

### Seasons Greetings

The District Office and the Executives wish all members a joyful and restful 2 weeks during the upcoming holidays. The office will be closed from Dec. 19 – Jan. 3, inclusive. Happy Holidays.

### Payroll Tidbits

As Friday, December 25<sup>th</sup> is a statutory Holiday, pays will be directly deposited on Thursday December 24<sup>th</sup>. For Occasional Teachers who complete time sheets, you are reminded about the Employer's latest communiqué regarding deadline dates to submit timesheets for the upcoming pay periods.

As of January 2010, CPP and EI Deductions begin again and, for teachers, the \$120 College of Teacher's Fees will be deducted.

### Teacher Self-financed Leave Plan (x/y)

Teachers interested in applying for a self-financed leave, with deductions to begin next year, must submit their written application by March 1. Applications are available on *Insite, Human Resources Department*. Please copy all applications to the OSSTF District 26 Office, fax 1-800-513-8574.

### Extended Health Coverage Outside of Ontario

Our Extended Health policy provides coverage while traveling outside of the province or country. Details of the coverage can be found in the 2005 Teacher Benefit booklet or online at [www.osstf26.com](http://www.osstf26.com) > *Pension & Benefits > Employee Group Benefits > Summary of Benefits*.

You can download a Travel Card with contact information at <http://www.sunlife.ca/>, but, you must first register with Sun Life to obtain an access I.D. and a password. You will need the contract number (25246) and your employee I.D. number. To print your Travel Card once you are registered, click on Group Benefits and you will see Quick Links on the right "Print Travel Card".

Please note, if you decide that this policy does not provide enough coverage while outside Ontario, you are always able to purchase more "travel insurance" through any provider, at your own cost.

### Pension Workshops – Mark your Calendars

The workshops focus specifically on pension planning and retirement. Whether members are 15 years from retirement or six months away, they'll discover common sense financial strategies and retirement planning ideas. The workshops provide opportunities for members to ask questions during the presentation or to speak privately with the Pensions Officer and/or presenter. For more information and to register, please contact the District Office.

**Apr 6, 2010** – Best Western Hotel – Cornwall @ 4:30

**Apr 7, 2010** – Smiths Falls DCI Library @ 4:30

### Terminating Your OTIP LTD Policy

Members become ineligible to receive LTD benefits 90 days prior to either:

- the date on which they qualify for a 60% unreduced pension;
- the date they reach their 85 factor and are eligible for an unreduced service pension of less than 60%;
- reaching age 65.

If a member has paid LTD premiums after they are no longer eligible to receive LTD benefits (as per above) they may apply to OTIP to receive a refund of those premiums for the current and previous school year, if applicable. More details available at <http://www.osstf26.com/pension%20info/How%20to%20Apply%20for%20a%20Pension.htm>

### **~ Win a \$25 Chapters Gift Card ~**

All D26 OSSTF members are invited enter a draw for a \$25 gift card from Chapters. Simply email the answer to the question below to [office@osstf26.com](mailto:office@osstf26.com) with the words "Info Letter Draw" in the subject line. A draw will be made from those who submitted the correct answer. Deadline for entries is 3 PM on Dec. 16<sup>th</sup>.

The Question: What is the toll-free number to reach the District Office?

### 13th Annual Safe Schools Conference

The much anticipated 13th Annual Safe Schools Conference is now open for registration. This conference is being held on Feb. 18, 2010 at the Toronto Congress Centre (by Pearson Airport).

- Learn new & practical ways to make a school safe
- Obtain essential, up-to-date information and training on safe schools issues, procedures and policies
- Hear experts on various Safe Schools Issues
- 30 different workshops to choose from

Cost: \$279/person (before Jan 22) or \$299 thereafter. Details and registration available at <http://www.canadiansafeschools.com/>

### PD Notes

Funds still remain for 1<sup>st</sup> semester. Members already approved for funding are reminded that they must submit original receipts on the Expense Claim Form following their event. Members wishing to access the PD fund should fill out an application, which may be found at <http://www.osstf26.com/teachers/PD forms/PD.htm>

**Cancelled PD Events:** Members who had received approval for funding from the PD Committee but were unable to attend as a result of the Board postponing PD should notify the District Office so that reserved funds may be returned to the account. Affected members may reapply for another event.

### Took Courses to Upgrade your Category (Group)?

Members who have recently completed courses to upgrade their category (group) must ensure they apply to OSSTF Certification Dept. for a new Rating Statement and advise the Board they have done so. Detailed information at <http://www.osstf26.com/>, then link to *Certification, Experience, & Pay* link in the Teacher's menu.

### On-Line Benefit Claims

To make electronic claims for benefits, go to [www.sunlife.com](http://www.sunlife.com) and click on the Plan Members button. If you don't have an account, you may create one here. Our contract number is 25246 and your certificate number is your Board employee number. Claims submitted electronically are often processed within 24 hours.

**Absences, Retiring, and Gratuity Information**

**Prolonged Absence:** When a member is away for 6 days or more, they should call the District Office to discuss the type of leave, sick leave, medical information, EI, EAP, LTD, and other supports.

**Retiring in 09-10?** Please remember the following:

- Request a retirement package from the OTPP.
- Send a letter to the Director of Education at least 1 month before the retirement date. In order to maximize your retirement benefit, it is best to retire at the end of the month.
- Request from the Board information about retirement gratuity.
- Read the article titled “Terminating your LTD Policy”.
- Inform the District Office that you are retiring

**Gratuity:** When you indicate your intent to retire, you will receive a Direction Form from the Board indicating if you wish to...

- receive the gratuity in cash (taxes are withheld at source: \$5000 or less - 10%; \$5000-\$15000 - 20%; \$15000 or more - 30%) **or**
- transfer the money into RRSPs.

Care must be taken if retiring on Dec 31, 2009. The gratuity will normally be deposited by February 2010 and will be considered as income in 2010 for tax purposes.

**Inclement Weather – Teachers**

As potential inclement weather approaches, members are reminded of article 17.01.09: “when in the opinion of the Principal or Vice-Principal, it is considered hazardous for teachers to travel to or from school or to be in school, then the teacher shall be excused so long as the hazard exists. If, in the opinion of the teacher, it is hazardous to travel, and the Principal disagrees, then the teacher shall have deducted one (1) day credit from his/her accumulated sick leave credits”

It is OSSTF’s position that a teacher who advised their school that they have deemed it hazardous to travel, should not be required to drive to work. If the administration disagrees that it was hazardous to travel, the teacher will be deducted one (1) sick day from their account.

**Sick Leave**

Members should **verify** their sick day allocation/deduction on “Self-Serve” through *Insite* and **print** the statement for their records. Issues should be raised with administration. Please note the number of sick days allocated for this year is based on your **yearly FTE status** (article 16.02 of the Teacher Collective Agreement).

Teachers who were granted short-term leaves as per article 17.01.01 (bereavement, illness of child/spouse/parent, jury duty, religious holidays, personal days, etc) **do not lose sick days** for these leaves.

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**New Members – Important Information**

New members are urged to visit the District website at <http://www.osstf26.com/> and Quick Link to the **New Teacher Information** for important details on pay, related experience, group rating statements, and benefits. Occasional Teachers and PSSP members should also visit the website and peruse the wealth of information under the Occasional Teacher and PSSP menus.

**Premier’s Awards for Teaching Excellence**

The Ontario Government has launched its fourth year of the Premier’s Awards for Teaching Excellence to recognize outstanding teachers and education support staff who motivate, support and inspire Ontario’s students across the province. Award categories include: Teacher of the Year, New Teacher of the Year, Excellent Support Staff, Excellence in Leadership, Lifetime Achievement, and Team of the Year. Since the awards were launched in 2006-07, more than 3,000 nominations have been received and over 50 educators and support staff have been recognized—many of whom have been OSSTF/FEESO members. The deadline for applications is February 1, 2010. Nomination information can be downloaded from the Ministry website at: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/teachingawards/howtonominate.html>

**Teacher Performance Appraisal & NTIP**

Teachers are reminded to call the District Office immediately should they receive a “below standard” performance appraisal or a “development needed” performance appraisal

**Teacher Learning and Leadership Program (TLLP)**

The TLLP is an annual project-based professional learning opportunity for experienced classroom teachers. The program funds proposals from classroom teachers who wish to enhance and/or share their classroom expertise with colleagues. The goal of the program is to provide an opportunity for teachers to engage in advanced professional learning of their choice and to share their learning with other teachers across the province. Interested teachers should go to <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/teacher/tllp.html> for more information about submitting proposals

**Calendar of Events**

	December
1 - World AIDS Day	
3- TBU & PSSP Exec	
4 - PA Day	
6 - Day of Mourning	
10 - Human Rights Day; District Executive meeting	
30- OSSTF 90th Anniversary	
19-31 Holidays	
	January
1-3 Holidays	
28- TBU Council meeting	
27-29- Exam Days	



**OSSTF present several awards each year. Read about them and email us if you know of a deserving colleague.**  
**[details at osstf26.com, “Awards & Bursaries” Quick Links]**

**Amie, R. Connolly, L. French, W. Fulton, A. Lecuyer, N. Warrenner, Kelly Ann McKenzie Awards (Jan 8)**

**Status of Women Award, John McNeil Award, Educational Enhancement Scholarships, James Forster Human Rights Award, Ontario Premier Award for Teaching Excellence, Lamp of Learning Award (Jan 29)**

