



Kawartha Pine Ridge Elementary Teachers' Local

Update: **March 1, 2011**

President's Podium

Our recent survey on provincial collective bargaining goals has brought an awareness level to the fact that we are getting closer to the end of our current contract which expires August 2012. In the meantime there is a battle waging against unionized workers in the U.S. and we face a provincial election next October. In short, a lot of the political landscape might look much different in the fall of 2012 when we are set to negotiate a new agreement and the battle is not likely going to be an easy one.



Our motto in KPR...and you will hear this many times over the next 18 months or so...is ***“Information and Trust = Support, Unity and Support = Success”***. Your collective Bargaining Committee will be elected this spring and I can assure you that the goal of this group and the Local Executive will be to keep you informed of what is happening so that we will be working together as a unified group during negotiations. We currently have a knowledgeable and committed leadership team in the form of your Local Executive and quite honestly I believe we have an outstanding Provincial Collective Bargaining Staff Officer in Derek Hulse. It is never too early to plan for the task of bargaining a new agreement. ETFO has presented Local Leaders with a comprehensive plan for the upcoming negotiations. There will be a coordinated effort between the provincial office and the Local office to achieve the goals determined by teachers. Your support of these goals will be critical in achieving a fair collective agreement.

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Other than the restoration of the 2% salary that ETFO members were not given in the last round of bargaining, many of the other goals identified by teachers in our Local were related to workload issues. Each round we look to make gains in controlling the workload, and subsequently the Ministry and the Board come up with ways to increase the work.

Until we can achieve improved and/or more explicit language to protect your working conditions, please keep in mind the fact that you can control some of your workload and you have every right to prioritize workload demands in order to

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President's Podium continued...

maintain your health and quite literally your sanity. Every week presents tasks that are “must-do’s”, “should do’s” and “like-to-do’s”. Focus on the “must-do’s” like planning for your class, delivering your lesson plans, completing report cards, etc. Many other tasks or extra-curricular activities can wait and need to wait if you are making yourself sick and your own family is paying the price. The best way to take care of others is to take care of yourself first.

Board Focus Groups – ETFO participation



Representatives of ETFO and Elementary Teachers have been invited recently to participate in two focus groups. The Board hired a consultant firm to examine the special education model including the role of the SERT and the delivery of special education services. This review is long overdue. The participants were Teachers, EA's, CYW's, ETFO and OSSTF. A report will be given to the Board and we will attempt to get a copy.

ETFO was also part of a focus group that was brought together to discuss issues around Teacher Performance Appraisal (TPA). This review was an initiative launched by the joint TPA Committee which includes Board representatives, ETFO, OSSTF and Principals. This committee will be creating resources such as handbooks, forms, guidelines, etc that will bring more consistency and purpose to the evaluation process. The focus group was composed of 3 Elementary and 3 Secondary teachers and they provided the committee with a great deal of information.

KPR ETFO Awards

Make sure you mark your calendar for the KPR ETFO Awards which will occur this year on **Thursday May 19 at the Best Western in Cobourg**. Come out and celebrate the accomplishments of our colleagues and to honour those who are retiring. The evening includes a delicious buffet meal as well.

Nomination forms will be available in early March so please take the time to nominate that special colleague who deserves recognition for his or her work.



Health and Safety Update



The Joint Health and Safety Committee recently completed their work on a *Workplace Violence and Harassment Guide* and a new form for all employees to use to report violent student behavior or any threat to one's own personal safety. The guide and the new reporting form should be in schools soon. When they are available ETFO will be sending copies to each Steward and we will have electronic copies available on our website.

Since 2008 every school must have in place a *Safe Schools Team* responsible for school safety. This team is to be composed of one student, one parent, one teacher, one non-teaching staff member, one community partner and the Principal. We are not finding evidence of many teams being in place and ETFO is currently following up with the Board to determine the status of these teams.

Your KPR ETFO Health and Safety reps are Mike Jessop at Harold Longworth and Crystal Donato at Westmount.

Growing Success

The Local ETFO Executive had a lengthy discussion around any issues with Growing Success. Many of the concerns were Ministry mandated changes that Boards are not able to modify or change in any way. Out of the discussion came some suggestions for improvements in the program (such as find and replace) and these will be forwarded to the Board's I T Department. If you have any suggestions for improvement, they can be e-mailed to Lorna Izzard or Elizabeth Peachman at the Board office. Please keep in mind that the Board's IT Department is not responsible for the format or layout of the report card, but they are able to take suggestions to the Board's program vendor.

One concern that was expressed by the Executive was the consistency around Administrator's expectations for report card writing. Across the Board there appears to be a different set of expectations and in some cases two different Administrators had different expectations in the same school! We will be meeting with Senior Admin at the Board office to discuss the issue of inconsistent expectations and how this can be addressed across our system.



Equity Update

“Comfort zones are most often expanded through discomfort.”



The ETFO Local’s Equity Committee has continued to expand their comfort zone and enhance their knowledge and experience base in the area of disabilities. They will continue the focus in their meetings this term and invite any interested members to attend the meetings. Check the ETFO website for the next meeting time and date or call Darline at the office.

Your Local Equity Committee is offering the opportunity for all members to broaden their perspectives regarding disabilities with the following workshop to be offered soon.

Access Without Borders

Thursday, April 7 at 4:30 pm; ETFO office

learn about visible and invisible disabilities; attitudes, policy, barriers and myths and how they affect the students in your classroom and other people in your life
registration on www.kpretfo.ca in March

The Ministry of Education has directed that all school boards develop policy regarding multi-faith accommodations. This will become an expectation in all schools. Plan to attend the following workshop which will speak to the legislation, Board policy around religious accommodation and how they will impact your classroom.

Learning and Understanding: Cultural and Religious Differences

Monday, March 28 at 4:30 pm; ETFO office

arranged by your Local Equity Committee and facilitated by Provincial ETFO registration on www.kpretfo.ca soon



Something else to anticipate! The committee has begun planning for the **Race Relations Retreat** to be held in late April. Watch for more news of this great event!

Status of Women



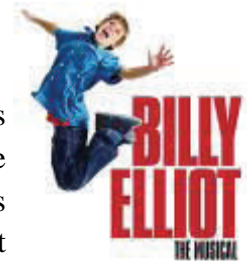
The annual Status of Women Retreat at Elmhirst Resort on February 25/26 sold out! Participants had a variety of workshops to choose from while they took advantage of a rare opportunity to network and visit with colleagues.

At this event the committee launched their sale of pink ball caps in support of breast cancer research. Please contact Sharon Woischwill, Vice-President (Female) at John M James to find out how you can purchase your hat.



ETFO Social Events

The KPR ETFO Social Committee has purchased a block of excellent seats for *Billy Elliot* which is playing at the Canon Theater in Toronto. The date for this event is **Saturday April 9 at 1:30 p.m.** The ticket includes bus transportation and an orchestra level seat and prizes on the bus! This event was very popular and tickets sold out within two days of the flyer being sent out to schools.



Your Professional Learning Committee

More **Smart Board** workshops are being planned. Watch the Local website for the latest location and date.

Search out those **Learning Carpets** that may be hiding in your school. The original creator of The Learning Carpet, Wendy Hill, is coming to our Local on April 20 to offer an interactive workshop to be held at Otonabee Valley P. S. Register on our Local website in late March.



JUMP FOR MATH! Jump Math is returning on Saturday, April 02 for Primary and on Saturday, April 16 for Junior/Intermediate to be held at the Local office; registrations on our website very soon.

Not one book club, but three! And with three different sites and three different sets of facilitators to extend the possibilities. Featuring the new ETFO kindergarten resource “Thinking It Through”. Added bonus: the resource will be offered to participants for \$35, less than half the purchase price.

Provincial Annual Meeting



The ETFO Provincial Annual General Meeting will be held August 15 to the 18 at the Sheraton in Toronto. For those interested, we will be electing delegates and alternates to this meeting at our Local Annual Meeting on May 10 (details coming soon).

The Local Executive approved two motions that we have sent to the provincial annual meeting. The first calls for ETFO to fund and maintain a provincial staff officer dedicated to health and safety. Currently there is a person in this position, but it is a secondment that ends at the end of this year. Our second motion asks that our provincial organization increase the per kilometer rate for travel from 40 cents/km to 50 cents/km. We are hopeful that these two motions come to the floor of the annual meeting for debate.

ETFO Credit Courses this Summer

A heads-up for two ETFO credit courses this summer. Flyers and more details will come out late March or early April.

QECO recognized Credit Courses

August 8 - 11 - **Co-operative Learning** - 8 am to late afternoon

August 22 - 25 - **Learning Styles** - 8 am to late afternoon

For further info email Ron Dempsey at redempsey@i-zoom.net

Registration at www.etfocreditcourses.ca

