



From the President

January—February 2012

Editor: Donna Howey President

Grand Erie Elementary Teachers Federation

GEETF Meetings and Events are listed on our website

www.gefed.on.ca



Your GEETF Collective Bargaining Committee and Executive are preparing for the upcoming negotiations.

GEETF Committees

Many Grand Erie teachers enjoy being involved in committee work where they are able to both contribute in an area of personal interest and to develop their skills. Committee work is a great way to have voice in your local.

On February 6th, the Political Action Public Relations Committee hosted a dinner for GEDSB Trustees where teachers were able to share their concerns related to resources, technology, the report card program and the challenges created by class composition.

The Collective Bargaining Committee will be increasingly busy as we prepare for the upcoming negotiations. At a recent CB-Executive meeting, members went over the results of our local survey, learned about the provincial bargaining goals and reviewed the bargaining process.



GEDSB Chair of the Board, Rita Collver and GEETF 1st VP, Geri Turkoski at the Trustee –Executive dinner hosted by the PA/PR Committee

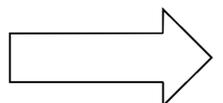
Our Office

You will find us at our office at 49 Dalkeith Drive, Units 1 & 2, Brantford. Our phone number for local calls is 519 753-9291 and toll free at 888 753-9291. The office is open each day from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. Many evenings the office is open much later due to meetings and workshops. We also endeavour to leave Fridays at 3:30 pm.

BMS Training - What is it? - Who is it for?

BMS is an acronym for Behaviour Management Systems. It is a specific program developed by the Ontario Educational Services Corporation with the support of the Ministry of Education. BMS emphasizes early prevention and non-physical intervention techniques. BMS also addresses the use of safe and effective physical interventions. Unfortunately, there are instances when a restraint may be required. I caution teachers to not use restraints without training, and to be familiar with GEDSB Administrative Procedure SO107 Physical Intervention/Restraint. Teachers' approach to managing student behavior needs to be "hands off". It should be extremely rare that a physical intervention is required.

In Grand Erie, we have trainers who provide BMS training. Most of our EAs are trained as are many of our teachers of self-contained special education classes. As you know, many classes are composed of students with a wide variety of learning and behavioural needs. BMS training can prepare all teachers to fulfill their duties in a manner that de-escalates student agitation and aggressiveness.





Planning on occasional teaching after you retire? Opportunities are diminishing.

Starting in September 2012, the Grand Erie DSB will be limiting the hiring of retired teachers as occasional teachers. Retired teachers will only be hired based on need and specialized qualifications, as determined by the Human Resources Department.

As well, our Teachers' Pension Plan is moving to the 50 day limit beginning September 2012. Check the OTPP website for details.

If you are at the point in your career to be considering retirement, you will want to inform yourself on the details of the pension regulations. Occasional teaching after retirement is not the automatic work opportunity that it once was.

Understanding Collective Bargaining

We recognize that teachers have varying degrees of union involvement. If you are a teacher who is in your first four years, you may have never been part of a contract negotiation. It is during negotiations that the union needs teachers to be engaged. We need teachers to understand the process, to stay informed and to support their local collective bargaining team. The upcoming steward training will focus on collective bargaining. Stewards will be sharing key messages with teachers at their schools. I encourage all teachers to learn about the CB process. Information is available on the ETFO website (www.etfo.ca). Select "Control Your Future".

New Executive Member—Elections in May

Cory Judson was the successful candidate for the executive position that became available due to Melissa Sault's retirement at the end of December. Welcome to our GEETF Executive Cory!

There will be a full election for all GEETF Executive positions at the GEETF General Membership meeting Wednesday May 16, 2012. Those elected will serve a two year term. A call for candidates will be sent through the stewards in March.

In the Staff Room

Just what are the performance standards for teachers? Many teachers have expressed that what they are expected to do seems like a moving target.

Teachers have many regulations that scrutinize both teacher conduct and performance. Teacher performance is usually appraised only once every five years but out of cycle performance appraisals can happen when concerns arise. Ensuring a successful TPA starts with being aware of the competencies that the appraisal is based on and reflecting on how your practice demonstrates those competencies. You can find the information at the web address below.

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/teacher/appraise.html>

Teachers have the professional responsibility to engage in on-going professional development to expand their professional knowledge and to adapt to changes in expectations. Don't worry, changes don't have to happen overnight, but there does need to be a willingness to refine and adapt one's teaching practice. There is so much information sent our way that sometimes it is hard to know what to prioritize and where to focus your effort. When you are looking at long range planning, you will want to be aware of the GEDSB system standards, and the report card directions which are found on First Class (select GEDSB Information Central, select Teachers' Information, select Elementary Information). Teachers are also required to contribute to their school's improvement plan (SIP).

Of course, you are welcome to contact the GEETF office with any questions or concerns.