



OCCASIONAL TEACHERS' BULLETIN

Dufferin-Peel Occasional Teachers' Bargaining Unit

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volume 15 Issue 2



The President's Message

Jean Smylie

We are now into the new year and hopefully everyone had a relaxing and enjoyable Christmas holiday.

Teaching, as a career, has always moved in cycles. Ten years ago there was a severe shortage of teachers. We are now in a teacher surplus situation! Most school boards are experiencing declining enrolment and fewer teachers retiring. In light of this, it's safe to assume that many teachers may be spending up to 10 years as occasional teachers.

This year our OTBUnit office has received many calls from members concerned about the lack of daily work. To date, there are approximately 1472 occasional teachers with approximately 439 LTOs which leaves 1033 occasional teachers longing for daily work. To compound the problem, approximately 60% to 70% of daily jobs are assigned to occasional teachers who are requested by school principals. In addition, teacher absences are down due to the Attendance Support Program (ASP) implemented in October 2011. With approximately 400 jobs available on a good day, this means that we have over 600 oc-

casional teachers sitting at home not working on any given day. Overall, this has resulted in a drastic reduction of days worked by occasional teachers, despite being available every day.

It is important that you are eligible for as many assignments as possible. You do not need to be qualified in order to teach all grades/subjects, you only need to be willing to teach them. Consider expanding your profile by adding schools and classifications in February, and/or increasing your availability days.

As we move into collective bargaining this year, we will address areas that are governed by our collective agreement, in order to achieve fairer and equitable job distribution.

Jean



**In Memory of
Donna Long
Occasional Teacher
Passed away
January 15, 2012**

**Local Executive
2011-2012**

Jean Smylie
President

Teresa Kolk
Vice President

Michael Farrugia
Treasurer

Sherron Ritz
Secretary

Councillors

Mike Rahal

Lisa Stokaluk-Bartnik

Lesia Teply

Roman Vynyarchuk

Webmaster

John Horemans

On the web

dpeel-ot.org

In this issue...

- Board's Hiring Procedure
- College of Teachers' Fee Increase
- CPP Changes
- Criminal Offence Declaration 2012

GENERAL MEETING — OTBUnit By-Laws

Wednesday, February 22nd 2012

at the OECTA Office Auditorium
(6435 Edwards Blvd.) at 4:30 p.m.
Refreshments served from 3:30 p.m.

Please come! Bring a Colleague!

Ontario College of Teachers' Fee

Your 2012 College of Teachers' fee has been increased from \$120 to \$138 effective January 2012. All LTO teachers and daily occasional teachers who received a pay on January 19th, 2012 had their fee deducted (OCOT) by the Payroll Department, and sent directly to the Ontario College of Teachers for you.

If you did **not** receive a pay on the above date, you are responsible for paying your fee directly to the College no later than April 15th, 2012.

Payment can be made electronically on the College of Teachers' web site, by credit card or by mailing a cheque.

Canada Pension Plan Changes

As of **January 2012**:

If you are 60 to 65 years of age and continue to work while receiving your CPP pension, you will be required to make CPP contributions. These contributions will go toward your Post Retirement Benefit (PRB). The Post Retirement Benefit (PRB) is a new lifetime benefit that increases your retirement income and rises with increases in the cost of living, even if you already draw the maximum pension from CPP.

If you are between the ages of 65 and 70 and you work while receiving your CPP pension, you can **choose to make contributions or opt out (Form CPT 30)**. If you choose to make contributions, the Board will match the contributions and these contributions will allow you to continue to build your CPP Post Retirement Benefit (PRB).

Contributions toward the PRB begin on January 1, 2012 and the benefit will be paid out the following year, starting in **2013**.

Board's Hiring Procedure

At a recent Arbitration hearing counsel for the school board explained the Board's hiring process. On the basis of his explanation in the hearing, the process can be summarized as follows: should permanent position(s) become available, the Board selects the successful candidate(s) from either of its two "preferred to hire" lists.

One "preferred to hire" list is comprised of occasional teachers who have been recommended for permanent hire by school administrators. Near the end of each school year the school boards asks Principals to complete a form by writing in the names of occasional teachers that have completed LTOs who might be candidates for hire. The form requires the principal to indicate the occasional teacher's area(s) of expertise and ranking of either 'outstanding' or 'excellent' for purpose of hiring to a permanent position.

The other "preferred to hire" list is made up of new graduates who received ranking of 'outstanding' or 'excellent' based on their Board interviews.

The Board encourages Principals to hire teachers on the "preferred to hire" lists for permanent, as well as for LTO positions.

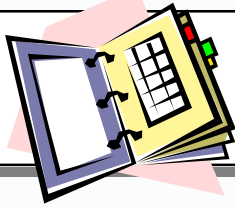
As a result, it is essential that you are evaluated during every LTO. If your evaluation is positive, ask the principal to recommend you for permanent hire.

Criminal Offence Declaration 2012

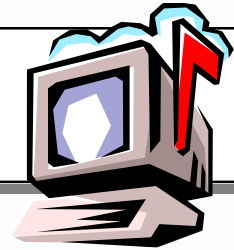
Since the Dufferin-Peel Board is required by law to have all employees complete an annual Criminal Offence Declaration (COD) form, occasional teachers must complete and submit the form to Agatha deLemos, Support Services Personnel Department. On WebTracs, click on Occasional Teacher Web Site/General Information/Forms to download the 2012 COD form after February 8th, 2012. Hard copies will also be available at all schools from the Head Secretaries.

You **MUST** complete and return the declaration by **April 30th** or you will be unable to teach in the next school year.

You can NOT TEACH if you do not comply!



Committee News



Collective Bargaining

Since our Collective Agreement expires August 31st, 2012 OECTA Provincial who holds the bargaining rights will formally send a letter in May to the Board giving them notice of our intent to bargain.

In the meantime, our Collective Bargaining team, consisting of Mike Farrugia, Teresa Kolk, Roman Vynychuk and Jean Smylie, has reviewed the collective bargaining surveys submitted by the membership. Using these surveys as a basis, the team has been busy researching, gathering and wording new tentative proposals for the next round of negotiations. These tentative proposals need to be submitted to the membership for approval at a General Meeting, and then to OECTA Provincial for approval.

Member participation will be vital in the coming months as we move closer to bargaining for our next Collective Agreement. This agreement will cover the terms and working conditions of our employment for the next few years. Every member should be informed and involved as it is your right!

Grievance Process

OECTA provides professional services, support, protection and leadership for all members. The OTB Unit's mandate is to negotiate, monitor and uphold the Collective Agreement (C.A.) for its members. This means that we are to ensure that the terms of the Collective Agreement are followed. When the Board violates the C.A., a grievance may be filed. A grievance needs to be filed within 10 days of the occurrence. Time lines can prevent grievances from being resolved. A member who is aware of a violation of the collective agreement and waits a number of months before bringing it to the attention of OECTA will likely find the Board raising a time line issue relating to the 10 day time frame. Once a grievance is filed there is a definite process that must be followed. The grievance procedure is outlined in the C.A. under Article 10.02 that requires OECTA and the Board to meet to discuss the matter with the goal of resolving the issue. If there is no agreement to resolve the grievance after the Board's response to the Step 2 meeting, OECTA Provincial may refer the matter to arbitration (Article 11).

The member(s) involved with the grievance shall refrain from communicating with the Board regarding the grievance matter through the entire process. Members should understand that matters referred to arbitration may take a long time to resolve.

WebTracs

Future Job Search on 'Available Jobs'

There has been confusion around this issue. Below is a summary, including times, when you may search for future jobs on the system:

Weekdays:

12 a.m. to 1 p.m. – you are able to search for jobs for the current day

9 p.m. to midnight – you are able to search for jobs for the next day, and **future jobs**

Saturday:

12 a.m. to 1 p.m. – no jobs will be displayed

1 p.m. to midnight – you are able to search for **future jobs**

Sunday:

12 a.m. to 1 p.m. – no jobs will be displayed

9 p.m. to midnight – you are able to search for jobs for the next day, and **future jobs**

Occasional Teachers' Statistics

(as of January 17th, 2012)

LTO - elementary	252
LTO - secondary	187
Daily	946
Certified Emergency	87
Total	1472

There is No Safe Touching of Students

There is no safe touch in the relationship between a teacher and a student no matter how innocent or well-meaning your intentions. You cannot anticipate either the reaction or interpretation of the child or their parent.

It is critical that all occasional teachers take precautionary steps to avoid any physical contact with students. Any time a teacher crosses the boundaries around touch, they are putting themselves at risk of an allegation. The stress on a member who faces an allegation cannot be overstated. Don't put yourself at risk!

AGM 2012

We still need one more secondary O.T. delegate! Should you be interested in being an O.T. delegate, please call the OTBUnit office asap.

A special thanks to the 12 occasional teacher delegates – 8 elementary (Linda Gwin, Charlotte Leavitt, Karen Maisonville, Neris Nielsen, Bozica Sajatovic, Lisa Stokaluk-Bartnik, Lesia Teply, and Jean Smylie) and 5 secondary (Mike Farrugia, Sherron Ritz, Katia Salvatore, Mike Sourial, and Roman Vynyarchuk) who will be representing you for 4 days as voting delegates at OECTA's Annual General Meeting (AGM) from March 9 – 12, 2012 to be held at the Caesars Windsor Hotel, Windsor, Ontario. This is an excellent opportunity to gain insight into the political organization and policy direction of our Provincial body.

All delegates will be required to attend **two pre-AGM meetings** and to participate in all sessions of the AGM, beginning the evening of Friday, March 9th and ending Monday, March 12 at approximately 1:00 p.m. No dates for the Pre-AGM meetings have been finalized.

I would like to personally express my deep gratitude to these delegates for admirably and selflessly volunteering their time during the March Break to represent us. We will be reporting the outcome of AGM 2012 on our web site.

We wish the Dufferin-Peel delegates all the best!

Snow Days / Bus Cancellations & Your Responsibilities

We need to be prepared for the possibility of dealing with a Severe Weather Day:

Listen to designated radio stations (CHUM, CHFI, CFRB, CHIN, Q107, CKYC, CBC (FR), am640, CKFM, CFTR, CFNY, CHAY, CBL, CJCL, CHWO, CJMR, DC103fm, and CKMW), as well as some TV stations such as CITY, CTV, and Cable 24 NEWS for bus cancellations/closure notifications beginning at 6:30 a.m. or visit the board's web site for information; and

Be prepared to perform duties beyond your normal teaching assignment to ensure the safety of students.

Bus Cancellations

Occasional teachers are expected to report to the school regardless of student bus transportation. If weather conditions prevent you from getting to the school, please call the school, and advise the Principal/VP so that other arrangements can be made for the classroom coverage if required. You will **NOT** be paid for that day.

The rules are:

1. Bus cancellations for schools where the **students are NOT 100% bussed**, you are expected to arrive for the assignment, and **you will be paid.**

2. Bus cancellations for schools where **100% of the students are bussed** (Elem. St. Cornelius & St. Patrick. And Sec. – Robert F. Hall & Cardinal Ambrozic), your assignment is cancelled, and **you will NOT be paid.**

School Closures

ALL OTs who have accepted and received a job number from Tracs for that day are **NOT** to go to the assigned school. **Please remain at home. You will NOT be paid.**

Calling the Office for Help

Incidents with occasional teachers and students continue to happen across Ontario. You are strongly advised to maintain a calm and professional approach particularly when dealing with an uncooperative student. Should you experience a difficult situation in the class, do not engage in a potential power struggle. Don't feel that you have to deal with the situation yourself. Don't hesitate to call the office before things escalate. Most schools are readily able to assist you. Remember, calling the school office for assistance does not mean that you have poor classroom management skills. This class may be known to the staff and administrators as a 'difficult' group of students. Avoid physical contact, especially with a student that may be causing a disturbance. As an occasional teacher, you are vulnerable when in the classroom.

Remember to leave a detailed note of any incidents for the absent teacher, and about your day. It is strongly recommended that you keep detailed notes for yourself including any names of witnesses – date, school, teacher being replaced, grade, job #, details of any incidents.

OECTA – Beginning Teachers' Conference

This conference is for teachers who are in their first five (5) years of teaching. It offers over 30 workshops relating to professional development, health and well-being. This year the conference will be held on February 23 – 25 at the Hilton Toronto Airport Hotel & Suites, Mississauga, Ontario. The Friday keynote speaker will be Dr. Jane Bluestein, author, classroom teacher and crisis intervention counsellor. On Saturday, Joanne Cave, founder of Ophelia's Voice, will speak about Educating the Next Generation of Leaders.

Provincial OECTA will be funding one person from every local bargaining unit. Our OTB Unit will be represented by Dominika Telech, an occasional teacher since 2007. Thank you to all occasional teachers who were interested in attending this year. Try again next year!

Don't Assume Your Pay is Accurate!

OTs must rely on the schools to “verify” the teachers’ absences and the respective teacher replacements before the payroll deadline date, in order for you to be paid for the assignments. Don't assume your pay is accurate!

You need to track your days worked and check each pay to confirm that you were paid correctly. At the bottom of your Pay Statement, you will find the dates you are being paid for, with the corresponding full day (1.0) or a half day (0.6) beside each date.

If you find that you are missing pay for a day or half day, email Sonia Lindo-Diogo at sonia.lindo-diogo@dpcdsb.org, Payroll Dept. at the Board office, and copy the OTBUnit office so we are aware of any inconsistencies. Mistakes do happen and if you don't find the error and report it, you will miss out on the money.

Stay Connected!

As OTs we often feel alone and isolated due to the nature of our transient work. This is why it is very important for you to access the dpeel-ot.org website regularly. You will be briefed on all current issues – OECTA, Board, OTF, Teachers’ Pension, and the Ministry of Education. As well, you will be able to read the current newsletters.

In the interest of saving trees and the environment, we're trying to make our communication “paperless”. We have already collected about 50% of our members’ personal email addresses, but we need 100% participation as we will be entering a new round of negotiations and will need to electronically communicate with the membership. If you have not submitted your personal email address to the OTBUnit office, simply send your personal email address to dpotbunit@gmail.com - just put “Please add me” in the subject line. If at any point you change your personal email address, please notify the OTBUnit at (dpotbunit@gmail.com)



You Asked Us....

Question: What should I do if I receive a letter or phone call from the Board or school administrator regarding a complaint?

A letter or phone call from the Board or school administrator regarding a complaint could result in an investigation/disciplinary meeting in most cases.

The procedure you should follow is:

1. If you receive a phone call from a school administrator, ask what the nature of his/her call is, listen to what the administrator has to say and respond by saying, “Thank you. I am willing to co-operate but I am unable to comment until I contact my Association. I'll get back to you.”, but make **NO** statement. Immediately call the OTBUnit office at 905-206-9200 to inform the President.
2. Document, to the best of your ability, all that happened on the day in question from the time of your arrival, including even minor details, to the time of your departure. Also, document any conversations you may have had with a staff member and/or school administrator about the situation/complaint.
3. Be aware that you could be removed from the O.T. List for that school only **or** from the Central List completely, depending on the nature of the complaint, until after the investigation meeting with Board representatives.
4. Make sure you discuss your documentation with the President **or** designate so that he/she can clearly understand what occurred that day.
5. The President/designate will accompany you to any meeting with school administrators or Board representatives, if you wish. It is strongly recommended!
6. During the meeting, be ready to respond to the complaint and/or any questions asked.
7. After the meeting, the Board will send you a letter with their decision. Should this letter be placed in your personnel file, the Association will file a grievance requesting that the letter be removed from your file. In the meantime, you have up to 10 working days to respond to the school administrator's/Board's letters. Your response will be attached to the letter placed in your file.

College Cautions Members using Facebook & Social Media

Electronic communication and social media offer new options to student learning. There are horror stories about teachers who posted online remarks or photos which resulted in discipline, including termination.

We know that sites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Flickr, YouTube, Wikipedia, Picasa and MySpace are part of the daily life of students. If you are going to join the online community, you need to be aware of the risks. You need to keep your online life from adversely affecting your career.

The following information is part of the Professional Advisory, **Use of Electronic Communication and Social Media** issued by the Ontario College of Teachers February 2011 and included in the June 2011 edition of **Professionally Speaking**. The complete advisory can also be found on the College's website at www.oct.ca

Minimizing the Risks:

a) Advice to Members

Avoid exchanging private texts, phone numbers, personal email addresses or photos of a personal nature with students.

Maintain formal, courteous, and professional tone in all communications to ensure that professional boundaries with students are maintained.

Decline student initiated 'friend' requests and do not issue 'friend' requests to students.

b) Understand Privacy Concerns

Operate in all circumstances online as a professional – as you would in the community.

Manage the privacy and security settings of your social media accounts. Privacy setting can shift and change without notice. Check the settings frequently.

Assume that information you post can be accessed or altered.

Monitor regularly all content you post to your

social media accounts and remove anything that is inappropriate.

Ask others not to tag you on any photographs without your permission.

Ask others to remove any undesirable content related to you.

c) Act Professionally

Consider whether any posting may reflect poorly on you or the teaching profession.

Be transparent and authentic. Use your true professional identity at all times.

Avoid impulsive, inappropriate or heated comments.

Ensure that your comments do not incite others to make discriminatory or other professionally unacceptable comments.

Respect the privacy and confidentiality of student information.

Be aware of the Board's policies and programs regarding the use of social media/e-communications and the appropriate use of electronic equipment.

d) Important Questions to Ask Yourself

What are my reasons for sharing this information – are they professional or are they personal?

Is this picture or comment something I would be comfortable with students, their parents, the Board, my family or the media seeing?

Would I communicate this way in my community?

Am I keeping current in my awareness and knowledge of social media technology developments to protect myself from misuse?

Members should be able to answer this: How does my online presence – that which I control and that which is posted by others – reflect on my professionalism, and how does it reflect on the teaching profession?

Reminders:

- Please do **NOT** use your cell phone, blackberry, laptop or any other electronic device during instructional class time. Should you require to use it, please do so during recess and/or lunch when students are **not** present, and you are **not** on duty.
- As teachers, we are expected to set the example for students (who are required to wear uniforms); therefore, you are asked to dress professionally at all times! **NO JEANS.**
- Please visit the OTBUnit's website at **dpeel-ot.org** to be "in the loop" with up-to-date information.
- Teachers who establish private **tutoring** practices outside of normal school hours **must not** use Board facilities, or resources, or privileged information and **must not** charge fees to students or parents from their own school (Board Regulation 8.71)

It's Election Time Again!

Election for 2012 – 2013 OTBUnit Executive

It is time to seek nominations for the 2012 – 2013 Occasional Teachers' Bargaining Unit (OTBU) Executive. Please read over the description of each Executive position carefully, and give some consideration towards taking an active role in your OTBUnit.

The Executive positions open for elections on May 24th are: Vice President, Treasurer, Recording Secretary, and Councillors. If you are interested in serving this Association and the members of Dufferin-Peel OTBUnit by being part of the Executive, please complete and submit the attached nomination form, and ensure that you (the person nominated) and your nominator are eligible to submit the nomination form.

The nomination forms must be sent directly to the OTBUnit by Board courier (OECTA – OT Bargaining Unit) **or** by Canada Post (5720 Timberlea Blvd., Suite 100, Mississauga L4W 4W2) and **must** be received by 4:00 p.m. on April 30th, 2012. Each candidate should include their professional profile of up to 200 words with the nomination form. Each candidate for a contested position will have her/his professional profile posted on our web site.

Eligible candidates will be introduced to the membership attending the General Meeting on May 24th, 2012.

Chicken Soup for OTs

The future depends upon the children of today. We need to build their confidence by what we do and say.

TIPS for OTs

- ✓ Be a confident occasional teacher.
- ✓ Be a prepared occasional teacher.
- ✓ Be enthusiastic, and sensitive to the needs of the students.
- ✓ Locate the emergency information within the classroom
- ✓ Try to familiarize yourself with the classroom routines.
- ✓ Follow the absent teacher's plans.
- ✓ Leave a detailed note for the absent teacher.



Nomination Form
for positions on the 2012 -2013
OECTA – Dufferin-Peel
Occasional Teachers’ Bargaining Unit Executive

Vice-President
Treasurer
Recording Secretary

Elementary Councillor
Secondary Councillor

Nomination for the position of:

Name of Person Nominated (please print):

Address:**Phone:** (.....)

Signature:**E-mail address:**.....

****All candidates and nominators must be active members of the OTBU. All candidates must be present at the General Meeting for the elections.**

Name of Nominator (please print):

Address:**Phone:** (.....)

Signature:**Date:**

A professional profile of up to two hundred words should accompany this form
(eg: work history with Dufferin-Peel, related teaching experience, OECTA involvement).

This form and profile must be received by 4:00 p.m. on April 30th, 2012

*Members nominated for ‘Councillor’ must teach in the panel of nomination.

Please mail the form and profile to: Dufferin-Peel Occasional Teachers’ Bargaining Unit
5720 Timberlea Blvd., Suite 100
Mississauga, ON
L4W 4W2

OR send by courier to: Jean Smylie
OECTA – Occasional Teachers

The President will email the nominated person to confirm receipt of the form.

OECTA – Dufferin-Peel Occasional Teachers Executive Position Descriptions

VICE-PRESIDENT

- *Assists the President in her duties
- *Shares the responsibility of attending committee meetings with the President
- *One of the OTBU signing officers
- *Attends meetings with the President when necessary
- *Attends committee meetings
- *Attends all Executive and General Meetings
- *Sits on Board/Association Staff Liaison Committee
- *Member of the Collective Bargaining team
- *Attends OECTA's Annual General Meeting (AGM)

TREASURER

- *Receives and acknowledges all money from the Provincial treasury through the Elementary Unit
- *Deposits all funds in the name of the OTBU in a financial institution or teachers' credit union
- *Keeps accurate and detailed account of all Revenues and Expenditures
- *Pays all authorized accounts and expenses incurred by the OTBU
- *Presents the Proposed Budget for approval to the membership at the first General Meeting of the year
- *Makes investments with the approval of the Executive
- *Reports investments during each financial report
- *Presents the Budget report for approval to the membership at the last General Meeting of the year
- *Submits annually a detailed financial report and the books with all pertinent documentation, including all Executive and General Meetings' minutes to an auditor appointed by the Provincial Treasury
- *One of the signing officers
- *Sits on at least one committee and attends all meetings

RECORDING SECRETARY

- *Attends all Executive and General Meetings
- *Records and keeps on file the minutes of all Executive and General meetings
- *Prepares minutes and forwards copies to Executive and OTBU membership at next meeting
- *Makes all arrangements for the Executive and General meetings
- *Keeps OTBU documents/records in order
- *One of the signing officers
- *Sits on at least one committee and attends all committee meetings

COUNCILLORS

- *Assist the OTBU Executive in its duties
- *Attend all Executive and General Meetings
- *Vote on issues affecting members during Executive meetings
- *Record and keep on file any concerns brought to their attention by members
- *Call the President with members' inquiries that are urgent or that they may not have a response
- *Sit on at least one committee and attend all committee meetings