



President's Message

With the first quarter of the school year already under our belts, we are entering a month which will prove to be a bit of a litmus test for a major emphasis of the negotiations undertaken last year. As you know, much time was spent working at the bargaining table and afterwards with Board representatives to ensure that there were significant reductions to the workload and stress levels associated with report cards. We were very pleased with the collaborative approach shown; in particular by Board representatives Laura McAlister and Principal Sandy Richardson, who helped create language which made it clear that the authors of the reports indeed were teachers and that their professional autonomy should be respected. From this point on, it really is up to you, the individual teacher, to insist on these rights. We can and will support you, but it begins with you standing up for your professional decisions.

There are a number of big issues evolving provincially, and none of them with more impact than the McGuinty pronouncement on the Early Learning Program which will see all day kindergarten for four and five year old children across the province. The program will see classes of 26 children with a teacher and an Early Childhood Educator delivering the program. Funding will be phased in over a number of years with full implementation in all schools by 2015-16.

In the initial round, schools which require no construction or renovations in order to deliver program and which also would have only the new ELP model of kindergarten will be selected.

This is obviously an ambitious and impressive commitment to education, but there is no doubt that there are many questions out there as to how this will all play out. We anticipate more information from ETFO on these matters shortly.

Bill 157, "Keeping our Kids Safe at School Act", requires that the Board train a team of three from each school (one teacher rep) in the new reporting system to identify suspendible actions by students. In essence, the new Bill requires that the Board develop new policies around reporting, recording and acting on inappropriate student behaviour which is harmful to others.

pH1N1 levels, according to latest figures, appears to be on the decline, but as always, teachers are urged to check with their personal medical provider to make decisions on what is best for them individually.

OCETF held two "TGIT" social events this month; one downtown and one in Barrhaven. We thank all the teachers who came out to join us for a relaxing evening with food and prizes provided by the union. Stay tuned for our next TGIT which will be held in the east end of the city.

As always, let me remind you please to look after your health and well being as you strive to meet the needs of all your students. Remember that we are just a phone call away if you need some professional assistance or just a sympathetic ear to listen for a while.

Peter Giuliani



NOVEMBER MESSAGE FROM THE CBC CHAIR

The 2008-2012 OCETF Collective Agreement should now be in hard copy in all schools. Any OCETF member without a copy of the new contract should contact the OCETF office at 613-596-3932 to obtain their 2008-2012 Collective Agreement.

A reminder that you can also access the new Collective Agreement on the OCETF website, on the OCETF folder on BEAM (OCETF 2008-2012 Collective Agreement), and under the HR/Personnel Department/Collective Agreements icon (OCETF 2008-2012) in BEAM.

REPLACING ABSENT TEACHERS

Article 27.04 of our Collective Agreement states, "*The principal shall make every reasonable effort to replace absent Teachers with qualified Occasional Teachers.*" The Ottawa Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) interpreted this clause to mean that, "in the event that a principal decides to replace an absent Teacher, the principal will make every reasonable effort to find a *qualified Occasional Teacher.*" OCETF took the position that the principal was obligated to replace ALL absent teachers.

Consequently, OCETF filed a grievance on February 11, 2008 with hearing dates on September 16 and 17, 2008 and September 11, 2009. An arbitration award on this grievance was issued on October 19, 2009.

We are very pleased to report that the Union's position was upheld by the arbitrator.

In his award, the arbitrator stated:

I am satisfied that the Union's interpretation is the correct one. There is nothing in the structure or composition of Article ... or the legislation that favours the School Board's interpretation ... That is, the person in charge of the organization and management of a school must make every (not just "a") reasonable (i.e. in the circumstances) effort to do something. The provision specifies what the principal must do. The provision does not, either expressly or by implication, require (or entitle) the principal to decide whether or not to replace an absent teacher. It clearly requires the principal to make every reasonable effort to replace absent teachers with qualified occasional teachers ... There is no express or implied discretion to not make every reasonable effort to replace absent teachers with qualified occasional teachers.

Thus, all absent teachers must be replaced. This includes but is not limited to:

- Classroom Teachers
- Itinerant Teachers
- Learning Support Teachers (LST)
- English Language Learner Teachers (ELL)
- Special Education Learning Centre Teachers (SELC)

Student Success Teachers
Guidance Teachers

Any teacher with "non-contact" time during his/her absence must be replaced and should prepare a schedule of students to be supported during their absence.

Stewards may wish to advise their principal both of the contents of the summary of the award and that staff has been so informed.

As you know, the filing of grievances is an important mechanism used under the Labour Relations Act to resolve disputes involving the application, administration, interpretation or alleged violation of the Collective Agreement. If you have specific questions or concerns with regard to any contractual matter, please contact Jeff Beckstead via email at cbc.chair@ocetf.org or by phone at the office at 613-596-3932 ext. 205.

H1N1(SWINE FLU) AND SICK LEAVE



ETFO has committed to looking at each individual case of teachers accessing sick leave during the H1N1 scare in Ontario elementary schools.

All OCETF members who have remained at home due to health concerns over the swine flu because of pregnancy and/or immune deficiencies should contact the CBC Chair and ensure that their specific details are known to OCETF and ETFO.

JEFF BECKSTEAD CBC CHAIR



RESOURCES:

PREGNANCY/PARENTAL LEAVE

The OCETF Office has available upon request a package for members going on Pregnancy/Parental Leave. It contains excerpts from the collective agreement plus information on other entitlements.

RETIREMENT

The OCETF has packages available upon request for teachers planning to retire. It is helpful if members specify whether the retirement date is December, March or June. Please contact Brenda Lowder via BEAM or at 596-3932 for these resources.

The Donations Committee

The Donations Committee consists of Susane Keyworth and Barbara Weaver and was formed by members of the Executive. There is a budget line of \$3000.

Two criteria are in place when considering a donation:

Does it **directly** impact on children of an elementary school age?

Is there some form of public acknowledgement of OCETF's contribution?

This year, OCETF has again donated \$1000 to the Snowsuit Fund. Janet Fraser was happy to hand over the cheque to ensure some of our needier students stayed warm this up-coming winter.

There's an easy way to start Feeling Better Now



Mental and nervous disorders are the most common reasons for long term disability (LTD) claims among education workers. Fortunately, for help getting on the road to well-being, there's FeelingBetterNow®.

FeelingBetterNow® is an anonymous, Web-based mental health care program designed to assist in the prevention, early diagnosis and ongoing management of common emotional and mental health issues.

Not only does FeelingBetterNow® assess your mental and emotional health, it also provides you with Diagnostic Risk Assessment Maps and Care Maps, when needed. You can take these reports to your family doctor to receive fast, accurate treatment. You do not have to submit a disability claim, be absent from work or be receiving disability benefits to use FeelingBetterNow®.

To access the FeelingBetterNow® Web site, you will need your LTD group policy number L7025-901 and the access code: OTIPRAEO.

www.feelingbetternow.com/otip



Check out the new OCETF website

Up and ready to view by December 1st

www.ocetf.org