

OCCASIONAL TEACHERS' BARGAINING UNIT

OSSTF DISTRICT 17

SIMCOE COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Units 6/7 - 51 King Street Barrie 705-726-1722 OTBU Web site: www.d17otbu.ca

FALL NEWSLETTER

October 2019



2019/2020 EXECUTIVE

Jeff Parton	(President)	705-428-3537	jeff.parton@d17.osstf.ca
Chris Petersen	(1 st VP)	416-262-5994	d17otbu@gmail.com
Matthew Boyd	(2 nd VP)	416-729-5744	mboyd84@hotmail.com
Paul Cudney	(3 rd VP)	705-445-1488	pcudney@hotmail.com
Ben Andrews	(Chief Neg/Gr.O)	705-737-2729	benjaminandrews@mac.com
Marcia D'Antimo	(Treasurer.)	705-436-4835	marciadantimo@sympatico.ca
Deanna Nelson	(Sec. /CBC)	705-322-6360	deanna.nelson@d17.osstf.ca

Dear Member;

Welcome back to the supply teaching game folks be it Casual or Long-term. Jobs were marginally down last year but we had very few queries regarding a lack of work. There are various reasons for this and they are explained fully under the **"Jobs"** section. **EasyConnect/Apply to Education** is working ok, but we are still demanding improvements. **Please** read this newsletter over thoroughly; there are some very important issues concerning you and Occasional teaching! **Most importantly**, some items are related directly to **remuneration! (\$)**



ADVERTISEMENTS

We have had different businesses advertise in our newsletters over the years, the biggest being **OTIP** and a few of our Executive members with sideline businesses. If anyone would like to place an ad in our newsletters, please contact us and we will provide costing, content, time-lines etc., we're very reasonable.

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS

Alt schools start and end times are now essentially standardized. Their doors open at 8:30 a.m. and the day ends at approximately 2:20 p.m. The last period of the day, which usually starts at 1:10pm, is actually your lunch period, so I would highly suggest you take in some sustenance (but a good idea is to leave the peanut ones at home) to get you through the day.

APPLY TO EDUCATION

EasyConnect call-out/email/text system.

You have had countless info emails from us and the Board over the last 2 years regarding EasyConnect, but unfortunately, I will be repetitive here and highlight only important items: *(over)*

- The EasyConnect system uses the pound (#) key not the Star * key for logging in and accepting assignments. The symbol * will initiate an immediate hang-up.
- EasyConnect begins call outs 14 days prior to the date of an assignment no matter when the job is posted.
- Requests are known as “First Contact” not “requests”.
- You cannot accept an assignment by text yet, although we have asked for it.
- When **requested** for an assignment, it calls you first then parks it in the job **archive** area if you missed the phone call. An email will be sent as usual. It will stay in there until the next call out period (24 hours normally), unless it’s the night before an assignment and then you only have the regular 3 minute acceptance window. **When a request is made, the call goes out almost immediately; therefore, it could happen while in class.** Personally, I would let it ring and grab the email when you’re able (at the teacher’s desk for e.g.).
- One can still not change availability, get requests, or change phone numbers by phone, it is a web based system. Again, we are asking for changes to all or at least some of these egregious issues.
- Temporarily changing your call out number has to be done on their web site or use “call forwarding” if you have that imbedded feature.
- Note: Upon cancelling a job or booking time off, it will ask you for a reason, don’t worry, the Board cannot see these reasons.
- Please watch out for cancelled job alerts in the morning. We have had a few of these over the last few years where a person heads to a job early in the a.m. only to find out the job has been cancelled well over the limits of the contract (75 mins). The cancellation has gone out but our member/s didn’t get the cancellation notice in time due to technical difficulties. If you have a smart phone, be cognizant of this while driving to your assignment (done by email). It’s rare but has occurred with more frequency. We are talking to HR about the situation.
- **Re-read** your manual to re-familiarize yourself with the system.

BENEFITS (OT & LTOs)

You have no doubt heard of the Provincial Benefits plan for most other OSSTF members. Unfortunately, a glitch in its implementation is that if a Bargaining Unit did not previously have negotiated benefits, then that group is not eligible. We are upset about this Executive decision but negotiations are going on as we speak to get OTs into a Provincial plan. We apologize for the unheralded decision to leave out several part time groups.

CERTIFICATION

(The following section is edited from the OSSTF Certification Department and is put in every newsletter because of its relevance to pay)

All teacher members of OSSTF should have a Certification Rating Statement in their possession. This is the document that ensures you receive grid pay for LTO teaching assignments. Evaluations are done by the in-house Certification Dept of OSSTF for all members, including day-to-day supply teachers. If you do not have a CRS you should go to the provincial website at www.osstf.on.ca and follow the Certification "Quick Links" to the applications page. Having a CRS in hand means that you will receive grid pay from the first day of an LTO position with no delay in remuneration.

Your goal should be to get to a Group 4 placement as quickly and as inexpensively as possible. The Certification Dept is always changing & many members will find that these beneficial rule changes will allow for Group increases without any further course work. If you are not at the highest 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 increased salary that will come with a rating change. Send in Certification Application Form #2 and request a review of existing credentials if you believe any of the changes apply to you. If you haven’t been re-evaluated in a few years, send in the form regardless. The Cert Dept of OSSTF is also happy to advise you of the steps required to progress in Group advancement. Plan to complete the needed courses as soon as possible. It is well worth the effort and expense.

Supplemental: Three years ago OSSTF teachers lost almost **\$20 million** dollars in pay because they didn’t heed deadlines or forgot to update their Cert status. Any related grid placement documents have to be hard copies and on file at the Board office. Any AQ’s (Additional Qualifications) you have taken can obviously influence this rating. If you are thinking of taking an AQ course and you are unsure whether it is an approved one, fill in the forms @ www.osstf.on.ca. This process will take approximately 2 weeks but you will then know if it’s an approved course or not regarding

advancement. Don't forget about Contract language regarding experiential work compensation. If you have previously worked in a related field of employ; please check articles 16:01 and 16:02 in the Collective Agreement regarding experiential allowance.

Certification (Category change) Board info: For teachers that qualify for or will qualify for a change in category based on additional qualifications (AQs) or an updated QECO Rating Statement, 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/will be completed. This must be submitted by November 30, 2019.
2. Submit an updated copy of OSSTF Rating Statement. It is the responsibility of the teacher to ensure that this form is submitted to Human Resources by **June 30, 2020**.

*Once received, updated OSSTF Rating Statements can be emailed to the appropriate contact in Human Resources. For LTO teachers, Jane Ryckman jryckman@scdsb.on.ca (last names A-M) or Erin Blair ebclair@scdsb.on.ca (last names N-Z).

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Unfortunately a lot of our time as Union Reps is spent dealing with discipline matters related to classroom management. Please remember your professional responsibilities in this matter. Here are some helpful hints towards that goal:

- ✓ Don't leave EAs, Peer Tutors, or volunteers in charge of your classroom at any time.
- ✓ When ejecting students; call the office and let them know immediately. Don't fear extrication; if they are highly disruptive, any contract teacher would not hesitate to do the same thing.
- ✓ When moving a class from your initial assigned location; say to a Library/Computer room, take a second attendance, inform the teacher in charge who you are, what you're doing there, and who you're replacing.
- ✓ Please follow the lesson plan given by the absent teacher & do the required work. This is a constant complaint from our TBU compatriots. If you want to indulge them with your life stories, no problem; just make sure the mandated/planned work is completed first.

COMMITTEES

(Our OTBU Reps)

Educational Services

Health & Safety &

Human Rights:

Status of Women:

Communications Officer:

CPAC: (see below)

Paul Cudney

Kate Dewey (705-209-3586)

katedewey@hotmail.com

Deanna Nelson, Marcia D'Antimo, & Jeff Parton

Chris Petersen

Matthew Boyd

COMMUNICATION & POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE

Your OTBU Rep on this Committee is Matt Boyd and the next scheduled meeting for CPAC is Monday November 25. Further details of CPAC can be found on the District web, but essentially the committee delves into many aspects of Communication, Political issues, and most importantly, elections.

COMMUNICATIONS

Our membership is obviously ever-changing and we are continually improving our ways to communicate with you. We now have about 75% of our Bargaining Unit's personal emails. If we've somehow missed you or know of another member who is not on our group email, forward it to Chris Petersen at d17otbu@gmail.com.

CONTRACT

Expired August 31, 2019

Here are some important Articles you should heed from our Contract:

- Article 12.02 (c), states "A Casual Occasional Teacher who fails to identify their unavailability in EasyConnect will receive a written warning. An Occasional Teacher who repeatedly fails to identify their

unavailability in ATE will be removed from the list". If you cannot supply for any given period of time, for whatever reason, **make yourself unavailable in EasyConnect!**

- Article 12.03 (a) states that you must commit to doing 10 assignments per semester. A half day assignment is counted as 1 commitment day. If you feel you cannot complete these needed commitment days, you may apply for a Board approved leave (12.03(g & h)). You must submit a letter to HR requesting temporary removal from the supply list for up to a maximum of one year. Supporting documentation is rare, but sometimes required to support the request, such as a chronic illness, elder care, or parenting duties.

- Article 14.01 (a, b, & c): Under Bill 115 LTOs get 5.5 **sick days** per Semester. This Article also states you can use **incidental** days for accidents etc., immediate family member issues - 2 days, bereavement of a close relative (3 days), & jury duty (fluctuates on the case of course). One can also tap into STD with 115 (Short Term Disability) of up to 60 days per Semester if needed @ 90% pay.

- Article 14.02 (a) deals with inclement weather. Simply put; if buses are cancelled in an area your job is located, your daily job is cancelled! If you live in an area of bus cancellations and your job is not in a cancellation area, use your best judgement to proceed to the school. If it is too nasty or dangerous, call the school if you have cancelled the job within EasyConnect. You are expected to check an assortment of media outlets or the SCDSB web site regarding bus cancellations. Article 16.10 (a) also deals with cancellations of jobs; "if an assignment is cancelled by EasyConnect within **75** minutes before the start time of an assignment, you will still be paid, but you will have to go to the school to receive an alternate assignment.

- Article 19.04 states "this article does not restrict the Board's right to assign the time table of more than one teacher, providing the number of periods does not exceed three (3) periods unless one of the periods is a **scheduled** on-call period of the absent teacher. This simply means the Board can hire someone for various periods as long as they don't go over the maximum of 3. Calls outs in these situations are normally indicated by the terminology "**vacancy**" when EasyConnect calls out.

- Regulation 274 governing the hiring practices of the Board is not a negotiated or contractual item. It is strictly a governmental regulation (law). There have been no changes since its inception. At all times we watch things very closely to make sure the Board follows these proper hiring procedures. We will grieve any deviation from the regulation's rules. Please remember that the Board does the hiring, thus the only control we have in this department is to insure the Reg is being followed.

Addendum: I would highly suggest reading over our current contract. You don't have to read things like definitions & Grievance procedures, but there is a lot in there that may surprise you; facts that you have probably forgotten about certain items of concern. Our main aim, with respect to the CA (Collective Agreement), is the maintenance of this binding **legal** document and making sure that our employers are following its intent. If you know of violations in any area please let us know. A significant issue is the assigning of extra duties above the actual teacher's timetable i.e.: on calls, hall duties, & cafeteria duty etc. Let Ben Andrews know immediately by email of any discrepancies with respect to these "contract maintenance" issues.

DECLARATIONS

One should have already signed off on your Offence Declaration and all other pertinent training modules before the start of the school year (i.e.: Accessibility Training Module). The Board has been very good getting out communiques to this effect, that is, if you have been checking your Board email address?

DISTRICT EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Our Bargaining Unit is one of 6 associated OSSTF Bargaining Units administered by an umbrella organization known as the District Executive Council (DEC). It is an overseer of District policies, administration, &, always, finances.



1st VP, Communication's Officer, and
D17 District President Chris Petersen.

EMAIL

(Board email & computer access)

All of us have a Board email address). This needs to be checked regularly as this is where the Board will contact you with important Board related info, such as EasyConnect and other critical items. One can get the app Outlook Express to directly access those emails on mobile devices. Please be cognizant regarding the content and use of your emails. Any email sent through SCDSB servers is subject to Orwellian type scrutiny. Keep your emails strictly professional leaving out any personal stuff. The College of Teachers and our Provincial Executive have also sent out directed documents advising members to be very wary of social media.

EMERGENCY DUTIES SHEET

(I.e.: On-calls)

Some of you aren't aware of the Emergency duties form. Every casual OT should carry the "**Occasional Teacher Emergency Record Form**". The maximum number of emergency duties for a school year is 4 full periods and these apply to duties that are **not** on the replacement teacher's regular daily schedule. An emergency assignment of 37.5 minutes or less counts as a ½ (.5) duty and any more than 37.5 minutes it counts as a full (1.0) duty. At the end of the day, make sure you get the sheet signed off by Admin. After you have completed the 4 full period duties, scan a copy to Human Resources. After that you can contractually & legally opt out of any more emergency duties if admin tries to assign any. Do **not** volunteer for any extra on calls as you may be inadvertently depriving another OT of potential work.

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Things have changed with EI in the way they handle mid semester reporting. You will have to call Service Canada if you are filing or regenerating a claim during Christmas break.

FACEBOOK GROUP

We have very few members on our FB page, so why not join up and get important information from us via that social media platform. It is a closed group made up of SCDSB Secondary OTs, so, just hit "**like**", we will then authorize it and you get to stay current with all of your D17 OT comrades.

GRIEVANCES

Thankfully, we don't have any outstanding grievances at this early stage of the game. A majority of potential grievances arise over extra assigned duties (above and beyond the teacher's timetable) and classroom management; namely discipline or abuse (physical, sexual, or verbal). In otherwords, to avoid the launching of a grievance in the first place, please maintain a well-run classroom environment and watch what you say to students.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Incidents of aggression in the classroom have to be reported. OTBU Health & Safety Officer (Kate Dewey) is requesting that you report any and all violent/aggressive incidents. You **must** complete an Aggressive Incident Form available in the school's office or online. If you need assistance with this form contact the OSSTF TBU Branch Rep in your school or call/email our H&S officer Kate Dewey at 705-209-3586 (katedewey@hotmail.com). This is for everyone's safety; employer, worker, and student.

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

District 17 OSSTF Human Rights Committee is always looking for new members including OTs. HR works to promote human rights in our workplaces by increasing awareness and encouraging positive change related to Human Rights' concerns & OSSTF Human Rights' policies. Former initiatives have included a focus on socially responsible investing, reducing homophobia in schools, community resources for parents & students, and fair trade practices & products. Chairperson for Human Rights this year is Joe Lamoureux.

The next Human Rights committee meeting is set for Monday October 21st off site. For more information on the Human Rights Committee and future meeting dates, visit the District website or contact our own OTBU Rep Kate Dewey at 705-209-3586 or katedewey@hotmail.com.

JOBS

Some general observations of OT work are:

- *EasyConnect currently has 423 Supplys County wide.*
- *The full time equivalency has dropped by over 300 contract teachers over the last decade. Less teachers, less supply jobs obviously.*

- *Enrollment is starting to creep up again, but ever so slowly.*
- *Newer and, on average, younger contract teachers don't use sick days as often.*
- *In the fall of the year, retired but active teachers on EasyConnect are trying to do their required 10 day/semester commitment days now before they head to warmer climes.*
- *Because of the educational climate right now, EasyConnect is made up of very dedicated/eager supplys willing to take on virtually any job and will go far & wide to do so.*
- *Supply teachers making themselves unavailable on a daily basis for various reasons such as appointments or sickness etc. has declined over the past few years from a high of 40% per day to as low as 15% now.*
- *Inclement weather is coming and along with it; airborne illnesses.*
- *Supply coverage still remains high especially compared to the 1990s.*
- *One has to realize that your discipline/s have a lot to do with call outs. For e.g. Math & English disciplines are going to be called out more often than other subject areas, as there are simply more classes.*
- *Obviously the more schools you are signed on to dramatically increases your chances of job offers.*

STAYNER CAR WASH

3 BAY SELF-SERVE CAR WASH
STAYNER, ON.

(Through the traffic lights, west of Tim Horton's on Hwy. # 91)

LEGAL ASPECTS

If you are involved in situations involving sexual harassment, over-reactive discipline, innuendo or any type of assault (even verbal) etc., you need to contact your union reps immediately after the accusation/altercation/incident. Do not say anything inculpatory to your accusers; wait until OSSTF support arrives.

***A WORD OF NOTE:** Keep your hands off students at all times! They know their rights more than ever and even a backpack is considered part of the student's anatomy. If you have a discipline problem, send the pupil to the office and phone down telling the office the student is on the way. I've usually found that most kids in your classes will cooperate and fellow students will almost always inform you of the name of the extricated student. If he/she refuses to cooperate at all, call the office and have them send up an Administrator for removal. Let Admin handle it when all else fails!

NEGOTIATIONS

Our Contract (an extension) expired on August 31st. You have been kept up to date with countless Bargaining Bulletins from Provincial Office and I won't be redundant in rehashing that info. The one important thing I can say is that we essentially lost an Ontario Labour Board hearing regarding what is central and local bargaining items. Suffice to say that a majority of negotiations going forward will now be approached from a central level, read: Government. We can't negotiate locally with the Board until a Central deal is garnered. We are working on a survey as to what is important to the local membership going forward and we will be expand upon things once they become known.

OSSTF MEMBERSHIP CURRENCY RULE

OSSTF requires any teacher under its jurisdiction to work at least 1 day in every 95 working days (read: *once a semester*) to remain a member of our Union. If, however, an incident happens and later action is taken while you are not a member, you will still be covered because of the retroactive nature of the event.

OTIP PARTNERSHIP LOYALTY PROGRAMME

We were approached 5 years ago by the Ontario Teachers' Insurance Plan to support their company through what's known as a Loyalty Programme. By us supporting OTIP we help to get the word out about their

services as they are wholly owned by all the Teacher/Support Staff unions in Ontario. By us advertising/marketing for them, they will in turn provide a stipend/donation that we can use locally for our members. As a result you will see the use of their logos, banners, and ads on our communiques, hand-outs, web site, etc. They are highly competitive so we would most certainly recommend checking them out.

****Looking to save on car and home insurance? Take advantage of OTIP's exclusive group rates! You could save up to 25% on car and up to 50% on home insurance when you bundle your policies with OTIP. Get a quote and start SAVING today! <https://bit.ly/2GuvlWd> #OTIPupdate:**



PENSIONS

The web site for the Teachers' Pension Plan (OTPP) is located at www.otpp.on.ca. It can supply you with information on many aspects of your pension including info with respect to what you have contributed over the years and to pay out schedules using various scenarios. Of interest is the fact that the Pension Plan pays out for an average of 35 years to pensioned teachers (this includes spousal survivors).

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

We have a modest budget line available for PD funds (\$) for our OTs. Please go to our web site at www.d17otbu.ca to download the application form. Scan them back to us for approval by the PD committee. The PD committee consists of the whole Executive and meets once a month.

REGULATION 274

(& Amendment #148/15)

The Government's Reg 274 hiring policy is now 7 ½ years old and still problematic. Most of you now understand how it works and, therefore, I won't be redundant in explaining it in detail. I will, however, list a few important things below that are still pertinent in its understanding:

- Seniority is based on the most recent hire date to an OT list, in our case; EasyConnect. The number of days/years a person has worked for the Board are only used in breaking ties regarding seniority. A quick example of teachable/discipline seniority is you could be #233 on the overall LTO Hiring List, but when it comes to your particular subject area of say, "Latin", you might jump up to be ranked as high as #2. The Board has indicated to me that these change almost weekly and is near to impossible to post a seniority list based on disciplines.
- At any time one feels there is a discrepancy in a recent hire, please contact Ben Andrews or me and we will investigate it with Abigail Desforges – Manager of HR at the Board.

REMUNERATION

Our casual daily rate of pay is set at \$232.38 per diem. To avoid any pay issues in future, write down your job number, school, and the absent teacher for each casual day worked. An Occasional Teacher who teaches a minimum of 10 consecutive days for the same teacher/assignment becomes a Long Term Occasional (LTO) teacher and will be paid retroactively according to grid placement. You are paid after teaching on the 10th consecutive day inclusively. The formula for working out your LTO per diem rate of pay is to divide your

yearly grid salary by 194 days (6% holiday/statutory pay is included in this amount). Pay particular attention to your pay stub in Payroll Portal as the Payroll Department is known to encounter errors due to its sheer size.

RETIRED TEACHERS on EASYCONNECT

(Active Members and ARM Chapter)

The Active Retired Members (ARM) has a chapter here in Simcoe County with Don Renwicke as President. They have "Wine & Cheese" get-togethers, dinners, and travel info nights throughout the year. Check the District web site for contact & event information.

As for active retired members, they can work 50 days without penalty to his/her pension. The 50-day restriction can also be fractionalized. As of now there are 60 or so retired teachers on ATE compared to 128 nine years ago. Please pay attention to your number of days worked as the penalty for exceeding these limitations is a cessation of your monthly pension. This applies to all educational jobs, not just teaching; such as Alt Schools, Adult Ed, Con-Ed, Contract work, and even custodial. The Board has to report, by law, the number of days worked by retirees directly to the Pension Board (OTPP). You can check the number of days you have worked by checking the staff web site (Payroll) or going to Apply to Education and checking the Archive job area. OTPP also has an app on their web site you can use to keep track of the number of days taught in a year.

SUPPLEMENTAL LIST

We established a **Supplemental List** five (6) years ago to hopefully solve the problem of unfilled jobs. These persons will only be called out when all persons on our main EasyConnect list have been offered a job for a given day. Their qualifications will not be listed and they have to be available for a considerable part of the week/month/year, as well as, always being available for Fridays. Supplemental people cannot be requested and will not, **in any way**, affect the Main EasyConnect list call outs. There are currently 28 teachers on that List.

STATUS OF WOMEN COMMITTEE

There is a very active Status of Women Committee here in District 17. This group usually puts on a Maternity/Paternity Workshop and will be participating in what's known as a Tampon Tuesday. If you are interested, please contact Jeanette Parker at missparkerposter@gmail.com.

WEB SITES

Our web site is found at www.d17otbu.ca. We recently updated our site; please take time to check it out as it contains:

- ⇒ Our Constitution
- ⇒ Emergency on call form
- ⇒ The current Contract
- ⇒ Professional Development Application form
- ⇒ Posts/Blogs
- ⇒ FAQs regarding Reg 274 & 148/15.
- ⇒ Newsletters Archive

The **District** Web site is www.d17.osstf.ca.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Ben Andrews and I meet with Human Resources several times throughout the year to discuss various working condition items on your behalf.

Yours in pedagogical solidarity,

Jeff Parton

President - D 17 Simcoe OTBU
(Occasional Teachers' Bargaining Unit)





NOTE: You are receiving this Newsletter electronically. This is a cost saving measure, as well as, being environmentally considerate. Those wishing a hard copy can still get one. Please inform Chris Petersen, our Communications Officer, at d17otbu@gmail.com and we will send you out a hard copy via Canada Post.

