

News @ 25



Ottawa-Carleton
District 25
Teachers' Bargaining Unit

Update from the Office: 729-7211

January 2007

From Your President:

Kerry Houlahan
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OCDSB Budget

The OCDSB's Management Plan for the 2007-2008 budget confirms a \$27.7 million shortfall. This 2-year plan includes cuts that will have a significant impact on programs. Remember...this is only a proposal. The plan is available on the Board's website.

The proposal includes cuts to teachers, office and administrative support staff, educational assistants, custodial/maintenance staff, speech and language pathologists, occupational therapists and physiotherapists. The District's seven Bargaining Unit Presidents met with representatives from Provincial Executive and Provincial Office last week. We are developing a district plan in conjunction with all of the bargaining units as we recognize that saving positions in one bargaining unit will only result in more cuts to other bargaining units. The inadequacy of the funding formula has created this untenable situation and OSSTF will continue to lobby provincially and locally to emphasize the need for adjustments to the funding formula.

Decisions linked to teacher staffing will be made at the **February 27** Board meeting. The Board anticipates the announcement of provincial grants by the end of March which should allow for board budget decisions to be finalized by the end of May.

Teachers need to be extremely careful about speaking out publicly against the Board. Please direct your comments and concerns to this office, as we are the only ones who can speak publicly about these issues. If members are approached about giving advice to make the proposed cuts work, they are not to provide input and should call this office immediately.

Respectful Workplace Policy

Together, OSSTF and the OCDSB have formed a joint committee to develop a policy and procedure that promotes a respectful workplace. The committee is comprised of representatives from senior staff, Human Resources, all nine bargaining units, principals and vice-principals and union exempt staff. Please contact me with questions or suggestions for the committee's consideration.

OSSTF-Sponsored PD Day

Please be aware that teachers are expected to participate in activities organized by a subject council on the February 9th PD Day. Anyone who is unable to attend the designated activities must inform the principal of illness or another approved absence. Your participation ensures that the day is worthwhile and that the Board, OSSTF, and subject councils continue to provide the opportunity in the years to come.

On behalf of all teachers, I would like to thank the Subject Council PD Chairs and their committees for their efforts in preparing for this PD day.

From Your Chief Negotiator:

Kerri Ferguson
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What if Teaching Positions are Cut?

By now most of you will have heard some of the specific details of the budget proposals and will know that there are proposed cuts to secondary teaching jobs. The proposal includes the loss of approximately 30 FTE positions. Because surplus and redundancy are dependant on student enrolment, retirement numbers, and leaves of absence, it is impossible to predict what effect these cuts will have on members' job status. The budget is still at the proposal stage and no decisions have been finalized.

It is important to remember that all of our surplus to school and redundancy declarations are based on seniority. If a specific program is cut at a school, the teacher of that program remains on the school's organizational chart. If the school ends up with more teachers than positions, any teacher declared surplus to the school must be most junior on the Board seniority list. Spring staffing is often a stressful time for some teachers and with the Board's financial difficulties, this year will be more complicated and will potentially affect more teachers. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Important Dates for Staffing

The deadline for applying for most leaves and exchanges is February 28. Information and application forms are available in the Sec. Academic Folder on BEAM.

Teachers should have received The Secondary Spring Staffing Procedure in their mailboxes recently and it is also available on BEAM.

From Your Membership Services Officer:

Louise Derry
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How much are we paying for benefits?

Starting in January, your pay stubs will reflect a slight increase in the cost for health and dental benefits; the employer pays 90% of the premiums and teachers pay 10%. The 2007 monthly premium rates for secondary teachers' benefits are available on-line. On Beam, go to Administration area, HR/ Personnel, Benefits, 2007 premium rates, secondary teachers 07.

Certification

As of February 2007, new simplified certification application forms will be available on the provincial website at www.osstf.on.ca. Teachers are advised that they should use only the new forms for all requests to the OSSTF certification department as of that date. Significant positive changes to certification will be presented at the annual assembly in March, and information will be shared in the April 2007 Update from the Office issue.

Long Term Disability

Look for a reduction of 9% to our LTD premiums rates effective March 2007.

Thinking of teaching past age 65?

Information is available at the district office on health and insurance benefits beyond age 65. Contact me for details.

