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# THE INFORMER

The Official Newsletter of O.E.C.T.A. - Simcoe Muskoka Elementary Unit

ELEMENTARY UNIT

## Professional Development

OECTA provides a plethora of choices for Additional Qualification courses.

Depending on the course you are looking for, many are offered in both on-line, and face-to-face formats. There are options for the whole course format, or the module format. The module format gives you the option of completing each module of the AQ course at your own pace and according to your schedule. The cost of each course is usually between \$550-\$600. There are **subsidies available** for some courses anywhere between \$110-\$450! Have a look: [OECTA AQ](#).

## Good to Know:

Qualifications is an issue that has been coming up more often around the unit office. Teachers need to keep in mind that if they are qualified to teach in a certain area, i.e.. French or Spec Ed, that they can be placed there by administration regardless of preference or past teaching assignments.

## President's Message

### New Staffing Process

Please find below the changes to the Staffing Process that was negotiated locally in our last round of collective bargaining:

- Those teachers declared surplus – not interim surplus – will be required to complete a Transfer Request Form.
- Teachers do not have to fill out a form for each round of staffing. If you complete a form in round one, it remains active for round two – unless requested to be withdrawn.
- Teachers may choose to fill out a transfer form only for the second round.
- Those teachers declared surplus – not interim surplus – and those teachers completing a Transfer Request Form will be placed together and ranked based on seniority.
- Round One: begins April 15<sup>th</sup> and ends May 20<sup>th</sup>.
- Top three most senior and qualified applicants **will** be interviewed for the posted vacancy.
- Please note: if you accept to be interviewed at a school, and are successful, and offered the position, it is the expectation that you **will** be placed in that vacancy.
- Round Two: begins June 3<sup>rd</sup> and ends August 31<sup>st</sup>.
- Teachers that are surplus – not interim surplus – and those teachers requesting a transfer, will be placed by seniority and qualifications. **No interview!**
- Please note: if you identify a school or posting, and you are the most senior, and qualified, you **will** be placed in that vacancy.
- Interim Surplus will be placed – at the latest – two days prior to the end of school in June.
- Transfers are still available and active until August 31<sup>st</sup>.

## OECTA Provincial Elections

OECTA provincial elections are held every year as part of the AGM held at the Westin Harbour Castle in Toronto. Each year the AGM is the first weekend of March Break. Here is a list of the OECTA members that have been nominated for a position:

### **President:**

Liz Stuart

### **1st Vice President:**

Warren Grafton

### **2nd Vice President:**

Barb Dobrowolski

### **3rd Vice President:**

Andrew Donihee

### **Treasurer:**

Michel Derikx

### **Councillors:**

Michael John Knoblauch  
Anthony Rocchio

### **OTF Governor:**

Rick Belisle  
Tracey Pekarski  
Richard Shrader  
Andrew Robinson  
Chris Cowley  
Sean Roberts

### **Benefits**

Beginning April 1, 2017, Simcoe Muskoka Teachers will be transitioned to the new benefits provided by OTIP. Beginning March 1, 2017, teachers should start receiving their enrolment packages. These packages will be mailed to the address you have on file with the Board. Therefore, please make sure that your current address is correct with the Board, in order, to avoid delays.

Once you receive the enrolment package, you will receive login and password that will provide you access to the benefit webpage, in order, to verify information and coverage. As well, you will be provided the details of the new benefit plan. If you have questions prior to the date of transition, please contact [oectabenefits@catholicteachers.ca](mailto:oectabenefits@catholicteachers.ca)

Once the transition is complete – end of April – people will be reminded that they have a deadline for submitting claims with Sun Life after termination. For most plans, it is 90 days, but I am seeking clarification on this point from the Board.

I will be sending out further information regarding benefits to your OECTA email account and posting on our local webpage ([www.oectasimcoemuskoka.on.ca](http://www.oectasimcoemuskoka.on.ca))

### **2017 OECTA Annual General Meeting**

OECTA's Annual General Meeting will be held in Toronto from March 10-13, 2017. There will be many resolutions debated and voted upon, to alter the OECTA Handbook, which governs how our association is run. The 2017 AGM Supplement, which contains submissions for AGM's consideration as well as other supporting materials, is now available on the OECTA Provincial website ([www.catholicteachers.ca](http://www.catholicteachers.ca)). The following local delegates will be joining me as representatives of Simcoe Muskoka Elementary and Occasional Teachers Unit at the meeting: Nicole van Woudenberg, Shannon McGlynn, Joe Martone, Erin Zawacki, Joe Forte, Trina Feetham, Lindsay Zawacki, Josh Goodeill, Catharine Douris, Lisa Diessel, Tina-Marie Lockyer, Sara Vause, and John Romanow. On behalf of all our members, I would like to take this opportunity to thank these individuals for taking time out of their March Break to attend and represent the Simcoe Muskoka Elementary Unit.

## Important Dates

Feb 3-Feb 9-Black out period

Feb 3-PA day for report card writing

Feb 9-Executive Meeting-Unit Office

Feb 10-Report Cards Due to office

Mar 7-General Meeting/AGM Delegates Meeting

Mar 11-13-AGM-Westin Harbour Castle-Toronto

Mar 24-26-Women's Leadership Summit

Mar 30-Executive Meeting and OECTA Reps Meeting-Unit Office

Apr 29-Retirement Workshop

## Safety Procedures

Safety procedures set out by the school administration are put in place for a number of reasons. Fire drills, bomb threats, adverse weather and code red drills (dangerous imposter in the school) are important ways to train and help kids manage and deal with a stressful and scary situations. As teachers, we need to be mindful of this as we guide children through these drills. We also need to remember that these kids look up to us. We need to be role models at all times, whether we are in charge of a class, or we are on prep time. All teachers, as a requirement of our job, need to take part in these drills whenever you are in the school for the safety and training of everyone.

## @oectasm Email Accounts

Across the province, there has been a strong urging from Unions to move away from/avoid using employer email servers to conduct union business. In response to this, most OECTA affiliates have moved to the same email server we have. Most Simcoe Muskoka members were quick to respond to our request to create an account. There are a few out there who have yet to create an account, and as a result, may not be getting important, up to date information regarding OECTA business. Members with an account have access to past memos, important dates and events,

An account was created for members that hadn't created one. An email was sent to their personal email address that we had on file to inform them of the account.

If you have yet to login to the Simcoe Muskoka OECTA website, please don't create a new account.

**To get your login credentials, or any other issues, contact Shannon at the unit office, or email [smcglynn@oectasimcoemuskoka.on.ca](mailto:smcglynn@oectasimcoemuskoka.on.ca)**

We recognize that having multiple email accounts is inefficient, but our email server has the option for you to forward your email from the @oectasm account to your primary personal email account, as long as your primary account is **NOT** a board @smcdsb account.

## Births

Congratulations goes out to: Matthew Compeau, teacher at St James Catholic School, and his wife Jenn, on the birth of their daughter, Amelia Marie on January 11.

Mitch Harris, teacher at Our Lady of Grace Catholic School and Brooke Roth, teacher at Saint Gabriel the Archangel Catholic School, on the birth of their daughter, Macy Jo Harris born on February 21.

## Bereavements

Please Keep In Your Prayers: Nicole Nicoletta, teacher at St. Monica's Catholic School, on the passing of her mother, Anna Marie Strom.

## Contract Extension!

By now you should have been notified through email, news, websites, etc, that OECTA Provincial has reached a tentative deal with the Ontario Government.

The OECTA provincial website has all the details in the members section for your perusal.

**Please make sure that your personal email, and other information, is up to date!**

This is how you receive important information and updates from OECTA provincial.

**More importantly**, this is how you get your login so that you can vote on the contract extension ratification. If you are having trouble logging onto the provincial website, contact OECTA:

Phone: 416-925-2493  
or toll free  
1-800-268-7230

Email:  
[contact@oecta.on.ca](mailto:contact@oecta.on.ca)

## Retirement Planning

Retirement is a big step for most teachers, involving many decisions. While planning should begin several years before retirement, final preparations should begin at least six months in advance of your scheduled retirement date. Here are some resources to help you plan for a successful transition to retirement.

Remember, three months before your retirement date you should contact the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan (OTPP) at 416-226-2700 or 1-800-668-0105 to obtain a personalized pension application form. You can also begin the pension application process through your secure online IACCESS account at [www.otpp.com](http://www.otpp.com).

Our local Retirement Planning Workshop is taking place April 29th. Please contact Michele MacDonald at the office to register. [mmacdonald@oectasimcoemusoka.on.ca](mailto:mmacdonald@oectasimcoemusoka.on.ca) or 705-733-9910.

### Summary of the Extension Agreement

-Two year extension-From September 1, 2017 to August 31, 2019.

-Salary Increases-           1.5% Sept 1, 2017  
  1% Sept 1, 2018  
  1% Feb 1, 2019  
  0.5% Aug 31, 2019  
  -0.5%, one time lump sum payment, not on grid

-Staffing increases to be determined by the Joint Staffing Committee

-4% inflationary increase to our benefits on Sept 1, 2017, and another 4% on Sept 1, 2018

-No local bargaining-extension of current agreement. If the Unit or the board wishes to change any part of the current agreement, both parties must agree on terms and conditions. We can do this through a Letter of Understanding, and attach it to our Collective Agreement.