

OCCASIONAL TEACHERS' BARGAINING UNIT

OSSTF DISTRICT 17 SIMCOE

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FALL NEWSLETTER

2024

2024/2025 OTBU EXECUTIVE

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GR: Grievance Officer **CN:** Chief Negotiator **CO:** Communications Officer **CPAC:** Communications & Political Action

EQ: Equity Officer **HR:** Human Rights **H&S:** Health & Safety Officer **S:** Recording Secretary

ES: Education Services Rep **SW:** Status of Women **TT:** Table Team - Negotiations



Dear Member.

2023/2024 saw a return to normal levels of work in both casual day assignments (daily) and LTO work. Currently LTO work is up a bit from last year in September and should continue at normal levels throughout the year. Casual work was down 8% in September, but October has picked up dramatically and with the cold weather coming soon, work should maintain good levels regarding offered assignments. Unfilled jobs are insignificant at this point. If you have a concern/issue, get ahold of us at any time (letterhead data). We have had a sizeable increase in wages across the board with the rescinding of Bill 124 in the courts and recent negotiations.

Please read this newsletter over! There is critical info within, and it is your **bank account/career** to which these items apply.

ATTENTION – IMPORTANT!

Below are a few of the more important items which you should be acutely aware of. Some of these things can impact you staying on the Board's Supply List!

- **WORK COMMITMENT - Article 12.03 (a):** The Board's commitment language is set at having to teach **10** assignments in SEM I and **15** assignments in SEM II. Remember, **half day assignments** count as a full commitment day.
- **LEAVES - Article 12.3 (d/e):** Timelines are fairly strict with regards to leaves. Personal leaves commencing in September have to be into the Board by **August 1st** and **January 1st** for Semester II leaves. **Medical leaves**, however, are very different but get them into HR as soon as possible once a situation arises.
- **RETIREEES (ACTIVE):** Remember that the Board reports the fraction of days worked. For example, if you work 2 periods in an LTO it will be reported to the Pension Board as a .66. A 2-

period daily supply will be reported as a .50. It has a direct impact on your re-employment days. The 50-day re-employment rule is still in effect this year and it doesn't look like it will be increased, so as a result the **95-day extension does not apply this year!**

- **PERSONAL DAYS:** Unfortunately, we have had a lot of members asking about taking a personal day. The problem is, we don't have that availability as it's not in our contract. We did try and negotiate it in, but the Board put up strong resistance against it, sorry.
 - **PREP PERIODS:** We've had issues over the past few years regarding the understanding of prep period commitments. The new language in our Collective Agreement now says once you have accepted a daily job from EasyConnect your obligation is to stay in the school during an assigned prep period in case of emergencies at the school. If you need to leave the school during a prep period, **simply ask for permission at the office** and provide your cell number to office staff.
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BENEFITS FOR LTOs

Benefits for LTOs have been available for the past few years through OTIP. Once the Board knows your employment status, they get in touch with OTIP, and they then will send out an email to you to initiate the plan. You have to be locked into a 90+ day assignment (LTO) to qualify.

CERTIFICATION

(The following section is edited from the former OSSTF Certification Department as QECO now does certification)

Everyone should have a Certification Rating Statement. This is the document that ensures you receive proper grid pay for LTO teaching assignments. Evaluations are now done by QECO, including all supply teachers. If you do not have a CRS, go to the QECO website or call them to see where you are at with respect to your grid level. Having a CRS in hand means that you will receive correct grid pay from the first day of an LTO position.

Your goal should be to get to a Group 4 placement as quickly and as inexpensively as possible. QECO criteria changes occasionally, and you may be higher up the scale than you think. Many members will find that these beneficial rule changes will allow for Group increases without any further course work. If you are not at Group 4 level and have not had a re-evaluation of your existing file, then you could well be missing out on the opportunity for commensurate salary that will come with a rating change. If you haven't been re-evaluated in a few years, check out QECO soon. Also, plan to complete the needed courses as soon as possible. It is well worth the effort and expense.

Supplemental: Several years ago, teachers lost almost **\$20 million** dollars in remuneration because they didn't heed deadlines or forgot to update their certification status with OSSTF, and subsequently QECO, & the Board. Any related grid placement documents must be hard copies on file at the Board office (emails are fine). Any AQs (Additional Qualifications) you have taken can obviously influence ratings. Don't forget about Contract language regarding experiential work compensation. The Board has made it easier to apply for this and have cleaned up the language involved, especially for tech teachers. If you have previously worked in a directly related field of employment or have additional education, check articles 16:01 and 16:02 in the Collective Agreement regarding this experiential allowance.

Category change *(from the Board):* For teachers that qualify for or will qualify for a change in category based on additional qualifications (AQs for example) or degrees, please ensure the following guidelines are met:

1. Go online to the staff website, under **"Human Resources"** and complete the online **Intent to Change Salary Category** form indicating the date that the course was or will be completed. This is to be submitted by **November 30, 2024**.
2. Submit an updated copy of the **QECO** Rating Statement. It is the responsibility of the teacher to ensure that this form is submitted to HR by June 30, 2025.

*Updated QECO Rating Statements should be emailed to **HR**.



COMMUNICATION

Our membership is highly transitory and many of you do not have permanent work sites; therefore, communication with our members is the most crucial element in all that we do. The best way we have found is by direct email and, to that end, we only have about 60% of your personal email addresses. We **do not** use SCDSB email/servers for union purposes. Please forward your personal email or get a colleague to forward it to Communications Officers Deanna Nelson or Andrew Tam at d17otbu@gmail.com.

COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

District Committees

Jeff Parton	Human Rights, CPAC, Health & Safety alternate, Status of Women
Paul Cudney	SCDSB Health & Safety Officer
Deanna Nelson	Status of Women (District Chairperson)
Marcia D'Antimo	Status of Women
Matthew Boyd	CPAC (District Chairperson)
Henry Elgrichi	Equity Officer
Andrew Tam	Educational Services Rep

CONTRACT

(Collective Agreement)

With respect to our current contract (CA), is the maintenance of that binding agreement. We do this by ensuring that our employer follows the **collective agreement's** legal intent and interpretation. If you know of any violation in any area, please let us know. An example would be the assigning of extra duties above the actual teacher's timetable, such as extra APAs (e.g.: hall duty) or flagrant pay discrepancies. Contact any of us (letterhead) by email or text so I/we have a record of any problems associated with "contract maintenance."

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EasyConnect/ATE

The best web page for EasyConnect is <https://scdsb.simplification.com>. The number of supply teachers currently on SCDSB's EasyConnect's Main List is 476. To ensure your **daily** pay is correct we would advise people to record their job number, assignment date, location, and the teacher you are replacing. A multitude of data can be accessed within **EasyConnect** such as days taught regarding pension restrictions and hours associated with Employment Insurance.

An on-going systemic issue of course is unfilled jobs. The Board and contract teachers obviously have warranted concerns when jobs are not filled, plus members obviously miss out on a job opportunity. If you know you're not available on a particular day/s, please sign out of EasyConnect (under Calendar).

FACEBOOK

Don't forget that we have a dedicated Facebook page for **D17 Occasionals** within Simcoe County. To join us, search **d17 otbu ossff** and ask to join. Once connected you'll have access to all our posts and current communications regarding Secondary OTs.

HIRING PRACTICES

Seniority hiring of OTs into LTOs (Regulation 274) was massively gutted by the Ontario Government three (4) years ago. It had been in place for 9 years and hiring is now very different than before. Board hiring policies are in place now and seniority-based hiring is now barely considered. Other important criteria are now being considered, such as life experience, community work/activism, equity, diversity, spoken languages, and so on. The other thing we can say is that Boards are to be legally cognizant regarding **nepotism and favouritism** in hiring. Policies regarding these points are very focused on getting these parameters correct.

NEW MEMBERS

New members should pay critical attention to the Power Point presentation given to you by the Board when you were hired. There is important info on it to help you navigate the supply experience. Also, it is critical you contact **QECO** right away upon graduation to establish your grid/group rating (check **Certification**). Without this info on file with the Board you will only be paid at the lowest category of pay for an LTO assignment and retro pay is tricky with regards to timelines.

OTIP LOYALTY PROGRAMME

We were approached 7 years ago by the Ontario Teachers' Insurance Plan (OTIP) to support them through what's known as a **Loyalty Programme**. By supporting them through advertising/marketing this teacher-owned insurance company we would be helping get the word out about their services. They are wholly owned by all the Teacher/Support Staff unions in Ontario. Because we support them, they in turn provide a stipend to us that we use locally for members, such as PD funds, charity donations, or overall assistance. You will see the use of their logos, banners, footers, and ads on our many communiques etc. They are highly competitive for members so we would, of course, highly recommend checking them out.



Insurance built for all members of the education community



Back to school bonus offer.

Get a quote in September or October
and be entered to win **\$1,000 cash!**
(over)

Get a **quote online** or call **1-866-206-7523** and mention this offer.

Why OTIP?

- Save up to 25% on car insurance.
- Save up to 50% on home insurance when you insure both your car and home with OTIP.*
- Deal with an insurance brokerage who understands your unique needs and is dedicated to the education community.

* Restrictions apply. See details.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PD funds are available again this year from our coffers. If you have something that is PD based, such as an Additional Qualification, download the form from our web site www.d17otbu.ca, scan it back to us, and we will then take it to our Executive for consideration, approval, and subsequent reimbursement (\$300 maximum). I believe we have only turned down one request in the past 7 years.

REMUNERATION

Extra pay for an additional period taught is not in place yet, usually that happens in the spring when there is a plethora of unfilled jobs. However, what I can say is that our current per diem rate of pay is now \$279.30, a damm nice increase.

SICK DAYS

A full time LTO (3 periods in a Semester) gets 5.5 general use sick days, plus 5 supplemental days (awarded for bereavement, serious accidents, graduations (3 days), special illnesses (2 days), and jury duty (depending on the case of course). If you go beyond 5.5 days and are still in need of sick days, then one can use the Short-Term Disability portion (**STD**) of sick days under the previous Government's Bill 115 (2012). You will receive 90% of your pay for 60 days based on, again, a full Semester. Medical notes have to be supplied to the Board, however, by a professional.

WEB SITE

Our OTBU web site is located at www.d17otbu.ca. Please take time to check it out, as there is a lot of pertinent information there and contains such items as: Notices of meetings, our Constitution, our Collective Agreement (*Contract*), blogs, posts, emergency sheets (*a download*), new & archived newsletters, PD fund forms (*a download*), and links to other Bargaining Units within District 17.

Yours in camaraderie,

Jeff Parton

President D17 OTBU (OSSTF)
Occasional Teachers' Bargaining Unit

