

Social Justice Committee Agenda

Date: Tuesday, Feb. 18, 25 – 3:30 PM – 4:45pm

Present: Tara McKinley, Elliot Fox Povey, Jessica Barker, Amber Grant

1. Welcome and check in – Be cognisant of member's mental health.
2. Items to discuss:
 - a. Online and regional groups we should be aware of in the Cowichan Valley – Jessica
 - b. Staff sharing emails outside of the district, how to get a strong message out from the union about that. Results from conversation with Kevin at school level. - Jessica + group
 - c. Making connections with other SJ union groups. Teaming up and what we want to support/put our time into. - Jessica has Nanaimo contact, anyone else?
 - d. Staff surveys from admin, should we be taking these, is it confidential, what are they really asking us and why? -TAG (the one from Colleen)
 - e. Continue conversation about supporting queer staff. – Ell
 - f. Postponed Think Tank session - Amber
 - g. AOB

3. Adjournment

Social Justice Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2025

Time: 3:30 PM – 4:45 PM

Attendees: Tara McKinley, Elliot Fox Povey, Jessica Barker, Amber Grant

1. Welcome and Check-In

- Members shared support and solidarity with one another.

2. Agenda Discussions

a. Concerns Regarding the "Westward Independent"

Jessica Barker provided insights into the "Westward Independent" and raised concerns about the deliberate spread of misinformation and harmful rhetoric by organized groups, both online and in print. This led to a discussion on the publication of an internal school email regarding Grade 9 vaccinations.

b. Internal Email Breach

Members unanimously agreed that the sharing of internal emails undermines professionalism, safety, and trust. The email in question was intended only for teaching and support staff, and it had explicitly stated that it should not be shared externally. The article in "Westward Independent" falsely claimed that Island Health was administering vaccinations without parental consent. The committee agreed to monitor the publication for further breaches and supported the idea of having the Union issue a reminder to staff regarding the confidentiality of internal communications. The Social Justice Committee (SJC) will keep Union executives and PVP informed about any developments regarding external groups compromising teachers. Admin at FKSS has been informed and already received an email from an outside agency asking for confirmation on the article (which was ignored).

c. Networking with Other Social Justice Union Groups

Members agreed on the importance of connecting with other Social Justice Committees within the union. As the committee is still in its early stages, time management and prioritization will be key as we develop these connections.

d. Staff Surveys from Administration

Members discussed concerns about staff surveys administered by school and district administration, including their confidentiality, intent, and potential pressure to participate. While the union does not take a definitive stance on whether members should complete these surveys, the committee agreed to remind staff that participation is optional. If any survey questions make members uncomfortable, they have the right to decline. Additionally, concerns were raised about some administrators repeatedly pressuring staff to complete surveys despite their supposed optional nature.

e. Supporting Queer Staff

The committee agreed to engage with self-identifying queer members to better understand their needs and determine how the union can provide improved support. The goal is to develop protocols, staff representative support, and training to better serve marginalized members.

f. BCTF Think Tank Session

Amber Grant's Think Tank session with the BCTF has been postponed. The committee is still seeking artifacts that reflect both positive experiences and areas for growth within the Cowichan Valley and Vancouver Island. The session has been rescheduled for April.

3. Any Other Business (AOB)

a. Social Justice Logos

The committee noted that the Social Justice logos are still missing, and the original files have not been located. It was suggested that the Union Executive reach out to Stuart for a copy of the original file or contact the District Office to inquire about the missing logos. SJC will ask Nic to follow up on this matter.

4. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 PM.

5. Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for March 6, with future meetings set for the first Thursday of each month.