

# Newsletter



**ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local**

***Volume 7, Number 2, June 26, 2020***

Colleagues and Friends,

To say that the 2019-2020 school year has been tumultuous and eventful would be an understatement.

Through it all, you have been steadfast in supporting your colleagues and the ongoing work of the Federation. Thank you.



The 2020-2021 school year is presently shrouded in uncertainty and promises to be no less challenging than this school year. Know that the Federation has your back and will continue to depend on your vigilance and tenacity in addressing the many challenges ahead.

I hope that you will find time this summer to rest, spend time with family and friends and stay well as we prepare to once again fight the good fight.

Sincerely and in Solidarity,

Craig Smith, President

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## Collective Bargaining

In early September, the Collective Bargaining Table Team in consultation with the Collective Bargaining Committee created a concept document that outlined the priorities for Local negotiations. The Preliminary Submission was presented to the membership at an All Members Meeting on October 16, 2019. With a 98% approval, the membership overwhelmingly supported the Preliminary Submission. At an All Members Meeting on October 24, 2019 approximately 3000 Members of the ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local voted 97% in favour of Local Strike Action. As well, on Friday, November 1, 2019 ETFO Provincial reported that Members voted 98% in favour of Central Strike Action.

Local bargaining commenced in November 2019 and continued with dates up to March Break. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was agreed upon that local bargaining would resume in May. On the fourteenth (14th) full day of talks between the ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local and the Thames Valley District School Board a tentative agreement was reached late on Thursday June 4, 2020. On June 5, a Memorandum of Settlement was signed.

Information regarding the details of the Local Tentative Agreement was shared with the membership and all active ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local Members were invited to participate in a telephone Town Hall Meeting on June 16, 2020. Participating in the meeting where President Craig Smith, Chief Negotiator/Grievance Officer Mark MacLeod and Susan Ansara, ETFO Provincial. A question and answer session occurred for Members to ask questions about the Local Tentative Agreement prior to the ratification vote. Online voting took place from 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 16, 2020 until 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 18, 2020. On Friday, June 19, 2020 the membership overwhelmingly voted in support of the Local Tentative Agreement.

On behalf of the Collective Bargaining Committee and the Bargaining team, I would like to thank you for your support throughout this challenging year. The commitment and dedication of the 3600+ ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local Members was unprecedented and we have stood together because Local Bargaining Matters.

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

*Mark MacLeod, Chief Negotiator / Grievance Officer*

## 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*



As the situation with COVID-19 keeps evolving, OTIP continues to work closely with its stakeholders and partners to make proactive decisions that are grounded in care for its members and employees. Learn what you need to know about access OTIP's services during this time.

For more information, visit [www.otipinsurance.com/article67](http://www.otipinsurance.com/article67).



## Difficult Conversations

All teachers have a vested interest in the education of their students and the running of their schools. Sometimes our professional ideas conflict with the administration of the school. It is during these times that, as professionals, we enter difficult conversations. Every teacher should feel comfortable discussing educational issues with their principal. We are all part of the same school team. Below are a few tips to consider when entering one of these difficult conversations:

- Nail down the problem before arranging a meeting. Make sure it is clear. If unsure, discuss with a colleague or Workplace Steward first.
- Check your emotions and consider the time sensitivity of the issue. Sometimes waiting a few hours can lead to more rational problem-solving conversations.
- During the meeting, focus on the issue.
- Don't avoid having the conversation. Avoidance can lead to undue stress.
- Clearly indicate the purpose of the meeting.
- Be willing to listen.
- If possible, be prepared with some solutions. Be willing to consider alternate solutions.
- Review the summary of the conversation in an email. Electronic documentation is always recommended.

Many issues with simple solutions fester because of a lack of communication. If you are unsatisfied with the outcome of your conversation, consider discussing the problem with your school steward or calling your local office.

*Scott Hardie, Vice President*



## Teacher Performance Appraisal (TPA)

In consultation with the Ministry, the following process was put in place with respect to TPA's during the school closure period:

- TPAs (Experienced, New Teacher and Long Term Occasional Teacher) that had been scheduled for this year and had not been completed were postponed until Teachers are back in schools and completion of such is reasonably possible;
- TPAs where the summative report was the only outstanding component could have been completed by a virtual review meeting. If the result was a development needed/unsatisfactory rating, the Board will address the matter within 60 days of the return to schools;
- New Teachers who had not had their second appraisal completed will have it postponed until Teachers are back in school and their recommendation to the Board from probationary to permanent will be completed in the fall;
- In the cases where all components of the New Teacher Induction Program including two successful TPAs had been completed, these names went forward for recommendation in June.
- Teachers involved in an Enrichment Plan / Improvement Plan continued to work on the expectations connected to their plan but classroom observations and TPAs will follow the timelines as noted above and will be scheduled once Teachers are back in the schools.

Stay well and enjoy a well deserved summer break.

*Glenda Manzi, Vice President*

## 10 tips for safe summer grilling

Many Canadians choose to take their cooking outdoors in the summer to make the most of the long days of sunshine. However, it's important to take precautions when barbecuing to prevent potential fire-related injuries and damage to your home. Before you light up the grill this summer, make sure to review the following grilling safety tips.

For more information, visit [www.otipinsurance.com/article72](http://www.otipinsurance.com/article72).

## Wellness for the Summer and Beyond

This school year has seen us all experience a CUPE strike, ETFO negotiations, various stages of a Work-to-Rule campaign, strike days, and a world wide pandemic; these on top of all the regular demands of the teaching profession. With that said, we all deserve a time for rest and relaxation throughout the summer. This rest and relaxation can sometimes 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](http://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. This can occur 2 different ways. They will cease when you retire (congratulations!!!), or they can be terminated if you meet one of the following two criteria:

You have reached a 60% unreduced pension (30 credit years of teaching experience)

You have reached the age of 65.

If you qualify for scenario number 1 you must submit a Service Record from OTPP showing your 30 credit years. The LTD policy number for Thames Valley is 50188-111.

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 2019-2020 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.

It is our intention and hope that we will meet next year on Thursday, June 3, 2021 to honor both our 2020 and 2021 retirees. Specific details will be shared with you as soon as they are available.

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

### 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 this situation continues to evolve. Information will be conveyed to members as we progress.

*Mike Thomas, First Vice President*



## ETFO Membership Profile

- All Members are requested to log on to the Local's website ([www.etfothamesvalley.com](http://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.

## ***Congratulations!***

### **Health and Safety Activist Award**

***Lorrie Bailey, Southside P.S.***

### **Workplace Stewards' Award**

***Brent Dixon, Byron, Northview P.S.***

***Bill Lewis, White Oaks P.S.***

***Jamie McElrea, Mountsfield P.S.***

## **Are you retiring in June?**

If you are retiring in June please contact Erin at the ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local office by e-mail: [etfotvtl@etfothamesvalley.com](mailto:etfotvtl@etfothamesvalley.com) to submit your name, home address and personal email in order to receive an invitation to the Annual Banquet in the Spring of 2021.

## **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

## **Reminder**

ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local requires the names of the Workplace Stewards/Alternates and Health and Safety Representatives for the 2020 - 2021 school year.

Please submit the names and personal emails to [etfotvtl@etfothamesvalley.com](mailto: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 2020**

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

### **August 18 and 19, 2020**

- Federation Annual Meeting - August 18-19

## **Summer Hours**

### **ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local**

ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local office will close at 4:00 p.m. on Friday, June 26, 2020.

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

**President****Craig Smith**

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**Vice President****Glenda Manzi**

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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**