

### **H1N1 Information**

The District Office has been receiving many phone calls regarding H1N1 and what a teacher should do if they feel they are medically vulnerable and/or at risk of secondary complications.

**The District strongly recommends that teachers contact their doctor for specific direction if they feel they are medically vulnerable and/or may be at risk of secondary complications.** Teachers are reminded that sick days can be used, if need be, to support a medical note/certificate which instructs a teacher to remain home.

### **Planning for H1N1 Conference - Nov 26, 2009**

The conference will examine the growing concern regarding the rapid spread of the H1N1 influenza virus, and how it will affect the school system. Hear from leading experts in the area and learn all you need to know about keeping your school safe during the outbreak. The conference is at the Spirale Banquet Hall, Toronto and costs \$185. To register or obtain more information, click <http://www.canadiansafeschools.com/home.htm> under "Current Events" section.

### **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](http://www.osstf26.com/teachers/PD_forms/PD.htm)

### **Social Justice Conference – Dec 4, 2009**

Registration is now open for the social justice/equity conference, *Beyond Words: Exploring, Creating, Engaging*, being presented by OSSTF/FEESO, UNICEF and Harbourfront Centre on December 4, 2009 at the Harbourfront Centre in Toronto. The conference, commemorating the 20th Anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is open to OSSTF members and to small student groups (e.g. social justice groups, global issues clubs). Additional information and registration forms are available on-line at <http://www.osstf.on.ca/beyondwordsconference>. The registration deadline is November 16, 2009.

### **Benefits Update**

- All claims from Sept 1, 2008- Aug 31, 2009 must be submitted to Sun Life by **November 29, 2009** or they will not be reimbursed
- Please review your dependent and beneficiary information. Email (with child's name and DOB) the Board if you now have an overage child attending a College or University and wish to continue benefit coverage.
- Claims for paramedical services (massage therapy, physiotherapy, etc.) have been added to the list of claims eligible for electronic filing. Members are encouraged to file electronically. Reimbursement can occur in as little as 24 hours in some cases.
- The Ministry of Health is de-listing a number of over-the-counter drugs, which will no longer be eligible for reimbursement.
- Sick Leave Credits: Members should verify their sick day allocation/deduction on "Self-Serve" through *Insite* and print the statement for their records.

### **AMPA 2010**

District 26 will be seeking interested candidates from the membership at large to attend this year's Annual Members Provincial Assembly (AMPA). AMPA will be held from March 12 to March 15, 2010 at the Toronto Sheraton Centre. All expenses are paid by OSSTF.

AMPA determines the priorities, policies and directions upon which OSSTF/FEESO acts to protect its members and to promote and advance the cause of education. Each Bargaining Unit has the right to send delegates to AMPA. Completed application forms should be in the District Office by Dec. 1, 2009 for recommendation from their Bargaining Unit Executive to the District Executive. Forms are available at <http://www.osstf26.com/>, *What's New* menu.

### **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.

### **National Day of Mourning, December 6, 2009**

On December 6, 1989, fourteen women were murdered at L'Ecole Polytechnique in Montreal. The man responsible purposely targeted these students because they were women. This event is remembered as the most violent demonstration of misogyny in Canada's history. December 6<sup>th</sup> has been designated as Canada's National Day of Mourning. It is a day to remember the 14 women who were murdered, but also to highlight the issue of violence against women by remembering the thousands of other Canadian women who have been, and continue to be, abused, and murdered every day of every year. This is also a day of action. As both educational workers and OSSTF members, we urge you to mark the day with activities and/or commemoration events in your workplace.

### **Teacher Exchanges and District Web Page**

Any two teachers with the same qualifications and entitlement are eligible to apply for an exchange to commence in the second semester. An exchange may be for one semester or one year. Interested pairs of teachers must submit their names to the Superintendent of Human Resources, no later than Dec 31<sup>st</sup> for exchanges that begin in semester 2. Read Article 22 of the Collective Agreement for more information.

If you cannot find another colleague to exchange with on your own, you are reminded of the web page titled **Teacher Exchanges** found in the "Contract Teacher" menu. This web page will allow you to confidentially express your desire to exchange jobs with another teacher at another school. The District office will review what is submitted and contact/connect pairs of teachers who "match" up for an exchange. "Connected" teachers may then choose to formally initiate an exchange request with the Board as per article 22.

### **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.

**Pension Workshops – Mark your Calendars**

OSSTF Pension workshops are planned for April 6<sup>th</sup> in Cornwall and April 7<sup>th</sup> in Smiths Falls. More details will follow.

**Teacher Performance Appraisal**

Unless there are performance concerns, a teacher’s appraisal cycle is every five years. This means that there are four non-evaluation years between their last evaluation year and their current evaluation year. This applies to all **experienced teachers not new to the board.**

**Experienced teachers new to the board** will be evaluated once in their first year of employment with the new board, regardless of when their most recent TPA occurred with their former board. They will then have four evaluation-free years before their next TPA, placing them in the 5-year cycle (unless there are performance concerns).

**PAR Leader Duties – Report Cards**

OSSTF would like to reiterate that, in accordance with Article 19.02, PAR leaders **should not** “assess teachers’ comments made on students’ formal reports”. This means reviewing such comments (grammar, syntax, format, etc.), making a determination as to the appropriateness of the comment, making such corrections or advising the teacher or administration that such a comment is either acceptable or not acceptable. If PAR leaders are directed by their administration to do so, we ask that they comply and inform the local Branch Steward. PAR Leaders must refrain from volunteering to “assess teachers’ comments made on students’ formal reports”.

However, OSSTF has no objection to...

- PAR leaders, in their respective program area meetings, informing members regarding the administration’s expectations of report card comments (grammar, syntax, format, curriculum links, appropriateness etc)
- PAR leaders mentoring teachers who request aid in developing report card comments
- PAR leaders reviewing the spread of marks for classes in their program area

**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.

**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

**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>

**Reminder - Marion Drysdale Awards**

*Sponsoring teachers:* are asked to select one entry per category and submit to your OSSTF/FEESO branch steward. *Branch stewards:* Up to eight winners (one in each category) can be selected per district. Submit your school entries to the district office no later than November 13, 2009.

**Amie, R. Connolly, L. French, W. Fulton, A. Lecuyer, N. Warrener, 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)**

Visit [osstf26.com](http://osstf26.com), “Awards & Bursaries” Quick Links for details

**Calendar of Events**

**November**

- 19- TBU CBC meeting
- 20 - PA Day
- 25 - Day of Elimination of Violence Against Women

**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



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