

WELLINGTON WORKS

March 2008

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

Volume 15, Issue 4

Agenda

MONDAY March 31

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

Wellington Works March 2008

WEDNESDAY April 2

Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting
Focus Group
ICC 8:30 –3:30 p.m.

TUESDAY April 8

Health and Wellness Committee
OECTA Office 12:00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY April 9

Catholicity Committee
OECTA Office 4:00 p.m.

MONDAY April 14

Executive
OECTA Office 4:15 p.m.

TUESDAY April 15

NTIP Workshop #4

THURSDAY April 24

Officers/ HR Dept. 3:30 p.m.

Healthier Lifestyle Workshop
"Make the Most of your
Hard-earned Cash"

St. Joseph (Fergus) 4:30 p.m.

MONDAY April 28

Reps Council Meeting and Dinner
Details to be confirmed 4:30 p.m.

Wellington Works

is prepared
by

Wellington OECTA

President Jim Whitechurch

Elementary VP Judy Mullen

Secondary VP George Giovinazzo

to provide important information
to members

Coming Soon—Contract Negotiations

It may be hard to believe but the current four year collective agreement ends on August 31 of this year. We are fast approaching the opening of collective bargaining with our Board.

It is no real secret that there are some discussions going on with the Ministry of Education, provincial representatives of Board Trustees and the provincial bargaining agents, in our case provincial OECTA.

Locally much is happening too. At our most recent unit executive meeting, decisions were made on the process and structure for the Collective Bargaining Committee and the make-up of the Bargaining Team. We have also served notice of our wish to bargain and have some tentative dates set for May already.

The specific appointments to the local teams will be finalized by the end of March, or early in April. If you have ever thought of getting involved in this extremely important venture, now is the time to put your name forth. While it can be time-consuming and challenging at times, it is ultimately a valuable learning experience and a vitally important task that needs the talents of teachers with

a variety of experiences. The next contract will govern your contractual rights and obligations, working conditions, salary and benefits, leave provisions, supervision and planning time for the next two to four years.

A significant amount of preparatory work has already taken place. The CB Committee will review current contract language, seek member input through surveys and other means, and develop our proposal for changes to our agreement. This proposal will ultimately be presented to the membership for approval and then be taken to the negotiating table. This all will be "meshed" with whatever comes out of the provincial discussions and assuming things go reasonably well a final agreement will be brought back to the membership for ratification. The (perhaps overly) optimistic goal is to have this done by the end of the school year.

If you have any ideas about what should be in our next contract or if you wish to get more directly involved please contact the unit office as soon as possible.

Inside this issue:

Coming Soon—Contract Negotiations

OECTA Professional Development

- OECTA: The Next Generation
- Summer Program 2008 • AQ Courses,

Wellness Workshops 2007-08

OECTA Banquet—Planning underway

Growing Success Draft Policy

PAET Workshop Re-scheduled

Transfers and Recruitment Brochure

Report from Annual General Meeting

- 2008-09 Provincial Executive, • Monte Carlo Fundraiser • Provincial President's Opening Comments • Education Minister addresses AGM • Romeo Dallaire Speaks to AGM • Membership Fees Set • Funding Review Extended • Status of Women Committee Approved

Apply for a Provincial Committee

1 Wellington OECTA

2 5420 Highway #6 North
R.R.#5 Guelph, ON
3 N1H 6J2

Phone: 519-763-3043

Fax: 519-763-2682

Email: oecta.wellington
@rogers.com

ONTARIO ENGLISH
**Catholic
Teachers**
ASSOCIATION

6

OECTA Professional Development

OECTA: THE NEXT GENERATION

OECTA's Beginning Teachers Conference OECTA: The Next Generation took place February 7-9. As in the past, Wellington Unit sponsored several delegates in addition to the three provincially funded representatives. By all reports, the event was extremely worthwhile and we anticipate that it will remain a popular event for new members of our profession.

Planning is already underway for next year's conference early in the new year (2009) The conference is open to all OECTA members in their first five years of teaching (including any work as an occasional teacher).

Some commentary from local delegates follow:

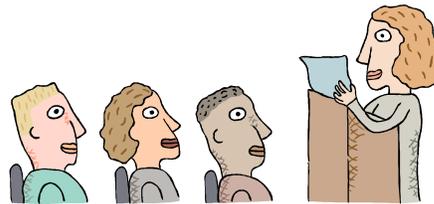
"The conference was fantastic. It was well organized and informative. The guest speakers provided us with relevant knowledge to enhance our teaching practices. I found the entire experience to be worthwhile and enlightening." - James

"The conference was excellent. I know we all really enjoyed it. It was a great opportunity to network with other beginning teachers, share related experiences, challenges, and strategies. The presentations were tailored to our specific needs and provided insightful suggestions and answered many questions about the early years of our profession." - Sean

"The conference was very good. I especially enjoyed the keynote speakers. It was absolutely amazing to hear Justin Trudeau speak. He has an amazing presence. If I could summarize the feeling in the room when he spoke, there was definitely a feeling of hope. People really believe in him. I was very inspired, and plan to take what he said and make changes in my life and in my classroom because of it." - Becky

"I would definitely say the conference was a valuable experience and it opened my eyes to a variety of different issues that teachers need to face in a dynamic classroom environment. As well, being with new teachers also helped me understand that we are all going through some of the same issues and it just made me feel more at ease." - Justin

The conference was awesome! I LOVED the dance workshop. We were up dancing for 1 1/2 hours and it was fabulous. I am now looking into an adult hip hop class. The speakers were fantastic, especially Justin. The conference was great to help address questions and concerns that otherwise might go unanswered. I find a conference always helps me to refocus and remember all of the positives in this profession. - Suzanne



OECTA Professional Development and AQ Courses

Summer Program 2008—OECTA will once again be offering the 2008 Summer Program for our elementary and secondary members. More than 35 courses on a broad range of topics usually run for three days in July. Some of these courses may be offered in Wellington as in the past. Provincial OECTA is currently seeking presenters for these courses based on best practises in Catholic schools. The application deadline is March 27th. Specific course information will be available in early May.

AQ Courses—OECTA is awaiting final approval for Part III (Specialist) of Primary Education, Special Education and Reading from the Ontario College of Teachers. It is also in the process of submitting Primary/Junior Mathematics, Primary/Junior Science and Computers in the Classroom. Also, with the increased demand for self-directed professional development and additional qualifications, the rising cost of AQ courses has become a concern. The Teacher Education Work Group will be conducting an investigation on the tuition and associated costs of AQ courses. It will report back to OTF Executive shortly. We will keep you updated.

Other—Finally, for our beginning teachers, there is a virtual conference entitled "Survive and Thrive" available online at www.survivethrive.on.ca

LOCAL NEWS—MISCELLANEOUS

**Wellness Workshops
2007-08**

The 2007- 2008 Wellness Program continues with the following workshops remaining in this year’s program. 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, 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.

**UNIT BANQUET/ ELECTIONS & AGM
Preparations underway**

As the end of the school year approaches planning is underway for two important year-end events.

Wellington OECTA’s **“In Appreciation” Banquet** will be held on **May 28th** at the Italian Canadian Club. At this banquet we honour our retirees, and 25 year members as well as those who have served as OECTA Reps and Committee members. In addition, we present our various Awards for our members and friends in the community.

Your staff reps will receive more information including Awards nomination forms at their April reps meeting.

Our local **Annual Meeting and Elections** will be held on **June 9th**. An important part of this meeting is the election of next year’s unit executive, The offices of two Vice Presidents (two year terms), Secretary and five Councillor positions will be up for election this year. (Note: the current President is in the first year of a two year term.)

We are currently reviewing our Constitution and Bylaws including election procedures. As a result, there may be significant changes brought forward to this meeting for consideration. Again more information will be forthcoming through staff reps and Wellington Works.

Stay tuned!



Growing Success Draft Policy - Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting

The Ministry has released a draft document entitled "Growing Success - K-Grade 12" regarding assessment, evaluation and reporting.

Boards are required to establish a team which will review and respond to the draft document. OECTA and the board have established a committee to assist in the collection and completion of this survey. To collect this information, the committee has decided to establish focus groups to gain accurate and reliable feedback on this draft document.

Schools which have included Assessment and Evaluation as part of their school improvement plan will be asked for the names of teachers on staff who may be interested in participating. This is completely voluntary.

Participants will be required to review the "Growing Success" draft document and survey before the focus group session which will be held on April 2nd from 9 to 3 at the ICC.

If you have further questions, please feel free to contact Judy Mullen.

PAET Workshop Re-scheduled

The date for the Performance Appraisal for Experienced Teachers workshop for principals and staff reps has been moved from April 2nd to Thursday, May 22nd. More details on times and location will follow.

Transfers and Recruitment Brochure

The revised Transfer and Recruitment brochure for 2008 has been sent out to schools. This document which is a mutual project of the Board and OECTA has undergone considerable revision from last year’s version. Teacher should note changes in the timelines in particular.

Report from the OECTA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Friday March 7 to Monday March 10

The provincial Annual General Meeting of OECTA took place from Friday March 7 to Monday March 10. We thank the nine OECTA members who voluntarily gave up the first four days of their March Break to represent the unit as voting delegates at the AGM. The individuals who ably represented the teachers of Wellington Catholic at this important event were:

Jim Whitechurch	George Giovinazzo	Judy Mullen
Nancy Baker	John Maschio	Marty Bell
Yvonne Runstedler	Laurence Vignola	Sheila Hynes

Some of the highlights from AGM 2008 held March 7 to 10 in Toronto are outlined on the following pages. More detailed information will be forthcoming from provincial OECTA and is available on the provincial web site at www.oecta.on.ca.

2008-09 Provincial Executive

PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE

President: Elaine Mac Neil
Past President: Donna Marie Kennedy
First Vice-President: James Ryan
Second Vice-President: Kevin O'Dwyer
Third Vice-President: Chris Karuhanga
Treasurer: Sonia Di Petta
Councillor: Lisa Mirabelli
Councillor: John Pecsénye

OTF Table Officer: Reno Melatti

ONTARIO TEACHERS FEDERATION (OETCA REPRESENTATIVES)

OTF Governor: Tom Doyle
OTF Governor: René Jansen in de Wal
OTF Governor: Reno Melatti
OTF Governor: George Saranchuk
OTF Governor: Mike Wosniak

Monte Carlo Fundraiser



\$17,000 was raised at Friday's Monte Carlo Night. Proceeds will be donated to Starlight Starbright Foundation, which helps seriously ill children, teens and their families through imaginative programs that alleviate the pain and fear of a prolonged illness. A popular event each year, the casino night is organized by the AGM Monte Carlo Committee.

Provincial President's Opening Comments and Report

International Women's Day-

Noting that OECTA's AGM began on International Women's Day, OECTA president Elaine Mac Neil cautioned delegates not to be complacent about the status of women in Canada. "We still have a lot to change. A woman's place in society marks the level of civilization of that society. Statcan is reporting the highest rate of women's poverty in two decades, at 19 per cent of adult Canadian women."

Workload, Poor Implementation -

OECTA has consistently reported members' concerns about overwhelming workload issues to Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty, Minister of Education Kathleen Wynne and to ministry staff, Mac Neil told delegates. "OECTA has pushed its agenda for relief from initiatives emanating from the Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat (LNS) and from the Ministry. Mac Neil added that, "no amount of teacher goodwill can compensate for poor implementation of initiatives. Only when teachers are considered partners in collaboration on policy development and local implementation will there be success."

Large Scale Assessments - OECTA has repeatedly advised the government that Ontario should not be squandering human and financial education resources on large scale EQAO assessments of students that do not contribute to improved learning for students, Elaine Mac Neil said. "There is growing evidence from other countries pointing to growing discontent with similar types of assessment. We continue to say that sample testing instead of large scale tests would produce results that could be used to correct learning gaps."

Manufacturing Sector Job Loss -

Guard against a temptation to look the other way concerning job losses in the manufacturing sector, Elaine Mac Neil advised delegates. "Most manufacturing jobs in Ontario are union jobs with good salaries and benefits," she said. "Those salaries generate the taxes that pay for public sector jobs like ours. There is an inter-connectedness that we ignore at our peril. Those of us in communities where plants have closed, particularly in Northern Ontario, see the pain of job losses on the faces of students every day," she said.

Face of hunger - Teachers who confront poverty every day in their classrooms will not be surprised to learn that the number of persons served by food banks has increased by 14.3 per cent since 2001. In the last year 52 per cent of food banks in Ontario have seen an increase in the number of working poor served. According to the Ontario Hunger Report, children make up 38.8 per cent of clients of food banks, and single parents are among the most common users of food banks, Mac Neil said.

Apprenticeship Training - Ontario secondary schools should include presentations on skilled trades as post secondary options for students, Mac Neil said. "There are misconceptions and a lack of information about the skilled trades, especially concerning worker shortages, availability of apprenticeship spaces, understanding the term skilled trade vs occupation and the differences between the construction trades and the industrial trades."

AGM Report Continued...

Ontario Education Minister Kathleen Wynne Addresses AGM Delegates

Education Minister Kathleen Wynne addressed the AGM and spoke very highly of the work being done in the education system and, in particular, by the teaching profession in this province.

Local Bargaining—Wynne assured AGM delegates that the Ontario government “has no desire to supplant local negotiations with provincial discussions.” OECTA has always insisted on the primacy of local bargaining to address local needs and concerns. “The government’s role is to facilitate discussions about provincial issues that are of concern to everyone,” the Minister said. “The OECTA leadership has been very clear about your position.”

Workload - In answer to a question about monitoring the activity of the Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat and workload, the

Education Minister said that she is working to consolidate the work begun during the McGuinty government’s first term. “We know we have asked a lot of teachers. We will not be introducing a slew of new initiatives. I do not want you to be overburdened. We are very conscious that we have to pay attention to the pace of change,” she said.

Large Scale Assessment - “I understand and hear teachers’ concern about a narrow focus on test scores,” Wynne told AGM delegates. “Because we live in a political climate that demands a visible, and I believe, overly simplistic measure of student success, we need to educate the public how to understand student success and achievement, in the broader way that teachers understand.”

Membership Fees Set for 2008-09

Actions taken by the AGM delegates resulted in no change to the OECTA membership fee for 2008-09. The fee will remain at the current \$950 for the next school year. This is the third consecutive year the fee has remain unchanged.

Occasional teacher fees were modified slightly to 1.55% of salary, offsetting increased release time approved at the AGM.

Funding Review Extended

The AGM approved an extension to the mandate of the Funding Task Force, originally scheduled to report to AGM 2008, until AGM 2009. The review is examining all aspects of OECTA funding, both local and provincial.

Status of Women Committee Wins Approval

Delegates voted to make the Status of Women Work Group a permanent standing committee of the Association. The Status of Women Committee will advise the provincial executive on ways to advocate for and enhance the status of women in society both nationally and internationally.

Romeo Dallaire Speaks to AGM

Leadership and Education

Teachers are anticipatory shapers of the next generation of leaders, said Lt.-Gen. (retired) Roméo Dallaire in his address to delegates Sunday morning. They can instill in their students the confidence, security and conviction they will need to be motivated to a high level of activism.

Dallaire’s talk, Human Leadership and Education: Unity of Effort in a Multi-disciplined World, focused on the power that individuals can have in a democracy. We are living in an era of instability, in a world that is enraged and where many countries don’t live by the rules, Dallaire said. The United States, which is still a super power, is vulnerable. Canada is vulnerable, too, but Canada, he said is well placed in the world as a leading middle power to be a powerful and positive influence.

We are a well-managed country, he said, but now is the time for leadership, vision and activism. As leaders and the shapers of the next generation of leaders, teachers must believe that there is no limit to youths’ potential and ability to advance human rights.

Canada is a nation committed to advancing human rights around the world, he said. We believe in several fundamentals, such as the

rights of all human beings to exist; that we must assist those who cannot help themselves, and that no human is valued more than another.

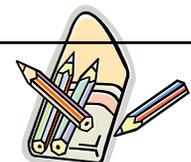
The NGO community (non-governmental organizations) is the supra-nation state to advance humanity, said Dallaire. Encourage your students to be activists, he said, to counter the use of torture, the existence of places like Guantanamo Bay, and sanctioning the death penalty for Canadians held in foreign prisons. Youth involvement in NGOs is the best way to introduce them to the reality of world issues and lead them down the path of activism.

When asked how can teachers convince themselves and their students that government can be a positive force for leadership, Dallaire stressed the importance of participatory democracy.

Vote, he said. Stress the significance of the free vote and its power to influence those who will lead this country.

Write to your MP on issues that matter to you. Don’t abdicate decisions to a handful of voters.

The depth our commitment to each other and the future of humanity, Dallaire said, needs problem solving, not problem-management.





Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association

Join a provincial committee

Are you a knowledgeable, interested and committed member of your association? Please complete and return this application by May 1, 2008. Present committee members seeking reappointment are asked to reapply.

STANDING AND OTHER COMMITTEES

- Awards
- Beginning Teachers
- Catholic Education
- Collective Bargaining
- Communications and Public Relations
- Educational Aid
- Elementary Schools
- Finance
- Health and Safety
- Human Rights
- Legislation
- Occasional Teachers
- Political Advisory
- Professional Development
- Steering
- Program and Structures
- Status of Women
- Secondary Schools

DUTIES

To study and report on such matters as may be a) referred to it by the annual general meeting, the council of presidents or the provincial executive; b) undertaken by it with the approval of the annual general meeting, the council of presidents or the provincial executive; c) pertinent to it and introduced by one of its members.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Information may be found in the Handbook 2007-2008 on pages 15, 18, 19, 20, 21, 56-60.

APPOINTMENTS

The Provincial Executive will make decisions for committee appointments to take effect July 1, 2008. All applicants will be informed of the status of their application.

Committee service application

NAME _____ M/F _____

HOME ADDRESS _____

POSTAL CODE _____ PHONE _____

SCHOOL NAME _____

SCHOOL ADDRESS _____

POSTAL CODE _____ PHONE _____

OECTA UNIT _____

UNIT INVOLVEMENT

COMMITTEE/ACTIVITY/POSITION/DATES

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

1-5 Years 6-15 Years 16+ Years

PRESENT POSITION _____

SUBJECT _____ GRADES _____

OTHER/RELATED ACTIVITIES, EXPERIENCE _____

WHY I WANT TO SERVE _____

PROVINCIAL INVOLVEMENT

COMMITTEE/ACTIVITY/POSITION/DATES

COMMITTEE PREFERENCES

IN ORDER OF CHOICE

1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____

Please complete and return this application form by May 1, 2008 to: Committee Application, OECTA, 65 St. Clair Ave. E., Toronto, ON M4T 2Y8 Fax 416-925-7764