



From the President

January, 2017

Shawn Martin, GEETF President – smartin@geetf.ca



Our GEETF Executive

As we move in to the second half of the school year I want to take the opportunity to thank the Executive Committee for all the work they do for our membership. We are very well served by this dedicated group of professionals.

In the back row from left to right is **Cory Judson** (Second VP, Political Action/Public Relations, Pension, Committee Support, Half-time in the GEETF office and half-time teaching at Princess Elizabeth), **Jennifer McColl** (King George), **Caroll Ann Macsai** (Status of Women Committee, Port Rowan), **Geri Turkoski** (Treasurer, Brier Park), **Steve Thorkildsen** (Professional Development, Prince Charles), **Nancy D'Aurora** (First Vice President, Collective Agreement Officer and Chief Negotiator, full-time release in the GEETF office), **Lori Burroughs** (GEETF Secretary, Social Committee, Lakewood), **George Overend** (Social Justice, Fairview Ave & Thompson Creek), **Carolyn Proulx-Wooton** (Arts Committee, Oneida).

In the front row from left to right is **Shawn Martin** (President, full-time release in the GEETF office), **Jennifer Orr** (Health & Safety, Seneca), **Michaela Kargus** (First Five Years Committee, Russel Reid), **Sabrina Sawyer** (Indigenous Partnerships, Teacher Consultant Indigenous Education).

New GEETF Committees Update

Work has begun to establish our three new committees: Social, Arts and FSL. Meetings and events will be promoted through flyers emailed to you via your Union Steward and all activities are kept up to date on our website calendar at geetf.ca.

January 23rd Assessment and Reporting Day

Article 15.13 of our Collective Agreement grants GEETF members the full PA Day to work on report cards and to complete assessment tasks. No meetings should be scheduled on this day as it is solely for teachers to complete these tasks.

FDK Reporting Update

Implementation of the new reporting process for FDK has been delayed until the end of this school year. The main issues that delayed implementation of the new Communication of Learning across Ontario were technical delays with the new online software and a short timeframe for training.

In-School PD Fund

GEETF members are entitled to apply for funds to attend PD activities of their choice. Each school has its own criteria. Ask your Union Steward for more information about your school's fund. When completing your application for PD funds, please keep in mind the following requirements and restrictions:

- Include a Google Map to show the distance if you are claiming mileage.
- Include the original receipt that shows exactly what was purchased (not just your credit card receipt).
- Your claim must comply with your school's PD Fund criteria.
- The fund does not reimburse for hotel wi-fi charges, office supplies or alcohol purchases.
- The fund does not pay for student resources (i.e. blackline masters, text books, work books, etc.)

Building Better Schools Newsletter

The number of names on the *Building Better Schools Newsletter* distribution list continues to grow. Thank you to all the schools who have shared information about Building Better Schools with your school councils. In recognition of those teachers who presented at school council meetings, a draw was held to honour their work. Congratulations to **Onondaga-Brant** and to the teacher representatives on school council from **École Confédération** and **Lansdowne-Costain** who were the winners in our draws. The next *Building Better Schools Newsletter* will be published in January. We encourage teachers and Grand Erie parents to sign up to receive this newsletter by contacting Cory Judson.

Random Acts of Kindness

Know someone on staff who could use a little pick me up? The Social Justice Committee is sponsoring "Random Acts of Kindness" in every Grand Erie School. Information will be going out to Union Stewards this month.

Violent Incidences

As I meet with colleagues who represent ETFO members across Ontario, the most serious concern, and one of the most difficult issues to address effectively, is the increase in violent and aggressive behaviours by students. This issue is one that ETFO is taking very seriously. Work is ongoing to find solutions. Student Safety Plans are one method used to reduce the risk of injury by student violence or aggression. The Safety Plan is developed for a student whose behaviours are known to pose an ongoing risk of physical injury to the student, staff and others in the school community. The Safety Plan should include:

- A description of the unsafe behaviour(s);
- Preventative strategies designed to reduce the chance of violent incidences;
- How to get immediate assistance;
- Steps to protect the student, other students, and staff from harm;
- Crisis response (first aid and emergency procedures);
- Reporting requirements.

If you have concerns about shortfalls in a student safety plan, you should report your concerns to your principal. You are also encouraged to contact the GEETF office for additional advice and support.