

Action Line

A Publication of the Vancouver Education Association

September 2011

Inside this issue:

- **Pre-retirement seminar**
- **National Hispanic Heritage month**
- **Are you registered to vote?**
- **Urgent! Know your Weingarten rights**
- **Contract ratification vote**
- **Have you changed your name or address?**
- **Join PTSA**
- **Transfer your sick leave**
- **12 ways your building rep can help you**
- **Do you have a building rep?**

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Do you keep a professional file?

If you haven't already organized a professional file, this would be a good time to start. VEA recommends that you maintain your own records to be able to verify and document any disputes that may arise over your salary, seniority, leaves, evaluations, and other employee-related matters. We suggest that your file include the following:

- Up-to-date transcripts of all course work, including clock hours
- All signed contracts, including extra-duty contracts
- Copies of pre-approved leave forms
- Copies of staff development forms
- All observations, evaluations, and plans of improvement
- All written directives or reprimands
- Anecdotal records of conversations with students, parents, and administrators
- All correspondence (including e-mails) between you and administrators
- All correspondence (including e-mails) between you and parents, including complimentary notes
- Descriptions of any incidents involving students, parents, colleagues, or administrators that could become an issue
- Work/teaching schedules for current and past years
- Commendations, awards, and honors
- Proof of association membership and information on benefit programs
- Current employee and student handbooks

You may want to consider storing this file in a safe place at home.

Benefits of membership

If you are a new teacher, you may be curious as to what your association dues entitle you to receive. Some of you who are more experienced may also have the same question. Here are some of the benefits that you receive as a member:

- Economic benefits through contract negotiations
- Protection of teacher rights
- Professional development support
- Legislative representation and information
- Legal assistance with job-related issues
- Voice and vote in association decisions
- Expert assistance with evaluations
- Informative publications
- Discounts for association sponsored in-service classes
- \$1 million in liability coverage
- Legal assistance and/or discounts for legal services for personal matters
- Insurance programs (life, vehicle, homeowner's, etc.)
- Knowing that you are part of a professional organization that supports and works for children and public education



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VEA office

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Pre-retirement seminar

Whether you are one, three, five, or even 10 years from retiring, it's not too early to begin planning for your retirement. Again this year, VEA will host two pre-retirement workshop opportunities: October 14-15 and March 9-10.

The workshops, which are put on by WEA-Retired, run from 6:00-9:00 p.m. on Friday and from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday. The fee is \$30 for WEA members, \$20 for a spouse, and \$20 for WEA pre-retired members. The fee covers all materials, a snack on Friday evening, and a continental breakfast and lunch on Saturday.

Space is limited. Call the VEA office or [e-mail Bonnie Larson](mailto:Bonnie.Larson@vea.org) for a registration form. The form may also be downloaded from the [VEA website](http://www.vea.org). Registration is on a first-paid basis.



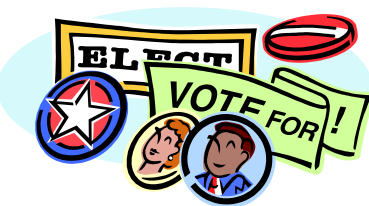
National Hispanic Heritage month

September 15-October 15 is National Hispanic Heritage month.

San Miguel de Gualdape was the first European settlement in North America. It was founded in Georgia in 1526, 81 years before Jamestown. St. Augustine, Florida, was founded in 1565 and is the oldest city in the United States. Hispanic Americans have been making contributions to life in the U.S. ever since.

Celebrate National Hispanic Heritage month with lessons, activities, videos, and more. Go to the [NEA website](http://www.nea.org) to find these resources.

Are you registered to vote?



Election day is November 8, but ballots will be mailed to registered voters on October 19. In addition to other ballot items, if you reside within the Vancouver School District boundaries, you will be voting for the two open school board seats. Go to the [VEA website](http://www.vea.org) for information about the VEA-endorsed candidates.

Other than the school board election, what's on the ballot? [Click here to see a sample ballot.](#)

In general, you should be registered and/or update your voter information (such as an address change) at least 29 days prior to the election. It's easy to do. Just go to the [Clark County elections website](http://www.clarkcountyelections.com) and follow the easy directions.

Please do this no later than October 8.

Urgent! Know your Weingarten rights

If you believe that discipline or other adverse consequences may result from what you say in a meeting with a supervisor, you have the right to request that a union representative attend the meeting with you.

The union representative (usually your building rep) will listen and take notes to confirm the accuracy of any statements. Protect yourself by asking to know the purpose of the meeting before meeting with any administrator.

If you determine that discipline may occur as a result of the meeting, send the administrator an e-mail request to have a representative with you. This will provide a paper trail.

Any statement you make can be used against you. You are not insubordinate to refuse to meet without representation. This goes for written statements as well.

Please note that management is **not** required to inform you of your Weingarten right. It is the your responsibility to know and request your rights.

Contract ratification vote

Electronic ballots to accept or reject the recently bargained contract will be online soon. The VEA Executive Board recommends this ratification.



An all-member meeting was held on September 13 to explain the changes. Information about the negotiated changes is on the [VEA website](#).

Join PTSA

Show your support for PTSA by joining your local school unit. PTSA provides assistance, equipment, service, and programs that make our schools a better place to learn and work. VEA encourages you to become a member of this outstanding organization.

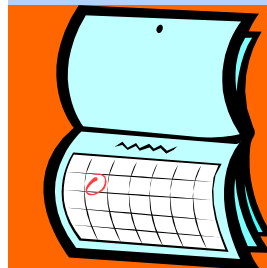
Have you changed your name or address?

If you moved, have a new phone number, a different e-mail address, or changed your name over the summer, please take a moment to [notify us](#). We try to keep our membership system as up to date as possible, and we want you to be assured of receiving the NEA, WEA, and VEA publications on a timely basis.

Transfer your sick leave

If you're changing districts within the state of Washington, did you know that you can transfer all your sick leave to your new district? However, you are responsible for notifying the district within 30 days of initial employment. The transfer isn't done automatically.

Calendar items



September 20
VEA social
Brick House

September 26
VEA committees

October 4
Rep Council
5:00, Gaiser

October 10
Executive Board
5:00, VEA office

October 14-15
Pre-retirement
seminar

October 18
VEA social

October 24
VEA committees

November 1
Rep Council
5:00, Gaiser

November 7
Executive Board
5:00, VEA office

November 11
Veterans Day

November 15
VEA social

November 23-25
Thanksgiving
break

Do you know your building rep? 12 ways your building rep can help you

Building/unit reps are vital communication links between the membership and VEA. They attend monthly rep council meetings, provide representational feedback between the association and the membership, facilitate elections, and much more.

Your rep is your first line of communication if you have questions or concerns related to your contract and to your work situation. Your rep learns about state and local issues, makes decisions regarding VEA's budget, helps set the direction in which the association will go, shares your issues and concerns, and reports back to you. Your rep works to protect your rights under the contract, advocates on your behalf, assists you in resolving conflicts, answers your questions, and gives you support.

Your building rep is a great resource. He/she can:

1. Keep you apprised of the educational issues that are being discussed and implemented in Olympia and Washington, D.C.
2. Help you identify the difference between sick leave and emergency leave.
3. Tell you how many kinds of leaves there are and how to use them.
4. Answer questions about planning time, duty-free lunch time, and on-site job time.
5. Help you understand how personal leave accrues, when you can use it, how to get approval, and when it is cashed out for pay.
6. Explain when you will receive your TRI payments.
7. Explain how to apply and get professional development money, how much you have allotted to you, how you can carry over two years of professional development, and when you can pay yourself with professional development money.
8. Clarify how the Bauer Bill works to exclude disruptive students from your classroom.
9. Inform you about changes that have occurred in the contract during bargaining.
10. Explain how to know if you qualify for class size overload relief, how to get it, and your options to use it.
11. Help with supplemental contracts.
12. And last but not least, tell you what it means to be a member of your Site Based Leadership Team, otherwise known as SBLT.



Building reps are listed on the [VEA website](#) under the "About Us" tab. The list will be updated as the year progresses.

Do you have a building rep?

Now is the time to elect new VEA building reps. Each building is entitled to one rep for every 15 members (or major fraction thereof). Once your reps are elected, please notify [Bonnie Larson](#) at the VEA office as soon as possible so they can be added to the appropriate lists.
