

WELLINGTON WORKS

January 2008

Newsletter of the Elementary, Secondary and Occasional Teachers of Wellington Catholic

Volume 15, Issue 4

Agenda

MONDAY January 28

Reps Council / Executive to follow
OECTA Office 4:30 p.m.

Wellington Works Jan 2008

TUESDAY January 29

HR Meeting 9:00 a.m.—Jim

Safe Schools 12:00—Judy & George

WEDNESDAY January 30 to FRIDAY February 1

Council of Presidents—Jim & George
Toronto

MONDAY February 4

Program Dept 11:45—Jim, Judy and
George

WEDNESDAY February 6

Catholicity Committee—Judy
OECTA Office 4:00 p.m.

THURSDAY February 7 to SATURDAY February 9

Beginning Teachers Conference

MONDAY February 11

Executive meeting
OECTA Office 4:15 p.m.

TUESDAY February 12

NTIP Workshop #3

Health & Wellness Committee—Jim

OECTA Office 12:00 p.m.

THURSDAY February 14

HR Dept. - Jim, Judy & George
3:30 to 5:30 p.m.

MONDAY February 25

Reps Council / Executive to follow
OECTA Office 4:30 p.m.

Wellington Works February 2008

Wellington Works

is prepared

by

Wellington OECTA

President Jim Whitechurch

Elementary VP Judy Mullen

Secondary VP George Giovinazzo

to provide important information

to members

Changes to Benefit Plans

Beginning February 1, 2008 your benefit plan will continue to be administered by Sun Life Financial but under policy number **15314**.

In addition, your **certificate number** will change to your **employee number** beginning with the letter 'w'. For example, if your employee number is 2222 your new certificate number will be w2222.

Please note that your new Pay Direct Drug card will be sent to you mid February 2008. Your old drug card should be destroyed once you receive your new drug card. You may continue to use your current drug card until your new card arrives.

Here's what you need to do:

Advise your dentist...

You will need to advise your dentist that your policy number has changed to **15314** and that you have a new certificate number.

Advise your pharmacist...

You will need to provide your pharmacist with your **new policy number 15314**.

You will need to give your new certificate number to your pharmacist when filling a prescription so the pharmacy can update their records.

Your dental office or pharmacy can call Sun Life if they are having any trouble submitting claims to Sun Life electronically by calling 1-800-361-6212.

Submit Claims

Claims that you have incurred or may incur prior to February 1, 2008 must be submitted to Sun Life no later than April 30, 2008.

Questions?

If you have questions you can call Sun Life directly...

By Telephone

Customer Care Representatives are available Monday to Friday, excluding holidays, between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. at the national toll free number 1-800-361-6212.

By Mail

Sun Life Assurance Company of Canada
Health Claims Office
PO Box 4023 Stn A
Toronto ON M5W 2P7

By E-mail: askus@sunlife.com

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5420 Highway #6 North
R.R.#5 Guelph, ON
N1H 6J2

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Phone: 519-763-3043

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Fax: 519-763-2682

Email: oecta.wellington@rogers.com

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ONTARIO ENGLISH
**Catholic
Teachers**
ASSOCIATION

OECTA & OTF Bullying Prevention Initiatives:

All school boards in Ontario are required to develop and implement policies on bullying prevention and intervention strategies as part of the Safe Schools Act. The Ministry of Education has provided funding to both OECTA and OTF to develop bullying prevention programs that inform and equip teachers with the strategies to develop the skills required to modify or develop their school's bullying prevention plan. We are currently working with the board to arrange and plan the delivery of these workshops.

The OTF bullying prevention initiative consists of a CD ROM training kit. It is a good resource which gives teachers the basic background to begin the discussion on developing their school's bullying prevention plan.

It has been designed as a self-directed e-learning module where teachers work through the module to develop a bullying prevention plan.

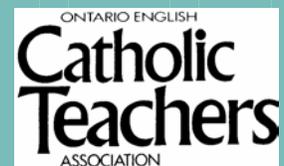
One of OECTA's bullying prevention initiatives is the PD Network Bullying Prevention Workshops for both elementary and secondary teachers. The workshops give teachers effective and practical strategies to address bullying behaviours among students from a Catholic perspective. The workshops are interactive and designed to be delivered face to face by trained facilitators.

The OECTA-sponsored workshops were held on Wednesday January 16 in the unit office and attended by approximately 30 teachers.

Want to know more about OECTA services?

Check out:

www.oecta.on.ca



Media Literacy Symposium:

Linda Cotnam, Ruthanne Finnigan, Kathy Ingram, Allen McInnis, Tia McKay, Kevin Reid, Kate Seftel, and Adelina Visentin attended the Media Literacy Symposium which took place on November 23-24 in Toronto.

This symposium was designed to assist teachers in addressing the challenges and opportunities that the new media provide, particularly as they pertain to Catholic education.

It was funded by grant money from Ontario's Ministry of Education to give OECTA members opportunities to demonstrate expertise and share their knowledge with teaching colleagues. Watch for more upcoming OECTA workshops and symposia.

Elementary Report Cards

At the end of first term a number of teachers attended Report Card Workshops held in the technology room at St. Michael School.

We would like to thank Brenda Kenney, Karen Brooks Nelson, John Maschio and Allen McInnis for their time, help and expertise.

If you experienced any difficulties with completing the elementary report cards this year, please forward your concerns to the unit office.



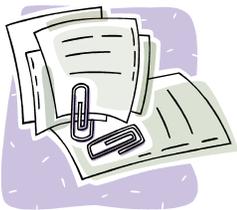
OSRs—who is responsible for what?

We recently addressed a number of questions on the administration of OSRs at Elementary Schools.

While there are certain tasks that teachers can be expected to do (e.g. filing the copies of their report cards and IEPs), the maintenance of OSRs is primarily an administrative/clerical task.

For example, it is not the responsibility of a teacher to organize previously filed items or to check for missing items other than those they are immediately responsible for. It is also not the teacher's responsibility to affix student pictures in the OSRs. It is not the teacher's responsibility to complete the basic biographical/ demographic information in the folder.

Information on this was recently sent to school reps. A couple of other specific items still need to be clarified. Please advise our office of any ongoing concerns.



School Effectiveness Framework

In the next few weeks members can expect to hear more about the new Ministry initiative known as the School Effectiveness Framework (SEF).

Our Board is beginning to roll out its plans in this area. OECTA has numerous concerns about this initiative and what it will mean to elementary teachers in Wellington.

There was considerable discussion at the November Council of Presidents on this new initiative from the Literacy & Numeracy Secretariat. There were several motions calling on provincial exec. to communicate and meet with the Minister of Education to convey OECTA's concerns on this initiative.

At a special meeting called in January, concerns were again raised with this new initiative. Further advice and direction is expected at the February Council of Presidents.

There are a number of grievances throughout the province on the issue and the new position(s). An Action Plan has been issued from Provincial and will be shared with Reps and the local Executive.

UNIT GENERAL MEETINGS

Unit General meetings were held in November for both occasional and regular contract teachers. In spite of weather issues on both nights, both meetings were reasonably well attended. Highlights are outlined below

Occasional General meeting

Significant discussion occurred re:

- New callout system
- Preparation for collective bargaining
- Communication with OTs

Occasional teachers again voted to maintain the current organizational structure and working relationship within the unit.

Nancy Baker and Roy Coughlin were elected as co-reps for the Occasional teachers of Wellington.

Regular Teacher Meeting

Regular rep meeting information shared

Unit operating budget for 2007-08 approved

Updates were provided on collective bargaining process and preparation including establishment of local committee.

A number of current issues were identified and discussed

- Safe Schools and Anti-bullying initiative
- School Effectiveness Framework
- Elementary Timetable
- Secondary Task Force

Wellington Unit will be conducting a review of its Constitution and bylaws to ensure compliance with the new provincial Handbook, revised electoral procedures and any subsequent changes which occur at provincial AGM.

John Maschio will chair the unit committee which is conducting this review.

Any bylaw changing resulting from the review of election process which is also underway will be incorporated as part of these revisions where needed.



Wellness Workshops 2007-08

The 2007-2008 Wellness Program continues in the new year with the following offerings. These Personal Growth and Well-Being Workshops are designed to explore many aspects of wellness and health promotion.

Be sure to mark your calendars with the remaining workshop dates:

Thursday, February 28, 2008

- Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic High School
Those who Laugh, Last!

Thursday, April 24, 2008

- St. Joseph Catholic School, Fergus
Make the Most of your Hard-earned Cash

Thursday, May 29, 2008

- Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic High School
Finding the Joy in Daily Living

These wellness workshops are brought to you by the Board's Health and Wellness Committee in partnership with the Board's EAP provider, Catholic Family Counseling Centre.

These Health and Wellness Workshops include OECTA sponsored refreshments and snacks.

To register your attendance at these workshops, please remember to contact Joanne Gibson at Ext 217 or e-mail her through the Board e-mail system.

Family Day Holiday

As promised during the election campaign, Premier McGuinty has set a new statutory holiday this year on Monday, February 18th, 2008. The length of this school year will not change, as they will not be adding an extra day to the present school calendar. It is anticipated, however, that next year the school year will remain at 194 days.

HAVE YOU RECENTLY...

- ... **MOVED?**
- ... **CHANGED YOUR NAME?**
- ... **CHANGED SCHOOLS**
- ... **REDUCED OR INCREASED YOUR CONTRACT?**
- ... **GOT A NEW PHONE NUMBER?**

Your OECTA Staff Rep has been asked to assist us in updating our database and membership list and to return this information by the end of January.



Please confirm your name and address information with your staff rep.

Elementary Timetable Changes

Wellington OECTA has formally advised the Board of its support for changes to the elementary timetable, which will have the effect of "equalizing" the morning and afternoon time.

In OECTA's view, the current timetable, which varies from school to school, is the source of a number of concerns. Inequities in workload for all teachers, but in particular for part-time and occasional teachers, as well problems in providing planning time in accordance with the collective agreement are among the main issues for Wellington OECTA. We also believe that the current timetable has implications from a program and curriculum perspective.

OECTA is encouraging the Board to institute and announce proposed changes in a timely fashion to allow for an easy transition beginning in September of 2008.

Hang in there...

March Break is just around the corner

Q&A—New Safe Schools Legislation - Bill 212

The information below is based on an Education Law News article entitled "Everything You Need to Know About the New Safe Schools Legislation" from law firm of Borden Ladner Gervais (Fall 2007) as well as presentations on the new legislation from the Ministry of Education and provincial OECTA.

1. What is the status of Bill 212?

On June 4, 2007, the Ontario Government passed Bill 212, *An Act to amend the Education Act in respect of behaviour, discipline and safety*. This legislation sets out significant changes to the safe schools provisions of the *Education Act*. All of the provisions of Bill 212 will come into force on February 1, 2008.

2. What are the major changes under Bill 212?

The new legislation includes the following changes:

- extending the right to discipline to include actions that are off school property and outside of school activities where the activity has an impact on the school climate;
- adding "bullying" to the list of infractions for which suspension must be considered;
- removing the power of principals to expel and the power of teachers to suspend;
- defining a suspension as no less than one school day and no more than 20 school days;
- requiring principals to take into account mitigating and other factors when considering whether to suspend a student, including duration;
- removing the process of senior board personnel to review a suspension and further revising the procedures governing appeals of suspensions and expulsions
- replacing the existing regime of mandatory suspensions and expulsions with a more discretionary model; and
- requiring schools to provide programs to suspended pupils and expelled pupils.

3. What type of behaviour is subject to discipline under Bill 212?

Under the current legislation, discipline may only be imposed where the behaviour of the pupil occurs "at school" or where the pupil is "engaged in a school-related activity." This existing limitation has created confusion with respect to improper conduct engaged by pupils either on the way to and from school, at home or in the community. The new Bill amends the *Education Act* to require discipline not only for listed infractions occurring while at school or while engaged in a school-related activity, but also where infractions occur "in other circumstances where engaging in the activity will have an impact on the school climate."

4. What significant changes does Bill 212 make regarding suspensions?

Bill 212 replaces the current mandatory suspensions with a more discretionary model. Instead of requiring a suspension to be imposed where a "mandatory suspension infraction" has occurred, a principal will be required only to "consider" imposing a suspension. In addition, "bullying" has been added to the list of infractions for which suspension must be considered.

Under Bill 212, a principal shall consider whether to suspend a pupil if he or she believes that the pupil has engaged in any of the following activities while at school, at a school-related activity or in other circumstances where engaging the activity will have an impact on the school climate:

- Uttering a threat to inflict serious bodily harm on another person.
- Possessing alcohol or illegal drugs.
- Being under the influence of alcohol.

- Swearing at a teacher or at another person in a position of authority.
- Committing an act of vandalism that causes extensive damage to school property at the pupil's school or to property located on the premises of the pupil's school.
- Bullying.
- Any other activity that is an activity for which a principal may suspend a pupil under a policy of the board.

5. What are the mitigating factors or other factors that a principal must take into account when considering a suspension or expulsion?

In considering whether to suspend a pupil for engaging in an activity outlined above, a principal is required to take into account any mitigating factors or other factors set out in the regulations.

Ontario Regulation 472/07

The following mitigating factors must be taken into account:

- The pupil does not have the ability to control his or her behaviour.
- The pupil does not have the ability to understand the foreseeable consequences of his or her behaviour.
- The pupil's continuing presence in the school does not create an unacceptable risk to the safety of any person.

The following Other Factors have been added:

- The pupil's history.
- Whether a progressive discipline approach has been used with the pupil.
- Whether the activity for which the pupil may be or is being suspended or expelled was related to any harassment of the pupil because of his or her race, ethnic origin, religion, disability, gender or sexual orientation or to any other harassment.
- How the suspension or expulsion would affect the pupil's ongoing education.
- The age of the pupil.
- In the case of a student for whom an individual education plan has been developed,
 - whether the behaviour was a manifestation of a disability identified in the student's individual education plan;
 - whether appropriate individualized accommodation has been provided;
 - and
 - whether the suspension or expulsion is likely to result in an aggravation or worsening of the student's behaviour or conduct.

These mitigating factors go well beyond those set out in the current regulations and it is not clear how they will be applied in practice.

6. What are the main issues for teachers?

OECTA has identified the following concerns for teachers:

- Programs for suspended and expelled students -voluntary participation must be mandatory to be effective
- Homework packages for students – responsibility may fall on the classroom teacher
- must emphasize the need to have academic program delivered by qualified, certified teachers
- teachers must be informed upon re-entry into school
- disclosure of student transfers
- Regional disparities – urban vs. rural, location issues

LOCAL NEWS

Collective Bargaining Update

Preparations continue for the next round of bargaining. Now that the provincial election has occurred and the Liberals re-elected, we expect collective bargaining will be at the forefront in the weeks to come.

George Giovinazzo, Judy Mullen, Mike Topolie and Nancy Baker recently attended a regional collective bargaining workshop as part of our ongoing preparation for the next round of bargaining (both regular and occasional contracts expire at the end of this school year.)

A special meeting of unit presidents was held on January 22, attended by Jim Whitechurch to represent Wellington. This meeting was informational in nature concerning possible discussions with the provincial government which might affect how local negotiations unfold. Further discussion and direction will also take place at the February Council of Presidents.

Shortly thereafter the unit will structure and appoint its collective bargaining committee and negotiating team. If this is something that may be of interest to you please advise the unit office.

Meetings with HR Department

Unit Officers recently met with Human Resources Department to discuss changes to the postings and transfer process. We were pleased with the open discussion on this topic and the willingness of the Board Admin to review the timelines and process in a meaningful way. More discussions are planned.

Further to this meeting, it was agreed to set a series of monthly meetings with Human Resources Department to discuss a range of concerns and specific issues as they arise.

On January 15th, Unit Officers met with HR to discuss a number of items. We continued to work on revisions of the posting and transfer process, and a revised brochure to be released to all schools soon.

PAET Task Force

Unit Elementary Vice-President Judy Mullen has represented the unit on the Board's task Force on the new Performance Appraisal for Experienced Teachers (PAET).

See article on page 8 for more details of upcoming workshops.

Health and Safety

Officers have recently addressed two serious Health and Safety issues at two sites. We have expressed our strong feelings that the Board's protocols and practices in this area are inadequate and need to be reviewed to ensure the Board is meeting its obligations under the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

It is imperative that H&S Reps inform the unit office and/or H&S committee members of any significant concerns with health and safety at their sites.

Secondary Task Force

Unit Secondary VP George Giovinazzo has been representing Wellington on the Board Task Force on Secondary Schools.

The task force is looking at a variety of issues concerning the future of the three high schools in Wellington Catholic.

Other OECTA members also on this committee are John Maschio, Marty Bell and Vince Campolongo.

Unit Web Site

The unit office is currently working with a local company, Platypi Designs to develop a web site for the Wellington Unit of OECTA. Watch for an official launch soon.

Meeting with MPP

Unit President Jim Whitechurch met on December 21 with Guelph MPP Liz Sandals to share some of OECTA's ongoing concerns in education.

Our MPP is very knowledgeable on education issues in particular and the meeting provided for a frank and open discussion of many issues of importance to OECTA.

Regular communication with our MPPs is part of OECTA's ongoing lobbying efforts.

Safe Schools Act

Officers have been involved in a number of presentations regarding changes to Safe Schools legislation, which will take effect on February 1st. – see page 5 for more.

Locally, the Board has undertaken to make the necessary changes to Board policies, as required by the new legislation and ministry directive.

We have expressed concerns to the Board admin that OECTA has not been more formally involved in this review. With the assistance of our reps we will continue to monitor the implementation of this new legislation.

OECTA YOUNG AUTHORS/ BEST PRACTICES



**TEACHERS
ARE
INVITED TO
ENCOURAGE
THEIR
STUDENTS TO
PARTICIPATE
IN THE
2007–2008
YOUNG
AUTHORS
AWARDS/
PRIX JEUNES
ÉCRIVAINS**

OECTA YOUNG AUTHORS/ BEST PRACTICES

OECTA's Annual Young Author's Contest is coming soon. At the same time, we are also encouraging teachers to consider entering the parallel teacher competition which recognizes Best Practices of those in our profession.

This year Wellington Unit is restructuring its local program with several goals in mind. Specifically we will be looking to increase participation, and better recognize the teachers that promote the program within our schools. Local judging criteria will be streamlined and improved. We will be providing prizes for teachers who participate in the Young Author's program. Reps will be provided with more details at their January Reps Council meeting.

The purposes of the annual OECTA Young Authors Awards are:

- to celebrate the writing talents of students (JK-12) and the teaching talents of their teachers
- to showcase the accomplishments of students and teacher

There are three levels of competition: school, unit and provincial. The first place winners at each level advance to the next.

For the **school level of competition**, teachers must submit their classes' entries to the *OECTA school association representative* by the school deadline, **February 29, 2008**. There are no limits on the number of entries at the school level of competition.

Each school may submit *one* entry per category and division to the **unit level of competition** by the unit deadline, **March 7, 2008**.

Each unit may submit *one* entry per category and division to the **provincial level of competition** by the provincial deadline, **April 11, 2008**. Provincial winners will be announced at the **June Council of Presidents (June 6, 7, 8)**

At each level, all entries will be judged on the basis of the criteria listed below which have been adapted from the achievement scales of the current language curriculum guidelines. At the unit level, those judged to exhibit a high level of performance overall, will be forwarded to the provincial level of the competition.

Creativity: impact and originality

Reasoning: level of understanding, range and complexity of ideas

Communication: clarity of purpose and expression

Organization: control and complexity of form

Language conventions: range and control over vocabulary, grammar and usage



Performance Appraisal

TPA and ALP Changes for Experienced Teachers— Workshop to be held in April

Last spring, the Ministry made changes to the Teacher Performance Appraisal (TPA) process and the Annual Learning Plan (ALP) and is encouraging OECTA and the Board to work in collaboration to implement these changes. Under the newly revised TPA, experienced teachers must be evaluated every five years, a two point rating scale (satisfactory or unsatisfactory) has been adopted, parent and student input is optional, format of the summative report has changed, and only one classroom observation occurs if the teacher receives a satisfactory rating.

There is also a greater emphasis on a teacher's ALP. The Ministry has clearly stated that the ALP is teacher directed and teacher authored in order that teachers have it reflect objectives that are personally and professionally relevant.

On October 16th, OECTA and Board members attended a Ministry inservice regarding the regulation changes and the intent behind those changes. Those who attended now comprise a Board Resource Team to oversee the implementation. Unit Elementary Vice-President Judy Mullen represents Wellington OECTA on this team and has been actively involved in the process.

The Board Resource Team met, most recently, on January 15th to plan the roll out of the changes to all schools in our system. The current plan is to develop a workshop that will be presented to all principals and school reps on April 2nd at Vic East. (More details to follow.) Principals and school reps will then present an abridged version to all teachers on their staff.

Any questions or concerns can be directed to Judy in the unit office.

OECTA AGM RAFFLE

The OECTA Annual General Meeting traditionally opens Friday with the "Monte Carlo" evening. As in the past, OECTA is raising funds for children in need. Towards this goal OECTA has partnered with the Ontario Chapter of the Starlight/Starbright Children's Foundation.

Starlight/Starbright Children's Foundation is an organization for seriously ill children and the people who love and care for them. With support from organizations, this non-profit group provides innovative, creative and fun entertainment therapies that bring lasting joy and enrichment to the lives of seriously ill children and their families.

Our unit has been asked to sell 24 booklets of tickets. Each rep will

receive one or two books to sell to staff (anyone not just OECTA members can win). Reps will be returning the tickets at their end of February meeting, so there is a short timeframe to get your ticket.

Prizes :

- 1st Draw - \$3,000.
- 2nd Draw - \$2,000.
- 3rd Draw - \$1,500.
- 4th Draw - \$1,000.
- 5th Draw - \$ 500.

Tickets are \$2.00 or 3 for \$5.00.

Draw to take place 23:00 hours Friday, March 7, 2007 at the AGM opening Social.

Thank you for your support of this worthy cause.

Teachers Transfers and Recruitment 2008

OECTA and the Board recently met to review and revise the Transfers and Recruitment brochure for 2008. The brochure includes important timelines for those seeking transfers, applying for vacancies, and those requesting or returning from leaves. There are significant changes in the timelines this year. The revised brochure should be in schools soon.

In particular teachers are reminded that March 3 (earlier than in past) is a very important date. Teachers are requested to inform the Human Resources Dept. of requests for increased/decreased contractual time, requests for personal leaves or intended resignations/retirements by this date. (Note: this is earlier than contractually required for retirement/resignation notice but if a decision has already been reached it can be helpful to others seeking moves, or in planning for next year.)

OECTA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Friday March 7

to

Monday March 10, 2007

Toronto Westin Harbour
Castle