

To: ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local Members
From: Craig Smith, President, ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local (ETFO TVTL)
Date: November 25, 2022
Regarding: **Weekly Update (10)**

President's Remarks, ETFO TVTL General Meeting November 2022

Colleagues and Friends,

This school year is a paradox.

On one hand, there are collective expectations of the familiarity of in-person teaching and learning and a return to the pre-pandemic practices that entails.

On the other hand, these collective expectations are challenged by the realities of multiple rampant illnesses in schools, disruptions to program caused by student and staff absences, and by a dark and negative climate created by a government that is dismissive of parents, does not care about children, dislikes teachers, and despises unions.

In the midst of this paradox teachers carry on, as professionals, supporting student learning with world-class programming, engaging in ongoing communication with parents, and doing the heavy lifting required to maintain an excellent system of public education.

And while teachers contend with increasingly unrealistic Ministry and Board expectations, managerial ineptitude, inertia, and indifference, together we persevere and fight on.

Elementary schools are increasingly violent places for students and teachers. A steady increase in reported violent incidents - 400 in June, 700 in September, 900 in October – points to a pervasive and systemic problem that must be addressed by the government and school boards in Ontario.

Addressing violence in schools is a core priority of this Local one that is being addressed immediately as situations arise, and through collective bargaining. Concrete steps are being taken by the Local to reduce and eliminate violence in elementary schools.

Local collective bargaining will commence once the OLRB has rendered a decision on contested central items, and when the preliminary submission has been presented and approved by members. Our local goal is to obtain a fair collective agreement through the process of free and fair collective bargaining. We will continue to provide clear, concise, and timely updates to all members of the Local as we proceed.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention report cards and the "much-loved" Aspen/SIS.

Three years ago, the Local advised the Board not to procure Aspen. The acquisition, implementation, and operation of this program has been an unmitigated disaster, and has caused many teachers to be unnecessarily frustrated, profoundly disappointed, and understandably angry.

The joint TVDSB/ETFO report card meets next week. Feedback from teachers, the results of the all-member report card survey, and suggestions to fix this mess will be shared with the Board at this meeting.

As you know, our CUPE colleagues reached a tentative agreement with the government. Voting on this agreement started today and will continue through until December 5. The results of the ratification vote will not be made public until December 6.

I want to be very clear that the ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local has stood, stands now, and will stand in unwavering solidarity with our CUPE 4222 and CUPE 7575 colleagues in challenging times. We know they will do the same for us.

This message of solidarity has been communicated directly and consistently to the CUPE leadership, through them to all CUPE members, and to all members of ETFO TVTL.

Thank you all for the work that you do every day, and for your ongoing support of the work of the Local. It is acknowledged and very much appreciated.

In Solidarity,



Craig

CUPE Tentative Agreement

CUPE and the Government of Ontario reached a tentative agreement on Sunday November 21. Voting on the terms of the tentative agreement commenced on Thursday November 24.

Communication Protocol

Teachers are reminded that the **Communication Protocol** remains in effect, **from** Friday, November 25 at 6:00 p.m. **until** Sunday, November 27 at 6:00 p.m.

The Board's **Disconnecting from Work Employee Procedure** came into effect on Thursday, June 2 in compliance with the **Working for Workers Act, 2021**.

Violations of the **Communication Protocol** and the **TVDSB Disconnecting from Work Procedure** must be reported to the Local office immediately.

It is the duty of the Local to:

Duty of the Local

- Defend the **Collective Agreement** and the rights of Teachers under it.
- Ensure that the provisions of the **Occupational Health and Safety Act** are enforced.
- Bring to the attention of TVDSB ongoing Teacher concerns, with the expectation that these concerns will be taken seriously and resolved quickly.
- Communicate with Teachers in a clear, concise, and timely manner.

Thank you for all that you do.

For more information regarding this **Communiqué**, please contact the Local office by email at etfotvtl@etfothamesvalley.com or by phone at 519-474-3150.

c. *ETFO TVTL Released Officers*
Terry Card, President, ETFO Thames Valley Occasional Teacher Local
Elizabeth Kettle, ETFO Provincial CB Staff Officer