



From the President

May—June 2012

Editor: Donna Howey President

Grand Erie Elementary Teachers Federation

Three weeks between pay dates this August

Thursday August 9th is the last pay date for the 2011-2012 school year. Thursday August 30th is the first pay date for the 2012-2013 school year. Our pay schedule is set up for 26 pays per year. This happens to be one of those years where there is a gap between when teachers receive the last pay of the previous school year and the first pay of the new school year. Please plan for your personal finances accordingly.

The August 30th pay cheques will also reveal whether or not your employer will be honouring the terms of our Collective Agreement and moving teachers on the salary grid for experience and qualification. To date, there is not a firm decision being communicated as to the Board's intent. The provincial government has allotted funds to Boards, given directions and put in place regulations that indicate a grid freeze. ETFO is certain that under the terms of our agreement teachers are entitled to receive salary increments for experience and qualifications. However, please be prepared financially in the event that the Board determines not to move teachers on the grid. Of course, should it happen this way, ETFO will be making a legal challenge and submitting grievances.

GEETF Executive Assistant, Maggie Bailey, at the registration desk during our preliminary submission meeting.



GEETF Members Get Involved

With contract negotiations beginning and the governments Provincial Discussion Talks (PDT) proposals indicating strips to our compensation package, GEETF members are showing interest in the work of their union. Recent school visits have shown that teachers are concerned about what they could lose. As ETFO pushes for what is best for teachers, there will be many different opinions within a workplace. Please inform yourself on the issues and as you debate the unfolding events related to your contract, recognize that your colleagues are your allies. Respect teachers. Respect collective bargaining. Whether it is working conditions, benefits, or compensation, every entitlement teachers have has been gained through bargaining and teacher solidarity.

GEETF Meetings and Events are listed on our website

www.gefed.on.ca

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Grand-Erie-Elementary-Teachers-Federation-of-Ontario/218009294961984>

Please take a moment to "LIKE" us on Facebook to receive updates with activities within the local and at the provincial level.

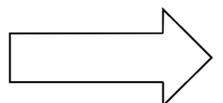
Our Office

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.

Health and Safety—Heat

Summer time,... and the workplace is not easy. In fact it can be extremely uncomfortable due to the fact that most schools are not air conditioned.

Ministry of Labour regulations require that employers take steps to protect workers from heat stress but there is not a maximum temperature that would result in a school closure. GEDSB has a hot weather guideline that was sent out by Lena Latreille on May 29th. Please contact me if you need support ensuring the preventions are in place in your school.





Brantford District Labour Council

The Brantford and District Labour Council (BDLC) now serves Haldimand-Norfolk as well. At our May 16th GEETF Annual Meeting, members voted to join the BDLC. Based on our membership we are entitled to eleven delegates at meetings. BDLC meetings are held the fourth Wednesday of every month at the Brantford and District Labour Centre (1100 Clarence St., Brantford) at 7pm.

Please contact Donna if you would like to serve as a GEETF delegate on the BDLC. It is an opportunity to get to know other people involved in labour issues in our region.

GEETF Executive 2012 to 2014

At our GEETF Annual Meeting, elections were held for a new two year term. Much of the executive remains the same but there are a few changes.

President: Donna Howey
 Collective Agreement Officer: Dave Peters
 First Vice-President: Geri Turkoski
 Deputy Collective Agreement Officer: Nancy D'Aurora
 Second Vice-President: Caroll Ann Macsai
 Secretary: Lori Burroughs
 Treasurer: Shawn Martin
 Health and Safety Officer: Jenn Orr
 Five Executive Members: Cory Judson, George Overend, Eleanor Pardoe, Carolyn Proulx-Wooten, Steve Thorkildson,

Thanks to out-going executive members Christina Macoretta and Brent Hachborn. Their years of service are appreciated.

Welcome to in-coming executive members Steve Thorkildson and Carolyn Prouten-Woulx.

Celebration Banquet—Retirees, Award Winners

At the June 14th banquet, staff gathered to celebrate their retirees' careers and mark their retirements. This year's 39 retirees received a commemorative booklet, a keepsake gift and a certificate of recognition from the Minister of Education. GEETF Leadership Awards were presented to Nancy D'Aurora, Brent Hachborn, Sarah Lasko and Joanne Kiers. Sandi Senneker was honoured with a GEETF Honourary Life Member Award. Other GEETF award winners included: Lorraine Balberman and Leslie Southern—North Ward School Arts Program, Sean Bradford—Grandview PS Cooking Club, Deb McLasky—Delhi PS Healthy Snack Program and Valerie Harrison—Cedarland PS Arts Program.

The role of the union in your workplace

As your union, we have the responsibility to protect, negotiate, enforce, support, advocate and represent all teachers who are members of GEETF. The union has a great deal of clout to ensure that the Employment Standards Act, the Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act and the terms of our Collective Agreement are adhered to by the employer. Clear violations of these can be identified and the union can ensure the Board "fixes" the problem.

Some issues of concern in the workplace are not addressed through legislation or the Collective Agreement. An example of this is the *Maplewood Report Card* problems. The union advocates on teachers' behalf by making those with decision making powers aware of the concern. In response to the report card, on an on-going basis, I am informing people such as the Director, the trustees, the superintendents, ETFO staff in Collective Bargaining, ETFO staff with responsibility to liaise with the ministry in regards to reporting and assessing, and ETFO provincial released officers. The Board recognizes the need for improvements and is taking steps towards changes. Unfortunately, there is not an action the union can take that will make the fix to the Maplewood program immediate. Teachers need to continue to notify their administrator and IT about report card concerns. This is the type of issue that is addressed over time and may lead to new Collective Agreement language.

Wishing you more than the "3 R's" between the end of June and the beginning of September.

Teachers work so very hard throughout the school year. During July and August I hope you can rest, rejuvenate, re-connect, remember, reflect, re-ignite, revamp and relax.