

Occasional Teachers



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Reminders

- ◆ **February 15**— Board Wide P.D. Day—See P.D. Flyer
- ◆ **February 28**—General Meeting and Delegates' Election at Armour Heights Public School
- ◆ **March 10–14**, Inclusive, Spring Break
- ◆ **March 21–24**, Easter Holidays
- ◆ **April 4**—Elementary P.D. Day—See the P.D. and Social Flyers

Snow Days

Occasional Teachers are asked to call their local school to see if they are needed, provided they are able to get there safely.

We are always adding email addresses to the membership data base. If you haven't contacted the local by email, or you have recently changed your email address, please send us a message with your current email.

If you have a TDSB TEL account, please let us know so we can add you to the Occasional Teacher conference.

January, 2008

Volume 10, Issue 2

THE DISPATCH

Are You Interested in a Contract Teaching Position?

We are in a period of declining enrolment across Ontario. There will be far fewer contract teaching positions posted by the TDSB than in previous years. If you are interested in being one of the lucky few who are hired to one of these contract jobs, you need to do everything you can to improve your chances.

This term, our Local will be offering a number of Interviewing Skills / Resume Writing workshops, including one specifically for internationally trained teachers. The resource materials that you can take home and the information provided by a retired administrator with many years experience as a member of the TDSB interview team could help to boost your interview score.

Make an effort to attend the TDSB Hiring Information evening on Tuesday, January 22nd, 2008. You will receive a direct mailing from the Board with all the details. Please note, there is a change in location to the North York Civic Centre Council Chambers—Lower Level at 5100 Yonge Street. You may pick-up some valuable information that evening to help you complete the online application form and be better prepared for an interview.

We are pleased to report that there will finally be a place on the application form for you to include your occasional teaching experience. The TDSB has also made a commitment to allow Occasional Teachers, **currently** on the Eligible-to-Hire List, to remain on the list for a second year, without having to go through the interview process again. However, you must complete the application process to confirm that you are still interested. Full details will be provided in hard copy at the Hiring Information evening.

One way to improve your application is to have current references from TDSB administrators. However, you need to be certain that the administrator has confidence in you. Ask if they are comfortable in writing this evaluation. Do they have any concerns that you need to address first? There is no value to an evaluation that is less than positive. To make the job easier for the administrator, the TDSB in consultation with the Local has approved an evaluation form designed for occasional teachers. These forms are available on our website at www.etfo-torots.org

GENERAL MEETING **Thursday, February 28, 2008** **Armour Heights P.S.**

5:00 p.m.—7:30 p.m.

148 Wilson Avenue

Light Dinner from 4:30 p.m.

(See enclosed flyer for details)

It's All in How You Say It!

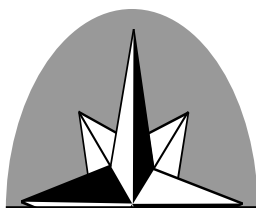


We have been hearing from Occasional Teachers that they are being cautioned about “raising their voice” in the classroom. There seems to be a shift in acceptable teacher practices or behaviour. Teachers are being told that they are not to “yell” at their students. The concern is about the emotional stress and psychological harm to the students. (If only they were as concerned with Occasional Teachers’ stress and psychological harm due to student behaviour!) Members are advised to “remove the anger or frustration” from their tone of voice when speaking to students.

We have all heard the teacher next door address their students at a volume that could cause hearing loss and with a tone that leaves no doubt about their frustrations. However, this teacher isn’t a stranger to the students or their parents, and they may be forgiven. Unfortunately, this isn’t always the case for the Occasional Teacher. While it may seem like a double standard, it’s better to play it safe and not allow yourself to get emotionally engaged. Keep your cool and ask yourself, is this moment worth putting my career at risk?

Here are some tips from Connie Zoet, ETFO Workshop Presenter - “Occasional Teacher Classroom Management”.

- ◆ When you arrive at the start of the day, ask the Principal or VP if there are students in the class that have behavioural concerns and how best to handle them, or how the office will be able to assist you. If the class is known to be difficult, the administration may be helpful. Get help before you get too upset.
- ◆ Step back from situations. If you feel you are getting annoyed and angry with a student, tell them you will speak to them later. Recognize and pay attention to your own reactions - take a deep breath - pause - anything to stop you from going "over the top" and yelling.
- ◆ Speak to a neighbouring teacher - they know if the class is challenging. Ask if they will take a student who is being particularly difficult for a little while. Most will help out.
- ◆ Remember, the end of the day will come.



Pay Stub

Improvement

The display of
“Occ Days Elem Yr” at
the bottom of your
paystub was rectified
on Dec. 27, 2007 and
now records your
correct accumulated
days from
Sept. 2007.

Understanding your Pay Stub

Unfortunately some of our members continue to experience payroll difficulties with the TDSB. Here are some tips to follow when trying to understand your pay stub.

- ◆ Accurately track the days you’ve worked and know your QECO rating and experience level.
- ◆ Keep all your past paystubs. Sometimes you will need to compare the total received over many pay periods to determine the accuracy of a particular pay. Unfortunately the TDSB does not always accurately itemize backdated debits or credits (missed days or overpayments).
- ◆ Have an approximate idea of what your gross pay should be. If one pay seems too high or too low it might be an adjustment from a previous pay. Again, we stress the importance of tracking and keeping all your pay stubs.
- ◆ Compare your Year to Date T4 information, in the bottom right corner of each pay, with information from previous pays.
- ◆ Your payroll assistance officer is listed on page 4 of your Occasional Teacher’s pocket calendar. They should be able to explain any irregularities in your pay information.
- ◆ Unless you are a retired teacher, make sure that pension contributions are being deducted.
- ◆ If problems persist, contact our office and explain the problem as clearly as possible. If necessary, we will advocate on your behalf.

The Dispatch Help Desk

The Help Desk is open and available to answer your questions during the evening call-out period. We’re told the Help Desk has fewer calls during the evening. Why not take advantage of this quiet time to have your questions answered. Please remember, the Help Desk does not dispatch jobs.



Welcome New Executive Members

We are delighted to announce that we now have four new executive members. Heather Cunningham, Scott Maudsley, Iris Sopinka and Mourace Scott were elected at our Fall General Meeting. We would like to thank all of the candidates who ran for election.

Executive members represent the diversity, interests, and concerns of Occasional Teachers. They are your voice at the Local’s monthly executive meetings.

Knowing and Honouring Your Collective Agreement

How important are working conditions to you? Most members would respond that their working conditions are very important. Our collective agreement 28.2.1. states: “an Occasional Teacher shall not be assigned any supervisory duty prior to the commencement of class on the first morning of an assignment...”

This was a right earned through our collective bargaining process. When members fail to honour this clause, it results in a precedent that makes it difficult for every other Occasional Teacher who works in that school. Please consider members who need this time to prepare for a day of teaching in an unfamiliar environment. Your actions are doing a disservice to them. Under our collective agreement, our members will do ‘a comparable supervisory duty’ so there is no intent not to fulfill the duties the permanent teacher would do.

This article of the collective agreement may not be important to you personally but we bargain collectively to strengthen our organization and make gains for all members. This article is a right earned through bargaining just like the right to the timetable of the teacher we are replacing, or our wage increases. Would you be happy if members failed to honour these gains, creating precedents that could impact your working conditions negatively?

Know your collective agreement and honour it. Politely and professionally let school administrators know about the ‘no first duty of the day’. They are professionals and should understand that Occasional Teachers need to use this time to adequately prepare for their teaching assignment and familiarize themselves with the classroom. If they insist you do the duty, inform the administrator that you are doing the duty “under protest” and call us.

Nominations for 2008 –2009 Local Executive

Once again, it is time for us to seek nominations from those members interested in serving on next year’s Local Executive. Nomination forms are enclosed with this newsletter. Please read over the description of each Executive position and ensure that both the person nominated and the nominator are eligible to submit the nomination form.

The nomination form must be sent directly to the Election Officer, by **Canada Post only** and must be received by the deadline on the nomination form. The Election Officer will confirm receipt of the form by email or phone. Each candidate has the opportunity to include, with the nomination form, a candidate profile of up to 200 words. These profiles will be included with the mail-in ballot sent to each member.

Eligible candidates will be introduced to the membership attending the General Meeting on February 28, 2008.

Election of Delegates to ETFO Provincial Annual Meeting



The Annual Meeting of the Elementary Teachers’ Federation will be held at the Westin Harbour Castle Hotel from August 11 to 14, 2008. If you have ever wondered what happens at this event, please refer to the article written by Third V.P. Rob Fulford in the Fall Newsletter available on our website.

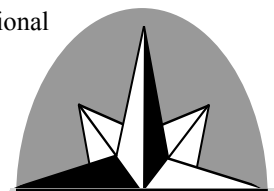
We are the largest Occasional Teacher Local in the Province. Because of our increased size, we are now allowed 13 delegate positions at the Annual Meeting. Our constitution guarantees delegate status for both the Local President and First Vice-President.

If you are interested in running for one of the 11 open delegate positions, please advise our office no later than 4:00 p.m. Friday, February 15, 2008. Your name will be printed on a ballot and voting will take place at the February General Meeting. Before the vote, each delegate will have the opportunity to address the members for up to two minutes.

Local Motions to the ETFO Provincial Annual Meeting

The ETFO Annual Meeting provides every local the opportunity to bring forward motions to influence the direction, goals and fiscal commitments of our Provincial body for the next year. Motions are brought forward and debated on the floor to test the language and the intention of the motion.

The first step in the process, requires that any motion to the Annual Meeting be approved by the Local’s membership at a general meeting. If you have a motion you would like to bring forward, please submit it in writing to the Local by 4:00 p.m. Friday, February 15, 2008.



Letter of Intent

If you are currently in an LTO and waiting for a QECO rating, you must send in a “Letter of Intent” before the end of your LTO, stating that you have made the request. This letter has to be on file prior to the end of your LTO for you to receive your proper category pay should the LTO end before QECO provides your new rating.

A form letter is available on the Board’s Website, under LTO Job Postings.

Federation Day, Friday February 15, 2008

Each year, the Board and the Elementary Teachers of Toronto (our contract teacher colleagues) provide a joint Federation Day as part of their collective agreement. Occasional Teachers who are in LTO positions on this day are expected to participate in the same professional development as the rest of the teaching staff at their school. ETT members will register for their workshop selection online through ETT's website. Long Term Occasional Teachers can only register by fax. Look for registration information provided in either ETT staffroom postings, on the public portion of their website at: www.ett.on.ca or ask the school's ETT steward for information.

Be sure to take a look at the enclosed Professional Development flyer for all the great workshops being offered by our Local for that day and the rest of the winter term.

Ontario College of Teachers Fees—2008

Annual fees are due to the College by April 15, 2008. Occasional Teachers are responsible for paying their fees directly. There is no payroll deduction option. If you have recently moved, contact the College to provide your new mailing address. If you do not pay your fees by the deadline, the Board will remove you from the list. Any days worked after April 15th will be paid at the "emergency person" rate.



Family Day—the third Monday of February

One of the first acts of the returning Liberal Provincial Government was to pass a new statutory holiday. While everyone enjoys a day with their family, there are issues with a school year that has been reduced to 193 days. At the time of writing, ETFO Provincial is in meetings with the Ministry of Education to ensure that LTO's are treated equitably.

We also believe that the Statutory Holiday Pay rate for daily Occasional Teachers would have to be changed in 2008 to reflect the addition of another statutory holiday. We are awaiting clarification.

Message from your President:

Dear Colleagues,

We continue to vigilantly enforce our collective agreement through the grievance process. But we can only do this if you are prepared to stand up for your bargained rights.

This past term, a member called to report that she had been told to cover another class during her prep time. The member informed the V.P. that this was a violation of her Collective Agreement and that she was entitled to the prep time of the teacher she was replacing. Politely, she made it clear that she was not "volunteering" her time. She then went to the classroom next door for the period as instructed by the administration, and called the local before the end of the day. We asked the member to make a photocopy of the teacher's day plan and a print-out of her assignment from SFE. She sent these, along with her notes of the conversation she had with the administrator, to our office.

The Local filed a grievance on her behalf. We are unable to discuss the details of the agreement but we were able to settle the grievance to the satisfaction of the member and the local.

If this happens to you, do exactly as this member did. We will file a grievance on your behalf.

Yours in Federation,

Marion

ETFO - Toronto Occasional Teachers

President	Marion Mutton
First Vice-President	Donna Chapman
Second Vice-President	Elaine Salisbury
Third Vice-President	Rob Fulford
Treasurer	Marsha Rayman
Secretary	Susan Monahan
Executive at Large:	
Judy Anderson	Heather Cunningham
Greg Deitcher	Scott Maudsley
Iris Sopinka	Mourace Scott
ETT Liaison:	
Peter Brickwood	Bonnie Gross

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