

OSSTF Limestone District 27

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MEMORANDUM

To: All Members of the Teachers' Bargaining Unit

From: Teresa Marrello, District Officer

Date: December 8, 2009

1. Retirement & Occasional Teaching

If you retire at the end of Semester I, you *can* do occasional teaching Semester II. To get on the Occasional list for the beginning of Semester II you must get a recommendation letter from your current principal. Send the letter to Paula Medeiros, Staffing Coordinator, and include the following information:

- Your current address and telephone numbers where you can be reached
- Your current qualification record card from the Ontario College of Teachers
- Your preferred subject areas and schools at which you are willing to teach
- Your availability—ie every day, or not on Fridays, or just Tuesdays

The Board must receive this information package by mid **January** in order to place you on the February addendum list of Occasional Teachers.

2. Claiming Extended Health Benefits

December 31, 2009 is the deadline to submit a medical claim for **2008**. Extended Health Benefit Claim forms can usually be found in the main office at your workplace. Alternately, you may download a form from the website found at <http://www.manulife.ca/groupbenefits>.

3. Staffing & Class Size Maxima Update

At the staffing meeting of December 2, 2009, placements were made for Semester II as a result of new information such as leaves for Semester II, resignations and retirements and increases in enrollment above Board projections. I am happy to report that the surplus and redundancy lists were cleared and a number of splits were resolved at that meeting. We were also able to complete some more transfers. The end result is that PAR positions and contract sections are being advertised for Semester II which gives members the opportunity for movement or to increase their entitlement. If you do not have an entitlement of 6 classes (full time) and you wish to increase your entitlement, please be aware that according to the Teachers' Collective Agreement: A Teacher with an entitlement of 3 classes or more **shall** be appointed before anyone new is hired; and a Teacher with an entitlement of 1 or 2 classes **should** be appointed before anyone new is hired.

The District Staffing Committee has adjourned and will reconvene in the spring to begin staffing for next year. The Joint Secondary Staffing Committee will meet in the near future to review the staffing process. The President, Steve Newstead, the Chief Negotiator, Dave Herrington and I will represent OSSTF. We have expressed our concerns re staffing timelines and how the delay in communicating placements and teaching assignments affects our members.

The Chief Negotiator, President and I met with the Board on October 19 to discuss class size maxima overages. We have reviewed the data provided by the Board and cross-referenced this with our OSSTF CBC Class size survey data. We reported any anomalies to the Board on November 5. On November 11 we met with the Board to continue to negotiate a class size for ESL Language and ESL Sheltered classes as per the Letter of Agreement signed January 2009. We presented the Board with a proposal at that time. We are scheduled to meet on December 9 to finalize this class size issue. Once this is complete we will be able to move forward with a resolution to the current class size maxima violations.

If at any point during the semester your class size increases and violates the Collective Agreement, you would be entitled to any settlement that is negotiated. Please report this violation to your Branch President and the District Officer immediately

4. Retirement Workshop

If you are considering retiring within the next seven years, you are encouraged to attend the Retirement Workshop scheduled for February 3, 2010 at 4:00 pm in the Library at Frontenac Secondary School. The workshop will be presented by Ruth Kirkham, the Provincial OSSTF Pensions and Benefits Officer. This

is an excellent workshop with a lot of valuable information. To sign up, please call the District Office at (613) 546-6985.

5. January Pay

Your January pay may seem lower because EI and CPP deductions begin again. The Ontario College of Teachers fee of \$120 will be deducted from the January 22nd pay.

6. Teacher Voice on Assessment—Here's Another Chance to Voice Your Concerns!

Assessment, evaluation and reporting policies are under review at the Ministry of Education. OSSTF has raised many valid concerns about current practices, credit integrity, etc. at both the Local and Provincial levels. Chief among these concerns is that the Ministry and Boards have not ever consulted the experts who deal with assessment every day—the classroom teachers. The Ministry has hired the Ontario Teacher's Federation (OTF) to conduct a survey—Teacher Voice on Assessment (TVAP).

- This online survey is being developed with input from Teacher Federations, and classroom teachers.
- An invitation letter will be sent to every secondary school teacher in Ontario—full and part-time regular teachers, LTO's and adult day school teachers with the URL, a Board code, and instructions on how to create a unique confidential 4 digit numerical PIN number.
- If Teachers complete the survey from their own personal computer, they may be able to do part of it at one sitting and then finish it later. If a Teacher completes the survey at school, they will have to complete it all at once (about 30-40 minutes).
- Only Teachers who are actively doing student assessment should complete the survey--Not Teacher Librarians or Guidance Counselors unless they teach credit courses.
- We need **EVERY** Teacher to participate for best results and so that results can be used to shape future Ministry policy changes.
- There will be follow-up interviews of Teachers next spring at selected schools around the province in order to get more nuanced and detailed Teacher opinions and samples of the best and perhaps worst practices.
- A final report of province-wide findings will be produced in August 2010.
- In 2010-2011, a resource book for Teacher use will be written based on project findings.

*Summary of T/OT SCOP #19, Rosemary Clark

7. Take Control of Your Mental Health--feelingbetternow.com

FeelingBetterNow is a new mental and emotional health care program that has recently been added to our Long Term Disability Plan by OTIP. The program has been approved by the College of Family Physicians of Canada.

The program provides easy-to-use tools to help with common problems such as sadness, anxiety, depression, stress, low energy, poor sleep, poor concentration and poor function at home, work or school. The program provides emotional and mental health assessment, tools that you and your doctor can use to assess, treat and follow-up on emotional and mental health concerns. It also provides resources about these issues.

To access the program, visit www.feelingbetternow.com/otip. You will need your LTD group policy number **L7027-902** and the following access code **OTIPRAEO**. Accessing the website is completely confidential and anonymous. FeelingBetterNow will respond to medical and work-related questions and give you a printable Diagnostic Risk Assessment map and a Care Map that you can take to your family doctor. These maps can help you and your doctor to identify issues, prevent problems and manage and promote your mental and emotional well-being.

***** **Have a Wonderful Holiday** *****

Questions? Please don't hesitate to call or email.

email: officer@kingston.net