

Currently Speaking

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www.ugot.org

President's Message



Dear membership,

Happy New Year. I hope you have all had a great winter holiday. We have been busy in 2011. There has been a lot of work. Unlike last year, where I was getting a lot of complaints about so little work, this year has been the opposite. We have not been able to meet the needs of the absences. The main reason has been that all Long Term Occasional positions are now hired from our list. Many of you got LTO work; therefore, we have had a bit of a shortfall meeting the demands of daily work. We had to hire 80 new occasional teachers to meet this need. There are also many of our members who are also on different boards' lists, on the secondary occasional teacher list, on leave or limited to only 20 days of work because they are retired teachers. There are also some members who have chosen to work very little or not at all. Please remember, you need to work a minimum of 10 days to remain on the list. Failure to do so will result in removal from the daily list. I have helped many members in this situation but this will become more difficult unless there is a medical reason that prevented a member from working. If there is a reason why you can't work the minimum number of days, then you should contact Donna Perry and let her know why you can't work and take a leave from the list.

This upcoming year will be very exciting for us. We are providing you with many professional learning opportunities as described by Carol Waffler in this newsletter. Be sure to read about the changes and take advantage of those opportunities. We also have the challenge of a new collective agreement. Marina Howlett, our Chief Negotiator, has written some important information about the process with timelines and how you can provide your input in the form of a survey. Please take the time to respond because this will affect the working conditions of all occasional teachers. Our list is composed of

many types of members. We have retired teachers, daily occasional teachers, Long Term Occasional teachers, teachers who are part time contract teachers and teachers with combinations of these. Of the teachers on our list, there are those who want permanent positions and those who will remain career occasional teachers. So, to ensure we have a collective agreement that reflects the needs of all our members, we need input from all of you.

This newsletter contains valuable information about working conditions, upcoming events, and an article from the Canadian Teachers' Federation on cyber bullying. I have also included an article with tips on how to handle harassment in the hallways in three minutes. I hope these are helpful to you. Finally, I would like to tell you about some great work our Federation does for our communities. ETFO donated \$500.00 on behalf of the Upper Grand Occasional Teachers' Local and \$500.00 on behalf of the Upper Grand Teachers' Local to Onward Willow in Guelph for the great outreach work they do with children and families in their community. Before our winter holiday, Gundi Barbour and I went to visit Lorna Schwartzentruher, who is the program director, to present the cheques. The teacher local also presented a \$300.00 donation of their own and we presented \$150.00 on behalf of the occasional teachers in Upper Grand. That money came from members who purchased tickets for door prizes at our Annual Meeting last June and our Fall General Meeting in November. Our local matched the prize money to come up with the \$150.00. Lorna gave us a tour of the facility and it was such a heart-warming experience. I was so overwhelmed with the programming provided for children of all ages and families who are really struggling. They do some amazing work there. Lorna mentioned to me that, if any of our members want to help, there are many ways to do so. Onward Willow will collect used clothing, etc. They also really like to receive new books so that they can give children a book for their birthday. Those are well received. For details, you can call Onward Willow at 519 824-6892 or go to their website.

Have a great 2012,
Andrew

Working Conditions

Job cancellations

When you cancel a job close to the day you are supposed to work, either the night before or the morning of, you must contact the school and let them know that you had to cancel. It is not just a courtesy call; it is required according to our collective agreement. Failing to do so will result in disciplinary action by the Board. A call is important because this allows the principal to be able to contact someone to fill the class if Smart Find doesn't fill the job. I would also email the principal to let him/her know because sometimes s/he doesn't listen to messages in the general delivery boxes until it is too late. Check our website, www.ugot.org, which provides the current school directory and the names of school principals.

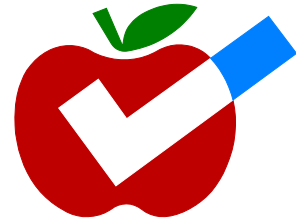
Missed Assignments

This has occurred frequently this year. One of the most common misconceptions that can cause missed jobs occurs when a member goes into Smart Find and enters an unavailability for a period during a time when the member has already accepted a job in the unavailability period. Smart Find will not automatically cancel an assignment for you. It will not call you for future jobs during your unavailable dates but you must cancel an already accepted assignment. Once you accept an assignment, you must honour that job assignment unless you cancel it.

Prep Time

As stated in our Collective Agreement, the teacher's prep time becomes the prep time of the occasional teacher. The teacher should not be arranging their schedule and trading their prep time so that you, the occasional teacher, don't get the prep time. If this should happen, photocopy the schedule and contact me. Sometimes it is legitimate, for example, on days when there is a field trip or another situation where the teacher has to work with other teachers who remain at the school to cover preps. They would be given payback. Unfortunately, we don't often return to get back the prep time. I was at a school where they knew I was coming back and the librarian honoured her promise to pay back the lost prep time. The other issue I want to raise around prep time is a touchy one that involves the perception of professionalism. The prep time is ours to do with as we see fit, provided that we are being professional. Prep times

should be used to ensure that your day runs smoothly. I have heard of teachers leaving jobs for the occasional teacher to do. If there is photocopying or marking to do, then you are required to do it, within reason. Your first goal is to ensure that you are well equipped for your day. Sometimes taking time to learn names of students, reading about students with special needs, tidying up after an art activity where you ran out of time to do a proper clean up or just brushing up on a math concept or lesson that you are going to teach are all priorities. If you are given tasks to do but you needed the time to do the things I have just mentioned, then you are acting in a professional manner. I think the day for occasional teachers is a tough one. We need that time to get things done and provide the students with the best learning opportunities possible. So, if jobs don't get done, then that is the way the day went and you did the best you could. However, if you didn't get the jobs done and you sat in the staff room drinking coffee and reading the newspaper, then I would say you weren't acting in a professional manner. I do not want to define what you should or shouldn't do. No one likes to be micromanaged. However, if occasional teachers aren't being professional, then that might be how things will go in the future.



Professional Learning

Professional Learning goes Online!

One of the missions of the Upper Grand OT local is to raise our members' professional status by providing Professional Learning opportunities.

Over the past few years we have budgeted for, and implemented, a number of Group PL events that have been well received and attended, such as "I am the Teacher" and BMS training opportunities. In December 2011, we developed PL Online Registration to enable our members to see new PL opportunities as they arise and to register immediately for sessions in which they are interested. We hope to eventually provide an entire school year's schedule, allowing members to plan their PL learning in advance.

In addition, but no less exciting, is the inclusion of a Member Professional Learning Fund On-line Application form. In simpler terms, this allows individual members to apply on-line for funding to attend Professional Learning events including, but not limited to, those presented by ETFO and our local.

Complete guidelines can be found by accessing the Members' Only section of the Upper Grand OT website at www.ugot.org.

Happy New Year, and Happy Learning!
Carol Waffler

Collective Bargaining

Collective Bargaining 2012

Your Collective Bargaining Team has been engaged in a number of conferences and workshops to begin preparations for Collective Bargaining in 2012. Last November 17-18, 2011, the Collective Bargaining Team attended a two-day workshop to focus on a variety of effective communication strategies to inform and engage the local membership. The overall theme throughout the next two-year Collective Bargaining cycle will be "Control Your Future" through member engagement, open communication and informed decision-making. Ongoing communication with members throughout the negotiations process is critical to a successful round of bargaining. Working in partnership with ETFO's Provincial Staff, your UGOT bargaining team will provide communication to the members in a variety of ways:

- ♦ Face-to-face interactive meetings
- ♦ All-member meetings
- ♦ Electronic and Social Media networks
- ♦ E-mails sent directly to all members (Be sure the Upper Grand OT Local has your e-mail address.)
- ♦ UGOT website postings
- ♦ Newsletter updates

Your local Executive and the Collective Bargaining Team will be receiving additional training and support on three specific occasions, January 23, 2012, April 23, 2012 and the CB Team will attend a Provincial Bargaining Conference February 14-15, 2012. Social Media strategies will be explored and implemented into UGOT's communication strategies. **Remember that ETFO will not conduct Collective Bargaining in public or in the media – that**

includes social media. UGOT will use appropriate strategies to broadcast officially sanctioned bargaining information to members. However, we will not engage in, or sanction, dialogue or on-line conversation that threatens member solidarity or compromises the Board-Occasional Teacher negotiations process.

Collective Bargaining Goals **Occasional Teacher Locals 2012**

- ✍ To negotiate a real salary increase
- ✍ To negotiate paid professional learning
- ✍ To negotiate capped lists
- ✍ To negotiate benefit improvements
- ✍ To negotiate language to provide priority hiring for permanent positions and LTO assignments
- ✍ To negotiate experience credit to include all occasional teacher work

Please complete the enclosed survey (on-line if possible). Your CB team will incorporate your priorities, comments and suggestions into the Preliminary Submission which will be presented to the membership for ratification at the Annual Meeting on May 31, 2012. It is imperative that you attend this Ratification Meeting to show your support and to provide direction for your CB team.

Marina Howlett
Chief Negotiator/Vice-President



Minga

Why don't you come out and Minga with us? Minga is a term used in Equador before the time of the Incan empire. It is a gathering of citizens to complete tasks to benefit the community. It is a gathering to achieve a collective purpose. For us, it is to get occasional teachers together in an informal setting to share and have some fun. This is not an ETFO sponsored function. It will not be funded. It is a chance to mingle with colleagues and to "Minga". I hope to see you there.

The next Minga will be at the Elora Raceway on Friday January 27th. We will meet at 5 p.m.. Please RSVP so that I know how many spots to reserve. Email me at andrewaloe@rogers.blackberry.net by January 25th.

**UPPER GRAND ETFO
OCCASIONAL TEACHERS' LOCAL**

President: Andrew Aloe
Vice President: Marina Howlett
Treasurer: John Ritchie
Secretary: Donna Henderson
Collective Bargaining Executive Liaison: Barb Walkey
Executive: Julie Birken
 Jacqueline Gray
 Charlene Martin
 Ralph Rainford
 Rob Robson
 Ruth Tomlins
 Carol Waffler

**Ontario College of Teachers
Membership Notice**

All LTO's please note: you will not be receiving pay on January 20th as this covers the period December 25th to January 6th, during which you weren't working. The Ontario College of Teachers will deduct their membership fee on February 3rd, 2012. Make sure this goes through by checking your pay stub.

Daily OT's must pay the membership fee directly to the College of Teachers. Deadline: April 15, 2012.

PAYDATES

Jan.20, 2012	Apr. 27, 2012
Feb. 3, 2012	May 11, 2012
Feb. 17, 2012	May 25, 2012
Mar. 2, 2012	June 8, 2012
Mar. 16, 2012	June 22, 2012
Mar. 30, 2012	July 6, 2012
Apr. 13, 2012	July 20, 2012

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Dates to Remember

Federation Dates

Thurs., May 31, 2012.....**Annual Meeting**
 Time: 4:45 p.m. Location: Marden Community Centre

Executive Meetings

Mon., January 23, 2012 (CB Training also)...Orchard Park
 Thurs., February 23, 2012.....Orchard Park
 Mon., April 23, 2012 (CB Training also).....Orchard Park
 Wed., May 16, 2012..... Orangeville
 Wed., June 27, 2012Fergus

Professional Development Days

Monday, January 23, 2012
 Monday, April 23, 2012
 Friday, June 8, 2012
 Friday, June 29, 2012



Holidays

Feb. 21, 2012..... Family Day
 March 10 - 18, 2012..... Winter Break
 April 6 - 9, 2012..... Easter

Last Day of School for Students

June 28, 2012

Website www.ugot.org



Please visit the website for current information, Professional Development opportunities, an Executive contact list, Executive Meeting Minutes, Currently Speaking (our OT newsletter), and other pertinent information as it becomes available.

We will continue to use the website to communicate to members when it is impossible to contact all members by telephone or through the mail.

If you need information or encounter difficulties, you may contact the Professional Relations staff (PRS) in Protective Services at 1-888-838-3836

UPPER GRAND DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
500 Victoria Road North, Guelph Ontario N1E 6K2
Phone: (519) 822-4420 Fax: (519) 823-1950

Martha Rogers
Director of Education

January 4, 2012

Payroll Changes that will affect your pay:

Effective January 1, 2012

The statutory deductions for CPP and EI will start again the first paydate in 2012 with the following;

For Canada Pension Plan (CPP) the rate is 4.95% for a maximum employee deduction of \$2,306.70. The Yearly Maximum Pensionable Earnings (YMPE) is \$50,100.00.

For Employment Insurance (EI) the rate is 1.83% for a maximum employee deduction of \$840.00. The maximum Insurable Earnings is \$45,900.00.

The Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan (OTPP) contribution rate is 10.8% up to the Yearly Maximum Pensionable Earnings and 12.4% above the YMPE.

The OMERS contribution rate is 8.3% on earnings up to the YMPE (\$1926.92 Bi-Weekly) plus 12.8% on earnings over the YMPE on a bi-weekly basis.

The Ontario College of Teachers annual fee this year will be \$138.00. This amount will be a one-time deduction, deducted on the 2nd paydate in January 2012 for all contract employees. For LTO employees this amount will be deducted on February 3rd, 2012 paydate.





Thank you

Darlene Allen
Supervisor of Payroll




HOW TO HANDLE HARASSMENT IN THE HALLWAYS IN THREE MINUTES

(From the Toronto District School Board)




1. **STOP the harassment.**

-  Interrupt the comment/halt the physical harassment.
-  DO NOT pull the students aside for confidentiality unless absolutely necessary.
-  Make sure all the students in the area hear your comments.
-  *It is important that all students, whether onlookers, potential targets, or potential harassers, get the message that students are safe and protected in the school.*




2. **IDENTIFY the harassment.**

-  Label the form of harassment: “You just made a harassing comment/put-down based upon race (religion, ethnicity, abilities, gender, age, sexual orientation, economic status, size, etc.”
-  Do not imply that the victim is a member of that identifiable group.
-  A major goal is to take the “spotlight” off the target and turn the focus to the behaviour. Students should realize what was said, regardless of what was meant (e.g. kidding).

3. **BROADEN the response.**

-  Do not personalize your response at this stage: “At this school, we do not harass people.” “Our community does not appreciate hateful/thoughtless behaviour.”
-  Re-identify the offensive behaviour: “This name calling can also be hurtful to others who overhear it.”
-  “We don’t do put-downs at this school” specifically includes those listening, as well as the school community in general. Even if they were “only kidding”, harassers must realize the possible ramifications of their actions.

4. **ASK for change in future behaviour.**

-  Personalize the response. “Chris, please pause and think before you act.”
-  Check in with the victim at this time: “If this continues, please tell me, and I will take further action. We want everyone to be safe at this school.”
-  Now turn the “spotlight” on the harasser specifically, asking for accountability. Again, be sure not to treat the target like a helpless victim. Rather, plainly give him/her this responsibility on behalf of others.