

Memo #28

Date: February 5, 2018

To: Executive/Members

Re: **Violence in the Classroom; Retirement Workshops; Benefit Update**

Violence in the Classroom

Unfortunately, this is becoming a rising concern in our schools. We have many students with needs, that require support from a team of professionals. Despite all the precautions that are put in place, we can be placed in an environment where we are kicked, punched, spat on, and verbally abused. This is unacceptable. Providing proper supports, training and funding is necessary for the successful learning environment for every student that we teach.

OECTA and other affiliates are advocating to their Boards and the Ministry of Education that the supports that the students and teachers require, in an everyday school setting, be funded properly.

In the meantime, teachers are asking what can be done?

1. After every incident complete a Safe Schools Incident Reporting Form

Your school may call them something different, but these forms are to be completed with 24 hours of an incident that may be considered for suspension or expulsion, such as:

- Uttering a threat
- Swearing
- Vandalism
- Bullying
- Injurious to the moral tone of the school, or physical or mental well-being of the school community
- Possessing a weapon (remember many items can be considered a weapon)
- Using a weapon to cause or threaten bodily harm

Submit the completed form to your administrator. It is suggested that you keep a copy for your records.

The receiving administrator should respond with a receipt within 48 hours – not including weekend – of the result of the investigation.

Mitigating factors - If a student has difficulty controlling their behaviour or understanding consequences - may be a reason not to suspend a student, **but it is not a reason to not complete the form.** As well, if behaviours continue, it is an opportunity to address those behaviours through the students' Behaviour or Safety Plan.

2. If hit or kicked or almost hit or kicked (a near miss), complete an Accident/Incident Reporting/Investigation Form the day the event occurred.

This form will outline what happened, what you were doing, witnesses etc. Submit completed form to your principal. Again, it is suggested you keep a copy for your records.

This form is sent to the principal, who will forward the form to the Joint Health and Safety Committee to review the incident.

3. If injured, complete the form and have the administrator complete their section of the WSIB form, and you need to seek medical attention immediately, and the attending doctor complete their portion of the form.

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. Nothing happens when I complete the form?

The principal has an obligation to provide you with a receipt and communicate the findings of the investigation. If your principal or vice principal is not completing the receipt or communicating with you the findings, contact the Unit Office.

2. I have completed multiple forms and nothing changes.

If the behaviour continues and nothing changes, then perhaps scheduling a team meeting to review the student's behaviour will help. Perhaps a Behaviour Plan needs to be created to help assist staff when dealing with certain behaviours.

3. My principal or vice principal tells me not to complete the form.

It is your professional judgment that determines whether you complete the form. Mitigating circumstances can be reason for not suspending a student, **but not a reason to not complete the forms.** If you are told not to complete a form, contact the Unit Office immediately.

4. Behaviours continue and the student never gets suspended.

Unfortunately, the decision to suspend is in the hands of the principal. But having a professional conversation about your concerns is an **important** first step.

5. Student with a Safety Plan continues to demonstrate physical behaviour but nothing changes.

If a student with a Safety Plan is continually throwing, punching, kicking etc. and multiple forms have been completed, and multiple meetings have taken place, it is advised you contact the Unit Office, so that we can assist you.

Retirement Workshops

OECTA Pension Workshop:

Saturday, April 7, 2018 at the Barrie Golf and Country Club from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm.

Registration this year will be taking place online. **You will have to have a member login and password for our website – www.oectasimcoemuskoka.on.ca - in order to register for the workshop.**

Registration is not open yet, so please keep the date open and make sure you have your member login and password. A flyer will be sent out shortly.

OTIP Walk into Retirement with a Plan Workshop:

Tuesday, April 24, 2018 at Liberty North Event Centre from 4:30 pm to 7:30 pm

During this workshop you will learn about:

- Retirement benefits for life
- Your Pension – OTTP
- Other sources of retirement revenue, including CPP and OAS

This complimentary workshop is open only to members and spouses. A light dinner will be served. Please note any dietary requirements at time of registration.

Register online at: www.otip.com/events

Benefit Update

Eligibility for Benefits

All permanent teachers are eligible to receive benefits through the OECTA Employee Life Health Trust (ELHT). For full-time teachers, life, health, and dental coverage is provided at no cost to the member. For permanent teachers working less than full-time, monthly premiums are prorated to the member's full-time equivalency. For example, a member in a 0.5 assignment would be responsible for paying half the monthly benefit premium.

Informing OTIP of Change of Status

OTIP, the plan administrator, must be made aware of any changes in your eligibility, changes in your full-time equivalency, leaves, and life events (see The 31 Day Rule). School Boards are required to provide all the necessary information to OTIP to provide for your benefit plan administration. Every two weeks, school boards provide updated member information to OTIP via an electronic data file. Upon receipt of this file, OTIP processes the data and, if there are changes in status, OTIP contacts members via email and requires that members provide updated information.

It is always best that the member contact OTIP directly to let them know of any future changes.

The 31 Day Rule

No matter what benefit plan you are enrolled in, or intend to enroll in, you need to ensure that changes to the benefit plan requiring your attention are completed within **31 days** of receiving an email notice of the change from OTIP. Failure to complete the "event" identified in the email may result in denial of benefits and/or the requirement of insurability be provided in order to provide/maintain coverage.

Changes in member's FTE status will also trigger an email from OTIP requiring members to respond. For example, taking a leave, whether part-time or full-time, requires members to choose if they wish to continue with their benefit coverage for the duration of the leave. Members are responsible for premiums during unpaid leaves and deferred leaves, members must indicate that they will assume responsibility for some or all of the monthly premiums.

"Life Events" also require members to respond to changes to their benefit coverage within a **31day** period. The birth of a child, marriage, etc. require the member to notify OTIP within 31 days of the event happening in order to ensure that changes to their benefit coverage are allowed. Most life events can be completed by logging into the member benefit portal and completing the event online.

**If you have any concerns, please contact the Unit office at 705-733-9625 or 1-800-558-4815
Thank you for sharing this information with OECTA members.**