THE OTBU NEWS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE OCCASIONAL TEACHERS BARGAINING UNIT - DISTRICT 12

MAY/JUNE, 2009

OSSTF/OTBU

Volume 7, Issue 3

President's Report

David Hopkins, President D-12, OTBU

It has been a long and trying year, with contract negotiations, the need to establish new staffing and evaluation procedures with the TDSB, and dealing with an increasingly hostile environment out there in our schools.

Be that as it may, I would like to thank all members of our Occasional Teacher Bargaining Unit for your hard work in the schools, and for your high degree of professionalism in carrying out your duties.

Important Deadlines and Changes

As I did at the Annual General Meeting, I would like to remind members that there are a few changes in the way the Board will conduct its business this year.

- 1. ALL renewals will have to be done electronically, via the Board's web site.
- 2. These renewals must be completed by JUNE 30, 2009

(See page 2)

3. Due to changes in the Employment Insurance Regulations (your friendly government), the TDSB will not be required to send out your personal Record of Employment (ROE). Instead the Board will be sending this information electronically to Service Canada.

(See article on E.I. by Linda Bartram)

- 4. You must complete a Criminal Offence Declaration.
- In order to maintain your place on the Occasional Teacher Roster of the TDSB, you must complete 10 days of Occasional Teacher work in 2009-2010.

The renewal deadline and the Criminal Offence Declaration are critical to your remaining on the Occasional Teacher Roster, so please do not ignore them. It is also necessary to be on the Roster if you wish to access benefits which you may have earned by working 90 days in 2008-2009.



Long Term Occasional Positions

In order to continue to monitor the hiring processes for Long term Occasional Teachers, we are asking all members who apply for such positions (LTOs), to email (otbud12@sympatico.ca) or fax (416-423-5934) the following details to our office.

- A. The job number of the posting.
- B. The school where the job is located.
- C. The timetable or job description.

We need this data to ensure fair hiring practices continue within the TDSB.

Be Careful Out There

I mentioned that I have seen a growing hostility, or lack of tolerance toward Occasional Teachers in the past few months. Occasional Teachers need to tread carefully when dealing with students. If there appears to be problems or questions of safety or outright disobedience of school procedures, or reasonable requests for cooperation, call the Vice Principal or Principal. Do not touch the students. It is also important to keep a record of the response you get from the school Administration.

In this vein, we are going to be gathering data on schools, which you believe, treat you with respect and in which students are reasonably cooperative and helpful. This will help us identify "Best Practices" for us to use in our ongoing consultation discussions with the Board.

Also, in the Fall, we will be continuing our work to develop better professional development opportunities - supports for members and a realistic evaluation process that will be used for professional growth.

Have a safe and restful summer.

Summer is Almost Here and There Are Some Things You Need To Do!

Renewal Process-New Deadline Date is June 30. 2009

The annual renewal to remain on the Occasional Teaching Roster for the 2009-2010 school year is now available online. The deadline date is June 30, 2009. You must renew by this date or you shall be removed

from the Occasional Teacher Roster

To access the renewal form on the web from home:

- . Go to www.tdsb.on.ca
- . Select the About Us menu and then Staff Login
- . Select the TDSB Web sign-in
- . Type in your username and password and then Login
- . Click on **TDSBWeb** (first link/selection on the top of the page) where you will be taken to the Internal TDSS Webpage
- . On the orange toolbar at the top of your screen select **Employee Services** > **Forms** > **Occasional Teaching**> **Renewal Form** (available after June 1st)
- If you are logging in from a school computer and are already in the TDSS Web home page on the orange toolbar select **Employee Services**> **Forms**> **Occasional Teaching**.

**NOTE: You must renew on-line. If you need to reset your password, refer to the instructions on the back of the 2009 Offence Declaration Memo or call us at 395 4357 (HELP), option 5

<u>The On-Line Offence Declaration Form:</u> must be completed to ensure your name remains active on the Occasional Teaching roster for the next school year. You can access the form through the TDSS website at www.tdsb.on.ca. following the same path as above, selecting. **Forms> Offence Declaration.**



Report from the STBU

Secondary Teachers of Toronto remain the only group of public education workers in the province of Ontario to be without a collective agreement. In spite of our Rally for Respect where over 3500 OSSTF members voiced their demand that the TDSB show the members of the STBU the same respect shown by employers to every other public education bargaining unit in Ontario, and in spite of the fact that over 5000 teachers voted in favour of a strike to protect our working conditions, negotiations remain at a stand still, and the TDSB Trustees busy themselves with the priorities of cutting Educational Assistants and closing school pools. For the time being, members of the STBU are content to wait until the Labour Board hearing is completed, and a ruling made. The hearing is scheduled to take place at the beginning of August, but we do not know how long it will take for the Labour Board to rule on the case. But regardless of whether the Labour Board upholds our case or not, the secondary teachers in Toronto remain committed to our position that we will not be the only public education workers in Ontario to agree to strips to our contract in return for funding promised by the provincial government. We appreciate the support shown to us by members of the OTBU Executive and bargaining unit as we continue to engage in this struggle with our common employer.

Leslie Wolfe Vice President/Chief Negotiator

OSSTF District 12 Toronto Secondary Teachers Bargaining Unit

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

by Linda Bartram, Vice-President, D12 OTBU

Many OTBU members apply for Employment Insurance (EI) during the summer break when no occasional teaching work is available. This is intended to help you with the process.

If you did <u>not</u> apply for Employment Insurance last year, you will need Records of Employment (ROE) for the past 104 weeks.

The number of qualifying hours is currently 560 hours...

If you did apply for Employment Insurance last year, you will only require Records of Employment for the past 52 weeks. For the period June 7th to July 11,the number of qualifying hours required for eligibility for E.I. benefits for Toronto is currently 560 hours, provided you had at least 490 qualifying hours in the preceding year. This number may vary depending on your home address and the changing rate of unemployment.

The Toronto District School Board will transfer the information on your Record of Employment electronically directly to Service Canada. *NEW *-A copy of your ROE will NOT be mailed to your home for the first time this year. It is very important to check your ROEs to ensure the full year or two years are covered, as required. This year's ROE will only be available on the Service Canada web site or at your local Service Canada office. If you are unable to print a copy of your ROE from either of these sources, you should call the payroll office of the TDSB at 416- 395-9642 to request a print copy of your ROE.

Service Canada is encouraging on-line applications. To apply on-line please go to www.servicecanada.gc.ca. You may use any computer to access the site.

<u>You must</u> apply within 14 days of the last available day of work. A late application may result in the denial of benefits. The processing of your claim may take up to 6 weeks.



School Board employees who are applying for benefits between June 1, 2009 and August 7, 2009 are asked to use the following Reference Code: 3557012009SCHOOL for information in English OR 3529012009FRENCH for information in French. Enter the reference code exactly as shown in capital letters. Codes are case sensitive. The same code will be used for Summer, Winter and March breaks for 2009/2010. The code is only open for the following period for the Summer break: June 1 – August 7, 2009. This reference code should only be used to apply for regular benefits.

The reference codes you will need for your application are: 3557012009SCHOOL for information in English,

3557012009SCHOOL for information in English, 3529012009FRENCH for information in French

You will be asked for a return to work date on the application. If you do not know the date, Service Canada has asked you to enter the following in the appropriate place: 10102010.

Please remember if you are collecting Employment Insurance benefits, you must be looking for full-time employment of a temporary nature over the summer. You must keep a written record of your job search as you may be asked to produce evidence of your job search.

You should know that comments that you make to Service Canada officers over the phone are written down and become part of your file.

The Union will assist you with problems you may encounter with your Employment Insurance application. You may call the OTBU office at 416-423-3600 until June 30, 2009. After that , call the Provincial OSSTF office at 416-751-8300. The Provincial OSSTF office is open during the summer months except for the period of July 20 to August 3 when a Duty Officer will be available to assist you.

May 27, 2009 General Meeting by Linda Enright

Another Annual General Meeting has come and gone.



As usual it was an entertaining evening with challenges for all.

To gain admittance to this prestigious session, we first be had to be familiar with the alphabet in order to cross our names off the appropriate registration list. We all passed this test, 100% success. We were off to a good start.

Next we had to gather up the necessary papers, assignment sheets for the evening. Someone had helpfully used different coloured paper for the diverse missives to accommodate disparate learning styles. That way we did not have to actually read the titles; we could just identify the requisite hues. This was not as easy as it sounded. There were three orange sets, pumpkin, salmon, carrot, sienna, titian? The agenda was boring beige. Biscuit might be more appealing, café-au-lait would have been classy, buff might have conjured up interesting images to keep us going through the boring bits of the meeting. The Negotiator's report was pink. Rose, coral or raspberry to put us at ease? Flush or roseate to make us worry about our future? The resolutions were yellow, a cowardly colour? Flaxen might have relaxed us whilst mustard would not have been to everyone's taste. The Constitution and Bylaws were printed on true blue. Were they azure, cerulean or beryl? Who knew that the OTBU document producers could be so imaginative?

Great excitement, we moved to the cookies, homemade style. Everyone knew that teachers had to have sugary snacks in order to survive after school meetings. The AGM came through; there were excellent chocolate chunk baked crisps. White chocolate, dark and milk, we embraced inclusion.

The meeting began. The hall was close to full, except for the first row. There were few teachers' pets willing to cozy up to the head table. The vacant spots were ready for the latecomers who would tardily join the proceedings. Since they would have missed the early bird refreshments, they were aptly seated for a quick exit and could be first in line for the excellent free dinner.

The meeting began reasonably with welcomes, Pledge and introductions. However then came the math challenges. The first interruption was an amendment to the agenda. We were to put 11 before 10. This was too much of a word problem and we voted to maintain normal numeration. Then came the card games. Possibly some participants were playing fish or gin rummy at the back, but at the front red, white, yellow and blue cards were flashing around. Did someone abscond with the blue ones? Did someone have them under their coat? They seemed to disappear part way through the meeting? Was someone going to use them as a teaching aid? Did someone need placemats?

We all had a welcome exercise break when a standing vote was necessary. A brief session of Head and Shoulders, Knees and Toes, might have also been appreciated. Certain members had a good workout as they frequently leapt from their seats to entertain us at the microphones. Stand up comedians in training kept the membership giggling.

However a proposed 15-minute extension to the meeting was greeted with roars of dissention. We needed food. Final amendments to the Constitution would have to wait until the next GM.

Continued next page......

AGM Continued

The dinner was, as usual excellent. The rain prevented us from partying on the lawn, as we would have liked. The tent sheltered the BBQ and marvelous cook who despite the damp, kept the platters filled. We were able to mingle with friends as the dining area rapidly filled with hungry educators. After filling the mind at the meeting, the bodies needed sustenance. There were accolades about the food. There was plenty for carnivores, there were vegetarian options, there were salads galore; there were desserts to satisfy the sweetest tooth. The liquid refreshments were rather avidly consumed, resulting in a temporary shortage of certain beverages. The supply was soon replenished and despite one case trying to take a mysterious walk, there were suitable libations for all.

It was a great evening. We met old friends, we made new friends. We were entertained, wined and dined. We learned new facts. We contributed to the democratic process. We helped ensure the future of teaching. Attendees should all be proud of themselves and the OTBU D12.



We all get heavier as we get older because there's a lot more information in our heads. So I'm not fat, I'm just really intelligent and my head couldn't hold any more so it started filling up the rest of me!

That's my story and I'm sticking to it!

STRESS RELIEF COMING UP.....HEARTMATH!

Our OTBU member, Jane Milligan, has studied this stress relief system and is prepared to explain it in one of our P.D. sessions in the new school year. Here are some comments by her.

Supply teachers are a special breed of teacher. We have come to realize that because the students are not 'ours' and we often have a very short time in which to develop a rapport, we will be challenged by some of the 'adventurous' in the classes that we are expected to manage. Their regular teacher actually hopes that we will successfully teach the lessons that have been left behind. Can you spell S-T-R-E-S-S? It is difficult to think of a more stressful situation. There are many places to assign blame, but in the end that will not relieve the Stress and we are the ones who will pay the price. Stress can be emotionally and physically damaging, compromising our health. In order not to become a victim, it is important to for us to become educated regarding stress and learn how to have stress-free classroom experiences. It was when I had a diagnosis of a disease that was stress-related back in 1989 that my attention was captured and I rejected the future painted for me. I began to learn about the role stress played in my health and since then I have recently been introduced to a winning system which has changed my classroom practice and my outlook. The Institute of HeartMath, a research and education organization has made reducing stress and enhancing learning its mission particularly in education. I have attended their educational program and learned how to help teachers become 'resilient'. As a Licensed 'Resilient Educator®' Instructor as well as a TDSB Occasional Teacher I am available to share these easy-to-learn techniques and the background behind their success. HeartMath is going to be a P.D. topic, possibly in the fall. Watch for it.

Jane Milligan's Article submitted by Jennifer Mills Executive Officer

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LONG TERM OCCASIONALS

by Vincent Zambrano Vice President

If you are interested in obtaining employment as a Long Term Occasional Teacher we would like to inform/remind you that the postings come out every Tuesday and that you should consult the appropriate section of the Board website. Alternatively, posting sheets can be picked up on Tuesday afternoon at the Secondary Teaching Office, 2nd floor of the TDSB.



In the new collective agreement, that we ratified in January, there is a new clause which requires the TDSB to report to the OTBU the Long Term Occasional Teacher positions posted and the name of the successful candidate for each position.

The first of these lists for the period from January 1 to the middle of February has been provided and indicates that during that period 90 LTO positions were posted and successfully filled by our members.

Of the members who were successful in obtaining an LTO 76% were not retired members.

We intend to use this data to ensure that all of our members are given fair consideration when they apply for the LTO positions. The new Collective Agreement provides for a Staffing Committee whose task is to review the staffing process for the upcoming year. This Staffing Committee, which will meet this June for the first time, is the means to ensure we have input into the Board's occasional teacher staffing process.

In reply to certain disgruntled members of the Bargaining Unit who promote, actively, the notion that LTO positions tend to be gained by a specific group or section of our membership, the statistics provided by this first list of successful candidate seems to suggested that information presently being disseminated by uninformed members is false.

Your Bargaining Unit Executive will continue to work toward ensuring that the members have the best working conditions and equal access to work. We will continue to strive to protect members through continued maintenance of our Collective Agreement provisions.

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Toronto District School Board Issues by Liz Barkley



Problems of the Toronto District School Board

It was reported earlier this spring that there have been two private schools that have for several years rented TDSB property and owe back rent of nearly \$1 million. This has been a developing problem and there is no quick fix in sight. The TDSB owns 97 properties which are considered surplus and sellable. When you consider our continuing declining enrolment over the next five years, and you add to that the Board's deficit we are in a very worrisome situation. As well, there are very needed new programs for students at risk, much demand for expanded ESL programs, the real need for expansion of the breakfast program, as well as more programs for Special Education students. This has lead me to the conclusion that the TDSB could well use the money it would get from disposing of at least some of these properties. I have not even including proposed changes to the curriculum that have been put forward and would cost money to implement. Examples of these new programmes are Economic and Budgeting courses, Understanding of our Environment, expanded Physical and Heath Education Programs, and Black History to be included as part of the History program.

Vending Machines In Our Schools Or Not?

An ongoing dispute is occurring among the staff and trustees at the TDSD. Should the Vending Machines contain sugar-laden regular pop or Vending Machines which contain diet pop that is sweetened with the chemical laden aspartame? The TDSB would lose \$500,000 of annual concession revenue which the Board presently spends on sport teams, repairs of crumbling buildings etc. if the present Vendor contract was terminated. Health-conscious parents and students are much opposed to the ingredients contained in traditional soft drinks. It has come down to your traditional Vending Machines which contain Pepsi and Coke or Vending Machines which contain Diet Pop with aspartame? The long-term safety of aspartame is uncertain as to whether it could or would put students health at risk. The dispute is very heated and as yet has not been resolved.

EQAO Test

We have an example of a have-not school in **Sir Sanford Fleming**. As reported in the Toronto Sun on June 11, 2009, there have been some phenomenal changes in that school. In 2005 the school test rate was 34% and this year it is 66%. What changed the score, it is believed, was that there were numerous extra-curricular activities as well as student involvement in as many aspects of the school and the community as possible. **Weston Collegiate** is also a notable success

WELCOMING A GUEST TO THE SCHOOL by Vincent Zambrano

THE SUPPLY TEACHER IS COMING

During my long career as a teacher, whether in the primary or secondary panels, there was always excitement when I informed my class that we would have a guest.

The guest was coming to the school to inform, entertain and educate but the reasons mattered little. Having a guest was just something that seemed to excite the class.

The administration, on being informed that there would be a guest in the school, was generally pleased and supportive even if it meant there might be some disruption to the normal routine of the day.

The students were always on their best behaviour and courteous to a fault.

Imagine the outcome for the school community if the teachers, the administration and the students were to act in the same fashion to the frequent guest who comes to replace a teacher for the day or longer.

If we all can re-contextualize the arrival of an Occasional Teacher (Supply) within this framework of welcoming a guest, the possibilities are endless.

The Occasional Teachers must, as all good guests would, ensure they are aware of their responsibility and prepared to do their utmost to fulfill their task to the best of their abilities- even if the conditions they are presented with are not always optimal.

Let the school community welcome the guest, the Occasional Teacher, and we all will benefit by having a well staffed, safe and effective learning environment.

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OSSTF DISTRICT 12 - 2009 Labour Day Parade "GOOD JOBS FOR ALL"

Monday September 7th 2009- 9:30 am

Meet at southwest corner of University & Dundas, north of Armoury (St. Patrick Subway)

To register for luncheon & order an OSSTF District 12 hockey jersey please fax order form to, or call, Marion Reid at 393-8900

DEADLINE TO ORDER: Noon Wed June 24th 2009 (You must pick up your hockey jersey in person at the start of the parade between 9:30 & 10 am)

NOTE: NO FREE ENTRANCE TO THE CNE

(Wrist bands must be worn to gain admittance- will be handed out at the meeting site- 9:30 to 10 am)

Please make a right as we pass Queen & Dufferin into the Gladstone to join the District for a Luncheon

Labour Day 2009 - Hockey Jerseys

Name	School	Size

Sizes for Hockey Jerseys through Chest	
XS	40"
S	44"
M	48"
L	52"
XL	56"
2XL	60"
3XL	64"
4XL	68"
5XL	72"
6XL	76"

For more information contact Mike Platt at 393-8900 or mplatt@osstfd12.com

For Your Information



The New GDP

The GDP, the Gross Domestic Product, is the value of activity produced by a country in a given year. It does not differentiate between harmful activity (destroying farmlands, polluting our waterways, wetlands and forests) and productive activity. Included in the GDP are such negative things as tobacco, accident costs, natural and made-man disasters, which make the GDP go up, and unpaid work such as housework, volunteer work, and child care. which are not included in the GDP because they are not in the formal market place. The GDP has been seen as the measurement of progress. Yet over the years many are uncomfortable with this narrow measurement and there is a global movement developing much broader criteria to measure societal progress. There is a move to have a more holistic view one that takes into account quality of life of the people. In Canada we have become a part of this movement with the founding of the Institute of Wellbeing and the Canadian Index of Wellbeing. The Institute is affiliated with the University of Waterloo. It will be a much broader measurement dealing will eight different areas of measurement to deal with quality of our citizen's lives. Such things as the health of the population, community vitality, education, environment, art, culture, recreation and our standard of living will be included. A very welcome change.

Our Municipal Water Systems

1 billion dollars lost to taxpayers! This is the cost of leaking and broken pipes in municipal water systems. This information is contained in a report by the Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario. In Toronto repair is only done when it absolutely must be and the pipes are very old. Our water rates have increased by 9% over the last few years because some pipes have had to be replaced. The replacements are not replaced until the pipe is broken. Some of the existing pipes are over 100 years old. The report states that municipal water systems have leakage rates from 10% to 50% which the author states is the equivalent of 327 million cubic metres every year and that this would fill 131,000 Olympic sized pools. And we the taxpayers are paying for this problem.

Advice on Our Food and What We Should Eat

A study, conducted over many years by McMaster University deals in particular with heart disease, diabetes, and cancer. The report reported some conclusions which are obvious such as whole grains, vegetables and fish are good and processed meats (hot dogs and baloney), red meat, trans fats, and processed food are bad. The study is not a strong proponent of supplements. The report includes that one should consume healthy portions of tomatoes and other vegetables such as avocadoes. The report also stresses that one should consume fruit, almonds, whole grains breads, feta cheese, and olive oil.

Fresh Water.....A Continuing Crisis

The problem that we have reported in this newsletter of the crisis of people obtaining pure clean water is escalating and is being extensively reported. The latest report was in the Toronto Sun on May 23rd. And people are craving access to one of our greatest resources. The largest inland body of water in the world, The Great Lakes...is on our doorstep. The U.S. and Canada are stewards of 20% of the world's fresh water. We have been working jointly with the U.S. since 1970. Herb Grey is the Canadian Commissioner in charge of administrating what occurs on and to the Lakes and has expressed hope that the new President Obama will show more interest than did the former President Bush. As parts of the U.S. South and Midwest dry up, there has been and is a continuing pressure to divert water from the Great Lakes. There was and is a great deal of pressure to divert our water south. There are continuing pressures and problems that will confront our major source of fresh water and we must make sure it is not either privatized or diverted.

Vitamin D Much More Important Than Most Thought

New studies are revealing that Vitamin D is even more important than we assumed. A leading research team insists that Vitamin D is emerging as a very important ingredient in cancer prevention and treatment. The Canadian and American Governments are so concerned that they have set up an expert panel to assess whether current intake advice needs to be revised. We have been told that 200 to 600 IU a day were sufficient. That was changed in 2007 to 1000 IU per day. The surveys that have been done to date indicated that those with generous amounts of Vitamin D generally have about half the risk of developing colon or breast censer. Researchers at the University of California estimate how much the two cancers rates would fall by taking the 2000 IU per day. There is disagreement on this and there are further studies occurring. Dr. John McLaughlin, Vice-president of Population Studies and Surveillance at Cancer Care Ontario says the case is strong enough to take action, and his study estimates that increasing vitamin D intake would reduce the total number of North Americans contracting breast and prostate cancer by more than 100,000 per year. Approximately 3000 studies have been published in the medical literature investigating the association between vitamin D and many kinds of cancer. According to Dr McLaughlin, a preponderance of the studies, although not all, have found Vitamin D plays a beneficial role. According to the literature, other cancers linked to low Vitamin D status include those of the ovary, kidney and uterus. Further studies are occurring.

The Continuing Problem of El.

We, in Canada, have paid into EI all our working lives. However, many unemployed workers cannot access EI. John Cartwright, Chairperson of the Toronto and York Labour Council, has stated that only a third of Toronto's unemployed workers qualify for EI. under the existing rules. In Toronto a worker must currently have 560 hours to qualify and the number varies across the country. In April only 744,000 of the 1.4 million who have lost their jobs could access EI. The remaining 48% don't meet Ottawa's eligibility standards. The three opposition parties are calling for substantially fewer hours at least until the recession is over. Stephen Harper is adamantly opposed. On June 12, 2009 Harper implied he might well change his mind! The pressure on him is increasing. People are working together to achieve important changes. There is a very broad Coalition that is active in our area. O.S.S.T.F. District 12 is a part of the Coalition.



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