63,958	\$ 64,746
6	\$ 55,819	\$ 61,319	\$ 66,550	\$ 67,338
7	\$ 57,967	\$ 63,683	\$ 69,142	\$ 69,930
8	\$ 60,115	\$ 66,046	\$ 71,733	\$ 72,522
9	\$ 64,131	\$ 68,409	\$ 74,325	\$ 75,113
10		\$ 72,895	\$ 78,840	\$ 79,891

For Teachers On Call in the K-12 bargaining unit, your pay is based on the above grid. For 1-3 days of work, you'll be paid \$204.61 for each full day, and will be paid an additional compensation of \$3 in lieu of benefits. For work over 3 consecutive days, you'll be paid on-scale (retroactive to the first day); additionally, you'll be paid compensation of \$3 in lieu of benefits for the first four days, and then after the fifth day you'll be paid 10% of 1/189<sup>th</sup> of your placement on the grid in lieu of benefits.

## Application Process: Change of Salary Category for Teachers

Teachers are reminded that Human Resources printed and distributed revised copies of the document, *Information Regarding Teacher Salary*, to all school sites. Teachers are strongly advised to consult the document to gain an awareness of the procedure in place and the application form required to get retroactive pay when they apply for a new TQS card for their salary change. All applicants must apply through TQS, the Teacher Qualification Service. Go to the TQS website at [www.tqs.bc.ca](http://www.tqs.bc.ca) for further information or call TQS at 604-736-5484.

## "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 more information.

## New 12 Month Pay Plan

An optional 12 Month Pay Plan for K-12 teachers was implemented in the district, effective Sept. 1, 2008. This plan replaces the defunct Summer Savings Plan. All applicants must apply through the payroll department as soon as possible. Temporary teachers who start no later than Sept. 30 and are contracted to June 30th may also enroll. Members planning to retire this year are advised *not* to enroll in the plan since the summer payments will delay when retirees can begin to draw a pension. A signed application form giving authorization must be given to payroll. All participants will have 10% of their gross semi-monthly salary deducted, and deductions will continue year over year unless the member provides written authorization to terminate the contributions. The payout of funds will be in 4 equalized payments (July 15, July 31, August 15, and August 31). Interest at the bank's savings rate, from Sept. 15 to March 31, will be applied to the summer installments. The Board will retain interest accumulated from April to August to cover costs associated with administering the program. The deduction code on the pay stub will be noted as "12PP". Further details about the plan and forms are available on the VSTA website ([www.vstaweb.ca](http://www.vstaweb.ca)), as well as from payroll. Contact payroll at [payrollandbenefits@vsb.bc.ca](mailto:payrollandbenefits@vsb.bc.ca).



Honourary Life Member, Marcy Toms, Peter Norris, Carollyne Ramsey (WLC/B Chair) and Brin MacIntyre (Pro-D Chair) - Templeton table at the Retirees' Dinner, June 23, 2009 at the RVYC.

## 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](http://www.tpp.pensionsbc.ca). Go to Teachers' Pension Plan and find *Purchase of Service* under *Tools*. The *Tools* also include a *Purchase Cost Estimator*.

## Cuts to Public Education... Spread the Word

Some trustees around the province are starting to mobilize more publicly around the cuts. Check out this article on the CTV webpage right now at:

<http://www.ctvolympics.ca/about-vancouver/news/newsid=15484.html>

and a YouTube clip being shared around by Maple Ridge trustee Stepan Vdovine:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3lck1Kg2Tak>



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

## Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement Signed

Congratulations to the Coast Salish Nations, Musqueam Nations, and the First Nations, Metis, Inuit, and the Urban Aboriginal Peoples served by the Vancouver Board of Education.

After several years of work, the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement for School District #39 (Vancouver) has been signed. The intent of the agreement is to improve the educational experiences and results of Aboriginal students in Vancouver public schools.

The agreement, copies of which will be circulated to all schools early in the school year, contains three goals:

**Belonging** - *To increase Aboriginal students' sense of pride, self-esteem, belonging, place, acceptance, and caring at their schools.*

**Mastery** - *To ensure that Aboriginal students achieve increased academic success in Vancouver schools and that they participate fully and successfully from kindergarten through the completion of grade 12.*

**Culture & Community** - *To increase knowledge, acceptance, empathy, awareness and appreciation of Aboriginal histories, traditions, cultures and contributions of all students through eliminating institutional, cultural and individual racism within the Vancouver school district learning communities.*



Dave Myles (Retiree) & Raza Mirani (Executive)  
Retirees' Dinner, June 23, 2009 at the RVYC