

OCCASIONAL TEACHERS' BARGAINING UNIT

OSSTF DISTRICT 17 SIMCOE

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SPRING (AGM) NEWSLETTER

AGM Edition

April 22' 2024

2023/2024 OTBU EXECUTIVE

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GR: Grievance Officer **CN:** Chief Negotiator **CO:** Communications Officer **CPAC:** Communications & Political Action **HR:** Human Rights **H&S:** Health & Safety Officer **RS:** Recording Secretary
SW: Status of Women **TT:** Table Team - Negotiations



Dear Member.

2023/2024 has seen a return to normal levels of work. Casual day assignments (daily) are up again this school year over last year. The problem with plenty of offered assignments is that more than a normal amount are going unfilled for a multitude of reasons. Unfilled jobs are not just a SCDSB problem, the rest of the province is also suffering tremendous supply teacher shortages. LTOs are holding their own with several in place right now. April, May, and June are the busiest months for supply teaching, so buckle up gang.

PLEASE NOTE: On April 2nd we ratified our new local CA (Collective Agreement/Contract – a 4% participation rate at the meeting) and to that end some things have changed within the language of this newsletter. We don't have an exact timeline on when the changes will take effect due to the Central Agreement currently being in mutual voluntary arbitration. I will indicate what the changes will be throughout this newsletter.

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

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This year's **AGM** will be held **in person** at our new Union office location at 630 Huronia Road (corner of Mapleview)- Unit 4, in the same office as the Simcoe County Elementary Occasional Teachers (SCEOT). It will be held on **Thursday May 16** starting at **4:00pm** sharp. Amylee Patterson (Provincial Constitutional & Parliament Committee member) will be chairing this year with Provincial delegates in attendance to answer questions. Several items will be discussed as always plus our Budget will be presented by Treasurer Marcia D'Antimo. Vacancies such as next year's AMPA positions (delegate and alternate) will be chosen. After our meeting we will be going to the **Fred (Red) Lobster** on Bayfield Street for our traditional all-inclusive AGM supper. Please RSVP Office Assistant Mary Jean at 705-726-1722. Please note that this year's event, like past dinners is **capped at 50 people/members** for attendance at the restaurant.

ATTENTION – IMPORTANT!

Below are a few of the more important items of which you should be acutely aware of. Some of these things can impact on 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 14 assignments in SEM II (**15 in the new contract**). Remember, **half day assignments** count as a full day commitment.
- **LEAVES - Article 12.3 (d/e):** Timelines are strict with regards to traditional leaves. Personal leaves commencing in September have to be into the Board by June 1 (new language: **August 1st** and for Semester II leaves, January 1st is the cut off date. Medical leaves are obviously different but get them in to HR as soon as possible once you know something.
- **SUPERVISION DUTIES (APAs - Additional Professional Assignments):** Remember that assigned APAs do not automatically disappear if you take on the new emergency 4th period (i.e.: a hall duty, caf duty etc.). Most administrators do take them away, but it is not contractual, it's just strictly out of kindness. (the new **Letter of Agreement** to work an extra period is now in effect).
- **RETIREEES:** Remember that with the extra periods being offered now, they will be reported to the Pension Board as an extra .33 of a day worked, in otherwords, it will impact your re-employment days. If you worked a .33 every time you went in this year the rule would drop you down to only 39 days instead of the 50-day re-employment rule. Also remember the rule limits retirees to 50 days only and that the **95-day extension does not apply this year**.
- **PREP PERIODS:** We've had issues over the past few years regarding the understanding of prep period commitments. 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 within the school cropping up. This is now entrenched in the new CA. If you do need to leave the school grounds, **ask for permission at the office** but please provide your cell number.

BENEFITS FOR LTOs

As you are no doubt aware, benefits for LTOs are available. Once the Board knows your employment status, they get in touch with OTIP, and they then 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) 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 was to be submitted by November 30, 2023.
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, 2024.

*Updated QECO Rating Statements can 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 critical element in all that we do. The best way we have found is by direct email and, to that end, we have less than 50% of your personal email addresses. Please forward your personal email or get a colleague to forward it to Communications Officer Deanna Nelson at d17otbu@gmail.com.

COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

District Committees

Jeff Parton	Human Rights, CPAC, Health & Safety (alternate), Status of Women
Paul Cudney	Health & Safety Officer (SCDSB level)
Deanna Nelson	Status of Women (District Chairperson)
Marcia D'Antimo	Status of Women
Matthew Boyd	CPAC

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 violations 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 or flagrant pay discrepancies. Contact me (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 web page for EasyConnect is <https://scdsb.simplication.com>. The number of supply teachers currently on SCDSB's EasyConnect's Main List is 460. 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 on the **EasyConnect** web site such as days taught regarding pension restrictions or Employment Insurance hours.

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 for a particular time period, please sign out of EasyConnect (under the heading: Calendar).



FACEBOOK

Don't forget that we have a dedicated Facebook page for **D17 Occasionals**. 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 here in Simcoe County.

HIRING PRACTICES

Seniority hiring of OTs into LTOs (Regulation 274) was massively gutted by the Ontario Government three (3) 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 things are now being considered, such as life experience, community work, equity, diversity, languages spoken, etc. The one thing we can also say is that Boards are to be legally cognizant regarding nepotism & favouritism in new hiring policies and to this point are very focused on getting these criteria correct.

NEGOTIATIONS

Negotiations are still taking place at the Central Table with what's called mutually focused voluntary arbitration. Your local agreement was ratified April 2nd and components will be put in place soon, but it depends somewhat on the Central arbitration. A previous arbitration was won by us gives a 7.41% retroactive increase to deal with the punitive Bill #124. We are to be paid retroactively on May 31st.

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's imperative you contact **QECO** right away upon graduation to establish your grid/group rating (found under **Certification**). Without this info on file with the Board you will only be paid at the lowest category of pay for an LTO and retro pay is tricky with regards to our contract.

OTIP LOYALTY PROGRAMME

We were approached 6 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 so we would, of course, highly recommend checking them out.



After a cold winter, springtime is a welcome change. But with the longer days and warmer weather comes new challenges. The potential for flooding increases as the snow melts and heavy rain falls. Canadians are experiencing more floods than ever before. According to the Government of Canada, flooding has increased 300% since the 1960s. But many homeowners haven't taken the proper steps to protect themselves or their properties. No matter what area you live in, flooding can happen to you. Don't wait for the water – take these proactive steps to minimize your risk of a flood damaging your home.

Read more at www.otip.com/article180. #OTIPUpdate!

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PD funds are still available but getting quite low as we near years end. If you have something that is PD based, such as an AQ, 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 payment (\$300 maximum). I believe we have only turned down one request in the last 6 years.

REMUNERATION

We have again signed a Letter of Agreement (LOA) which allows you to agree to teach a 4th period and be paid \$320 per diem. The only obligation is that you must have completed the 4 emergency periods prior to this arrangement. It has to be an emergency such as an unfilled position. You may be asked to top up your timetable to teach a 4 period. If the person you're filling in for already has a 4th period on call duty imbedded in their daily timetable, then it does not apply as it's not an **emergency**. The current rate of pay is \$239.44 and if you do the extra emergency period (4 out of 4) the daily rate of pay jumps to \$319.44.

When there are unfilled absences in a school, we (the Board) have agreed to the following:

1. Where there are occasional teachers (OT) who are not teaching 3 periods in a given day, a principal will first attempt to fill an unfilled teaching period by topping up the timetable with an OT, increasing their pay from 0.5 to 1.0, with mutual agreement of the OT;
2. Where unfilled teaching periods remain, a principal may assign an OT who is teaching 3 periods as an additional teacher of record (ATR);
3. An OT who is assigned work as an ATR shall be responsible for teaching 4 periods including any scheduled and emergency APAs (supervision); and,
4. An OT who is working as an ATR and is teaching 4 periods shall be paid 1.33 FTE of their normal salary.

SICK DAYS

A full time LTO (3 periods during a full 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. Proof has to be given to the Board, however, by a medical professional.

TIPS

In house/school Chromebooks do not have HDMI slots. Solution: buy a \$15 USB adapter that gives you extra USB ports and an HDMI plug in slot. These are great for high tech lesson plans.

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, the current Collective Agreement (*Contract*), posts, emergency sheets (*a download*), blogs, archived newsletters, PD fund forms (*a download*), and links to other Bargaining Units within District 17.

Yours in camaraderie,

Jeff Parton

President D 17 - OTBU
Occasional Teachers' Bargaining Unit

