

OSSTF Limestone District 27



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To: Teachers' Bargaining Unit

From: John Vince, District and Teachers' Bargaining Unit President

Re: **PAR and the Process**

Date: Feb 4, 2014

Dear Members,

This monograph is to clarify the timelines involved in the PAR process and to answer questions from members about the role of PAR.

Process for Determining PAR Structure

In our Collective Agreement, Article 17 outlines Positions of Added Responsibility (PAR). This Article gives important timelines and considerations for PAR. Article 17 states that PAR; must be filled by one person, must be subject or programme based (except for Adult Education, Student Services and Alternative Education Credit Programs) and must be balanced in terms of safety, programme and workload. Examples of programmes include ESL, Focus Programs, and Applied Level. Examples of subjects include the obvious such as Math, Science and perhaps the not so obvious such as Communication (English and Moderns).

PAR positions are allocated to schools for the following school year by February 7. In consultation with the School Based Work Team (SBWT), current PAR committee and teaching staff, each Principal develops a PAR structure. The SBWT must endorse the PAR proposal before it is brought to the Teaching Staff. The PAR structure proposal should be passed by motion of the Teaching Staff by February 28 or at the first staff meeting in March. If passed, the proposal is reviewed by the Joint Secondary Staffing Committee by April 15.

Role of Head of Department

Prior to the destruction wrought by former Premier Harris, the Education Act listed many roles for a Head of a Department. These roles included things like: mentoring new teachers, participating in interview teams, recommending appointments to the teaching staff, recommending timetables and assignments, maintaining equipment and more! After the Harris changes, these roles were reduced to a single line, "to direct and supervise, subject to the authority of the principal" the department. This change reflected the new reality of almost no funding and no time for the role.

Many Department Heads have continued to do extra work to ensure smooth running of the Department. For example, many Heads proof-read exams, order supplies, maintain equipment, organize Grade 8 day, organize Grade 8 parent/guardian night and are involved in timetabling. However, all of these jobs are beyond our interpretation of “direct and supervise” and in fact are duties that were specifically removed from the Education Act. The role of a Department Head is to be a Point Person for the Department. The Head can provide an efficient conduit for information from administration to the Department and vice versa; for example by attending monthly PAR meetings. Furthermore, Department Heads involvement in timetabling should be limited to ‘acting as a champion’ for the Department; for example by advocating for a member when they want to teach a certain subject. However, it is up to the Principal to assign courses and it is important that we avoid doing work that could potentially lead to member-to-member conflict.

It is your personal choice whether to do extra things as a Head of a Department. If the Ministry or the Board wants members to do more (such as acting as an Instructional Leader, ordering supplies, maintaining equipment, giving a dog & pony show...) than it would seem only fair that release time be associated with the position. As professionals, teachers want things to run smoothly, and we continuously make up shortfalls in the system. However, we will not return to the days of Department Heads with time release if we do more with less.

Yours in Solidarity,

John