

Newsletter



ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local

Volume 8, Number 1, December 17, 2020

Colleagues and Friends,

Season's Greetings to all Teachers from the ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local Executive.

2020 has been a calendar year like no other. The 2020/2021 school year has been extremely challenging to this point and will, no doubt, continue to be challenging in the weeks and months ahead.

Please find time over the holidays to rest, reflect, and recharge.

Thank you for all you have done, and will continue to do, on behalf of all students in your care.

Know that the Local continues to fight the good fight on your behalf.

kindest Regards and Best Wishes for a Happy New Year.

Take care and stay well.

In Solidarity,

Craig Smith, President



Craig Smith, President



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Collective Bargaining

The Local reached a tentative agreement on June 4th. On June 19, 2020 the membership overwhelmingly voted in support of the Local Tentative Agreement. Retroactive Pay for the 2019 - 2020 school year was included in pay deposits in July. September 1, 2020 had our pay grids adjusted another 1% and another 1% pay increase will occur September 1, 2021. The Local has worked diligently meshing the new articles into the Collective Agreement to ensure accuracy with all the provisions found within your Collective Agreement. Collective Agreement Highlights have been shared at the General Meeting in November and a newsletter featuring articles of interest will be published in the New Year.

Mark MacLeod, Chief Negotiator / Grievance Officer

Pregnancy/Parental Leave and Retirement

Two workshops were presented in the fall. A Pregnancy/Parental Leave Workshop and a Retirement Workshop. These workshops are designed to help Members understand what processes are undertaken if they become pregnant, wish to access parental leave, or plan to retire.

The workshops took place "virtually" this year. Thank-you to everyone who participated in these events. If, however you did not get the opportunity to participate, the materials presented by ETFO Thames Valley at these events are now available on the ETFO Thames Valley website under "Resources". Please feel free to have a look or call the Local office and ask for Dale Napier, if you have any questions.

These workshops and others are scheduled to take place again later this year. Please refer to the "Upcoming Events" section of this newsletter or look on our Local website for dates and details.

ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local would like to congratulate our Members on their baby's arrival. After baby's arrival please email the ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local with your mailing address and the date of your baby's birth to receive your baby's welcome package (etfotvtl@etfothamesvalley.com)

Dale Napier, Vice President

Grievance and Arbitration

The Collective Agreement outlines the terms of your employment with the Thames Valley District School Board. It is a rule-book, not a guide book. The employer has a legal obligation to follow the Collective Agreement. Members are reminded to honour the Collective Agreement by adhering to the duly negotiated and ratified provisions contained within it.

Since the beginning of the school year, ETFO Thames Valley has filed over 15 grievances. Areas of concern include but are not limited to Diagnostic Assessment, Hybrid Models of Instruction, Preparation Time, Temporary Letters of Approval, ESL Assignments and TOSA's.

All ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local Members are reminded to contact the Local if they believe their rights and entitlements found within the Collective Agreement have been violated.

Mark MacLeod, Chief Negotiator / Grievance Officer

Teacher Performance Appraisal (TPA) Workshops

A TPA workshop for New Teachers was presented virtually this year. The workshop explained the process and the rights and responsibility of the Teacher and the Assessor under our Collective Agreement and the Ministry Technical Requirements Manual.

The information from the workshop is posted on the Local Website under Resources.

TPAs for NTIP Teachers will continue this year. If you have any questions please contact Glenda Manzi at the Local.

TPAs for Experienced Teachers are put on hold this year except if there is mutual consent to continue. The TPA workshop for Experienced Teachers was postponed until next year.

Glenda Manzi, Vice President

Professional Development and Training

Teachers are lifelong learners. As Teachers, we regularly have professional conversations, read articles or books, mentor and are mentored and we reflect to improve our craft. The areas we focus our energy and time improving should be based on our professional judgement and needs.

The school Board and school sites also have their goals. These may or may not align with Teachers' own professional learning goals. The Board's model for advancing their goals is professional development. Over the past decade there has been a constant deterioration of treating Teachers as professionals and providing them time to attend professional development. The new model has Teachers attending professional development during their own time.

All activities outside of the instructional day are voluntary. Teachers cannot be directed or encouraged to attend PD before school, during lunch breaks, after school or on weekends. Teachers are strongly encouraged to reflect if the PD offered supports their own professional learning needs. Teachers should not feel obligated to attend any optional PD sessions. Consider, what would happen if staffs stopped attending voluntary PD?

With our Members on medical leaves, as a result of mental health, at an all-time high, reflecting on how to restore a healthy work-life balance is crucial. Not attending voluntary activities is an opportunity to remove something from the Teacher's plate.

Training is different from PD. Training is required to do a job. The OHSA states that training may be held outside the workday and that the time will be paid for.

Scott Hardie, Vice President

Classroom Management

A Classroom Management Workshop was presented by ETFO Provincial virtually this year.

Enjoy a well-deserved break. Wishing you a safe and healthy holiday season.

Glenda Manzi, Vice President

LTD Termination

If you retire then you will no longer be paying into your LTD benefit package. However, sometimes members are eligible to stop this payment prior to their retirement date. This can occur if one of the following scenarios applies to you:

- 1) you have 30 credit years of teaching experience or
- 2) you have reached the age of 65.

If either of these scenarios applies to you, please call or email Dale Napier at the Local office (519-474-3150 or dnapier@etfothamesvalley.com).

Dale Napier, Vice President

Staffing Update

There have been many staffing changes through the new Collective Agreement language and as a result of the present pandemic. If you have any specific questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Local office for information and guidance.

Preference of Placement Form

This standard form was created as a result of arbitration and was used for the first-time last February. The form is provided in early February. The completion of the form is voluntary. Teachers should not feel obliged to put more choices than they believe to be true.

Integrity of Assignment

There is a check box on the Preference of Placement form asking if you intend to retire the following year. Teachers who check this will not be moved out of their current assignment for their last year. This opportunity may only be used once.

Tagging

Tagging is no longer part of staffing. Teachers who transfer to cover a Teacher on special assignment, leave, etc, are now part of that staff. If the Member returns to the school, seniority will dictate surplus.

Scott Hardie, Vice President



Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP)

"A pandemic is a very stressful event for individuals and communities. It's normal to feel some stress and anxiety. It's also very common for people to display great resiliency during times of crisis" (the Canadian Mental Health Association). With this in mind I remind our Members to look after their Mental Health.

EFAP provides various forms of support for employees including coaching and counselling. To access this support, employees can call 1-800-663-1142 or look online at www.homewoodhealth.com. Confidentiality is guaranteed within the limits of the law. Please remember to look after yourself, your health, and your family.

Dale Napier, Vice President

Holiday Health and Safety

The holiday season is here and while we are all fortunate to have this time to spend with friends and family, it is imperative that we remain safe and healthy during the holidays. Realizing that these holiday times may not be celebrated in a 'traditional' sense, there are still some ways that we can make this time special.

The Ontario Government's website lists some of these ways to remain safe to reduce the spread of Covid-19.

https://www.ontario.ca/page/celebrate-safely-during-covid-19?qclid=Cj0KCCQIA5bz-BRD-ARIsABjT4nj_xWPz23CEzOhOjRw-tZWFaRyOrBhb1o5_6h_DBRAMMEGsllelvv4aAgH0EALw_wcB#ten-ways

Michael Thomas, First Vice President

Advice to ETFO Members

Members must always be vigilant to maintain their professionalism at all times, whether dealing with students or parents. Unfortunately, we can find ourselves in situations requiring Legal Assistance due to allegations made against us to either the Police or Children's Aid Society (CAS). If you have been notified that the Police or CAS is investigating an allegation against you, contact your Federation. In addition:

- Do not participate in or consent to an interview;
- Make no statement to anyone regarding the allegation/charges;
- Say "I am willing to cooperate but I am unable to comment until I contact the Federation and legal counsel;"
- Call ETFO Professional Relations and ask to speak with the PRS Duty Officer (1-888-838-3836); state that your call is urgent.

The Local Released Office supports the parameters associated with the school board, however, it is important that you have legal representation at these meetings with outside agencies to ensure that your rights are upheld.

It is also important to note that if you are asked by your Administration to attend a meeting at school with Union Representation, that your representation at these meetings must be from the Local office and not your Workplace Steward. If you are asked to attend such a meeting, please contact the Local office to set up a mutually convenient time to meet (519-474-3150 – ask to speak with the Duty Officer).

Michael Thomas, First Vice President

Fireplace Safety Tips for a Cozy and Safe Winter



There's nothing quite like cozying up by the fireplace on a cold winter's evening. While many Canadians look forward to the warmth, light and ambiance that comes with a home fireplace, it's important to practice proper fireplace safety. Review the following fireplace safety tips to ensure that you, your family and your home stay safe this season.

Learn more at www.otipinsurance.com/article90

ETFO Membership Profile

- All Members are requested to log on to the Local's website (www.etfothamesvalley.com), to update their profiles (name, mailing address, contact information and professional information).
- To access your profile, log in under ETFO Secure Login using your ETFO membership number and password.
- In your account, be sure to indicate your personal e-mail address and to calculate your preparation time and supervision time accurately when completing the Professional Information section.
- The Local has to ensure that the articles of the Collective Agreement are being adhered to and ensure that any discrepancies are addressed as soon as possible. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Local office.

Are you retiring in December?

If you are retiring in December please contact Erin at the ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local office or email: etfotvtl@etfothamesvalley.com to submit your name, email and home address in order to receive an invitation to the Retiree's celebration.



25 Year Celebration



The ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local is currently planning a virtual celebration for all ETFO Members who have completed twenty-five years of teaching as of June 30, 2020 (e.g. currently in 26th year), as well as last year's celebrants.

If you are eligible please fill out the online survey located on the Local's website.

Christmas Season Support to the Local Communities

On behalf of our Members, the ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local donated \$500.00 to each of the following organizations:

- London Food Bank
- The Salvation Army - Woodstock
- The Salvation Army - Strathroy
- The Caring Cupboard - Food Bank, St. Thomas



Upcoming Events

The following events are scheduled. Advance registration will be required.
(these dates may be subject to change)

January 2021

- Stewards' Council Meeting - January 20

February 2021

- General Meeting - February 24

March 2021

- Retirement Planning Workshop - March 2
- 25 Year Virtual Celebration - March 24
- Workplace Stewards' Meeting - March 30

April 2021

- Pregnancy / Parental Leave Workshop - April 7
- Financial Planning 101 Workshop - April 8
- OTIP Walk Into Retirement Workshop - April 14
- Local Annual Meeting - April 28

May 2021

- Independent Women Financial Workshop - May 5
- Workplace Stewards' Meeting - May 27

Holiday Hours

ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local

ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local office will close at 4:00 p.m. on Friday, December 18, 2020. The office will re-open on Monday, January 4, 2021 at 8:15 a.m.

Emergency assistance will be available through the ETFO Provincial office (1-888-838-3836). They will only be responding to critical legal matters.

2019-2021 Executive



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Treasurer
Gene Garbacz



Recording Secretary
Marnie Meloche



Alia Awaysheh



Jodie Bradburn



Devin Hanes



Marc Hodgkinson



Lara Jenson



Christian Rowell



Kelly Stoddart



Sue Varley



Maria Vieira



Amber Yerema

- Regular Office Hours -
ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local

Monday - Thursday, 8:15 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.
Friday, 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.