

Newsletter



ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local

Volume 8, Number 2, June 29, 2021

Colleagues and Friends,

We say good-bye to the 2020-2021 school year (some might say good riddance) and reflect on a year full of challenges that won't soon be forgotten.

Here is the school year in summary:

Fall re-opening, staggered entry, cohorts, no cohorts, IPL, FRL, paper packages, hybrid teaching, reorganization, re-reorganization, re-reorganization yet again, COVID-19 protocols, testing, quarantine, PPE, lockdown, pivot/turn again, variants of concern, reopening, sit down staff meeting, stand up staff meeting, March Break, no March Break, lockdown, vaccination, pivot/turn yet again, Spring Break, Ground Hog Day/Week/Month/Year, supportive parents, difficult parents, participating students, absent students, mystery students, graduation for all students.

What Teachers have gone through this school year has challenged and stretched everyone to the limit and beyond. But Teachers have risen to the occasion, made it all work as best we can, and discharged our collective duties with individual determination and grace.

We do not know what the future holds. We do know that summer is upon us and that Teachers look forward to a well-deserved break.

Take time for yourselves and your loved ones. Stay well. Enjoy a safe and peaceful summer. See you in September.

Sincerely and in Solidarity,

Craig Smith, President



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Collective Bargaining

It has been a long year with many challenges, but finally the 2020-2021 school year has come to an end. During these unprecedented and difficult times, you have risen to each and every challenge we have faced. I am incredibly proud of the professionalism demonstrated by each and every ETFO Thames Valley Member and it is an honour and privilege to work on your behalf as the Chief Negotiator/Grievance Officer.

Your Collective Agreement outlines the terms of your employment with the Thames Valley District School Board. Please contact the Local if you have any questions or concerns regarding any aspect of the Collective Agreement. You can find the 2019-2022 Collective Agreement at www.etfothamesvalley.com as well as being posted in the TVDSB Employee Portal.

According to the terms of the Central Contract Extension, on September 1, 2021 we are entitled to a 1% increase to our grid rates.

From my family to yours, enjoy a well-deserved summer break.

Mark MacLeod, Chief Negotiator / Grievance Officer



Home delivery risks and how you can prevent them

Taking more of your shopping online? You're not alone. E-commerce sales in Canada hit an all-time high in 2020 as many Canadians turned to online shopping and home delivery services during the pandemic. While home delivery offers a safe and convenient way to receive your goods, it's important to think about the associated risks and what you can do to prevent them.

Learn more at www.otipinsurance.com/article115.

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

COVID-19

During the summer, ETFO Local will be working with the School Board to ensure that there is a comprehensive plan to address safety as we transition back into the schools for the fall. ETFO is committed to ensuring that parameters exist to ensure our workplaces are as safe as possible as we prepare to return in September. Please contact us if you have any Health and Safety concerns or questions

Mike Thomas, First Vice President

Unintended Consequences

There is no more dedicated professional than a Teacher. 'Teachers care' is more than a catchphrase, it is the embodiment of all we do for our students, our schools and our fellow Teachers. Occasionally in our desire to achieve our best, we create unintended consequences for our colleagues.

Recently the school Board suggested having school libraries open to students during the summer months. Besides the breaching COVID protocols that exist, and will throughout the summer, this suggestion directly affects our community public libraries. The public libraries have wonderful summer programs for students. They hire additional staff for the purpose of running these programs. Will these programs be as successful if students can come into school libraries? If some Librarians agree to this, there will be great pressure put on those Teachers who choose not to. Should our Members be pressured into working, unpaid, while the schools are closed?

Many Teachers love to attend PD sessions. This year our school Board saved over \$4 million dollars as some Teachers attended lunch and learns and after school and weekend PD sessions. They did this to improve their craft. The unintended consequences are two-fold. First, it sets a precedent, that our employer does not have to treat us like professionals and provide release for PD sessions. Second, it creates inequality among our Members. For numerous reasons, not all Teachers are able to attend PD outside the instructional day. Reasons from child care, to second jobs, medical issues, other commitments and life work balance. The unintended consequence of attending PD outside the instructional day, is that it creates inequities in a school Board that publicly promotes equality.

Teachers should be proud of the work they do and many Teachers share this pride on social media. The result is a social media that is inundated with posts from Teachers 7 days week. Teachers' mental health has never been worse. Speaking with many Teachers, they express they are not doing enough and mention all the things they see on social media. The collective of Teacher social media posts is having the unintentional effect of creating unrealistic pressures on other Teachers.

As Teachers, we need to take care of each other. We need to consider the macro effects of our individual actions. We could take a giant step to minimize any negative effects on our profession, by not working in schools when they are closed; by not attending PD sessions outside the instructional day and assuming if PD is important, that the employer will provide training during the instructional day; and by limiting social media posts to school days and not share extras you may choose to do during the summer months or on weekends. Collectively we can make our profession stronger by taking care of each other and ensuring our individual actions are not having unintended consequences on others.

Have a well-deserved summer break.

Scott Hardie, Vice President

Teacher Performance Appraisal (TPA)

The TPA cycle for Members who could not be evaluated this year has been extended until the end of 2022.

There are currently 147 overdue TPAs.

The Board's goal is to catch up on all overdue, all deferred and all scheduled TPAs by the end of the next school year.

Glenda Manzi, Vice President

New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP)

NTIP Teachers must work 10 months, complete an AQ course or 3 days of Professional Development, participate in the orientation session, complete the mentoring sessions and have 2 satisfactory TPAs in order to be recommended for permanent hire.

Be safe and enjoy a well-deserved summer break.

Glenda Manzi, Vice President

Wellness for the Summer and Beyond

This school year has been could maybe best be described in one word as "stressful" as we have dealt with the ever-changing landscape of a worldwide pandemic. This on top of all the regular demands of the teaching profession. With that said, we all deserve some time for rest and relaxation throughout the summer. This rest and relaxation can often come with a need to focus on our physical and mental health.

The Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) offered through Homewood Health provides some excellent programs and resources to help Teachers and their families access proactive support for their well-being.

Many different types of assistance are available including but, not limited to: Nutrition, Lifestyle Changes, Elder and Family Care, Relationships, Financial and Legal, Career Planning, as well as Grief and Loss.

EFAP also offers e-learning courses in areas such as: Parenting, Mood, Stress, Anger, Money, Resilience, Smoking Cessation, Nutrition and more. To access these opportunities for wellness you can call Homewood at 1-800-663-1142 or reach them at www.homewoodhealth.com.

Please enjoy your summer. Take care of yourself, your health, and your family.

Dale Napier, Vice President

LTD Termination

LTD premiums are automatically deducted from your pay cheque unless you qualify to have these premium deductions terminated. Please note, these deductions will automatically stop upon your retirement as you will no longer have a paycheque from the Board from which these deductions can be taken. However, there may be 2 scenarios under which you qualify to have these deductions cease prior to your retirement.

The deductions can be terminated if:

- 1) you are eligible for a 60 % unreduced pension (30 credit years of teaching experience)
or
- 2) You have reached the end of the month in which you have turned 65.

If you qualify for either scenario above, prior to your retirement, associated paperwork is required with your application. The details of this paperwork can be found on the application form. An application for LTD termination can be located on the ETFO Thames Valley website by clicking on "Resources" and then "Retirement".

Dale Napier, Vice President

Best Wishes to Retirees

Retirees,

On behalf of the ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local Executive and Membership let me begin by congratulating you on your retirement.

By all measures the 2020-2021 school year has been tumultuous and eventful. Through it all you have continued to work hard, to discharge your teaching duties and to support the learning of the students in your care. You have done so with a level of professionalism and grace that is a credit to you as Teachers.

Over many years you have made a real difference in the lives of the students you teach, their parents and guardians and to your colleagues. Your excellence is acknowledged and appreciated.

I am sorry that we were not able to gather as we normally would to celebrate your retirement and accomplishments.

Once again, congratulations on your retirement. Thank you for all that you have done on behalf of students and the teaching profession.

You will be missed.

Sincerely and in Solidarity,

Craig Smith, President



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.



4 ways to protect your car from vandalism and theft

Your car is valuable, making it a prime target for vandalism and theft. In 2020, the top stolen cars in Ontario were the Lexus RX, Honda CR-V, Toyota Highlander, and Honda Accord, so if you own one of those vehicles you should take extra care to deter thieves. Criminals steal or damage vehicles for a variety of reasons: to get access to valuables inside the car, to sell, to get somewhere or to commit another crime. The costs of these crimes add up — in Canada, auto theft costs Canadians close to a billion dollars a year.

Learn more at www.otipinsurance.com/article114.

ETFO Baby Welcome Package

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

Dale Napier, Vice President

Congratulations!

Health and Safety Activist Award

Lorrie Bailey, Southside P.S.

Workplace Stewards' Award

**Holly Lusher, Lord Nelson P.S.
Tim Lusher, Orchard Park P.S.**

Reminder

ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local requires the names of the Workplace Stewards/Alternates and Health and Safety Representatives for the 2021 - 2022 school year.

Please submit the names and personal emails to etfotvtl@etfothamesvalley.com

Upcoming Events

The following events are scheduled.

Advance registration will be required.
(these dates may be subject to change)

July and August 2021

- Summer Academy Online Courses
(Register through the Provincial website)

August 17-19, 2021

- Federation Annual Meeting - Virtual

Summer Hours

ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local

ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local office will close at **4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 29, 2021** and will reopen at **8:15 a.m. on Thursday, September 2, 2021.**

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

Regular Office Hours

ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local

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

2019-2021 Executive



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Recording Secretary

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