



From the President

September 2015

Editor: Donna Howey President

Grand Erie Elementary Teachers' Federation

GEETF Meetings and Events are listed through our GEETF social media.

www.geetf.ca

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/GEETF

Twitter: @geetfo

Please take a moment to "LIKE" us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter

Grand Erie Union Contacts:

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Welcome Back! Another school year, still no contract.

As I write this, the ETFO Central Bargaining Team is at the table for another day of bargaining. We are carrying out PHASE 2 Work to Rule and we were joined in job action by our CUPE brothers and sisters on September 10th.

It is essential that all GEETF members, new and experienced alike, need to understand that both ETFO and CUPE are carrying out legal strike action. We are required to follow all aspects of our own job action and to help CUPE's job action be respected in the school. We have each other. Often CUPE members are the only person doing that job in the school.

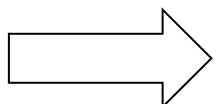
Please encourage and support each other. Each of us participates in our union's collective job action with different perspectives. Know that at the end of this (and we will get to an end), we will all benefit in the same way from the efforts of our ETFO Central Bargaining Team. Our professionalism will be respected and our beliefs about building better schools will be represented in our new Collective Agreement.

GEETF members are showing support, asking questions, becoming informed and contributing to the discussion through on-line participation. Thanks to all Grand Erie Elementary Teachers for supporting our union as we bargain for the future while respecting our past. There is a chance that we could be past this strike action soon. However, we will continue to do what is necessary to ensure a fair outcome for teachers and students in Ontario.

Project Overseas

GEETF Member, Leslie Hunter-Duvar joined a team of Canadian teachers who were dispatched throughout Africa and the Caribbean. Leslie volunteered her time this summer providing professional learning opportunities for teachers on the island of Dominica. Technology was her area of professional learning focus.

Here is the link to Leslie's blog: <http://projectoverseasdominica2015.blogspot.ca/>
If you are interested in applying to be part of Project Overseas, find out more at <http://www.etfo.ca/AdvocacyandAction/WorldIssues/ProjectOverseas/Pages/default.aspx> Applications are due October 30th, 2015.





Morale at Work

As employees, we can't control our colleague's attitude, but we can make sure that we contribute to a positive work environment by the manner in which we conduct ourselves. A few ways that we help create a positive work environment are:

- using a positive filter,
- practicing appreciation with ourselves and others, and
- modelling positive professional relationships with our colleagues.

Gossip and complaining are surefire ways to demoralize and create problems on a staff. You will find that consciously acting with a positive attitude will enhance your feeling of well-being at work.

Wishing you a successful and positive school year!

Fifth's Disease, Pregnancy and Teaching

When considering pregnancy, or upon discovering you are pregnant, please ensure your doctor orders the blood test to determine if you have immunity to Fifth's Disease (Parvovirus B19). Each year, teachers end up using sick days unnecessarily as they wait to find out if they have immunity. For the GEDSB Policy, go to <http://www.granderie.ca/Board/Bylaws, Policies and Procedures; HR120>. Call me (Donna) for specific support as any need arises.

ETFO Supports the CLC Strategy in this Federal Election

In the last ten years, the Federal government has put laws into place that purposefully and unjustly target unions. These laws diminish the abilities of unions to operate as effective advocates for their members' interests. To sustain and develop workers' rights in Canada, we need to have a Federal government that will reverse these laws.

The 2015 ETFO Annual Meeting delegates put forward and passed a new business resolution to support the NDP in the 2015 Federal election. The CLC is specifically targeting the Brantford/Brant riding; indicating that voting for **NDP candidate, Marc Laferriere**, is the best way to ensure the Conservatives will not win in the Brantford/Brant riding.

Elections Canada is the independent, non-partisan agency responsible for conducting federal elections and referendums. Find out if you are registered to vote and learn when and where you can vote at: www.elections.ca.

Learn more about Federal Party positions on social issues that impact our students and public education at: <http://www.spno.ca/canada-votes-2015>

Get your students involved at: <http://www.studentvote.ca/home.php>

On (or before) October 19, 2015 VOTE!

ETFO Annual Meeting 2015—Highlights

GEETF Delegates at this August's ETFO Annual Meeting included Donna Howey, Dave Peters, Carol Ann Macsai, Nancy D'Aurora, Sabrina Sawyer, Shannon Hendel, Steve Thorkildson, Jacqueline McEwen, Jeffrey Barnes, Jessica Crowley, Kataisha McQueen, Kelly Pulham, Kimberley Eng, and Tannis Wilhelmus.

Our own Grand Erie member (former GEETF President) was again acclaimed as ETFO First Vice-President. We are so proud and fortunate to have Susan Swackhammer's longstanding leadership at ETFO Provincial!

Congratulations to Grand Erie delegates, Kelly Pulham and Sabrina Sawyer for being "first time speakers" at the ETFO A.M.. Your engagement (and bravery) is appreciated. Thanks to Dave and Carol Ann for providing hospitality for our delegates.

GEETF Delegates for the 2016 ETFO Annual Meeting will be selected at the October 21st GEETF General Membership meeting. Look for an email inviting GEETF members to put their names forward for next August's meeting.

FNMI—Aboriginal Education

At the ETFO Annual Meeting, Wab Kinew addressed delegates and spoke with personal understanding about the Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Wab challenged ETFO members to respond. I did by submitting a new business resolution, "That ETFO formally and publicly endorse the 94 recommendations outlined in the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada; and additionally, provide a forum for members to learn more on the recommendations related to education." This resolution was passed. Let's act!