



President's Memo

Lamia Sabbagh, President

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December 13th, 2018

- 1. Provincial Leave Day** - As part of the remedy agreement from Bill 115, all permanent teachers who were employed during the 2016/17 school year and are actively teaching in 2017/18 or 2018/19 will be entitled to one paid day off work. This day off can be taken during the 2017/18 or 2018/19 school year subject to "black out" days determined by the Board:
 - Friday and Monday of the American Thanksgiving weekend
 - Parent/Teacher interview days
 - Any regularly scheduled PD day
 - Extending a long weekend or school break (before or after)
 - No more than 3 requests per day will be granted in a small school (less than 1000 students)
 - No more than 5 requests per day will be granted in a big school (more than 1000 students)

Requests must be made to the principal with two weeks' advance notice. If a leave day was granted and you were not covered by a supply teacher but instead your classes were sent to on-call or study hall, please contact the office. If you haven't used your Provincial Leave Day yet, apply for it as soon as possible so you don't run out of opportunities to use it! If you have not used your day by June 30th 2019, you will lose it - it will not carry over to next year.

- 2. Site Visits** – As usual during a bargaining year, we will be conducting site visits where we will be coming to each branch to discuss the upcoming round of bargaining, the process involved and to gather feedback directly from our members. We will confer with Branch reps to find the ideal time to visit your site either before school, during lunch or after school. We look forward to meeting as many people as possible during these visits and getting feedback from our members. Please look out for meeting notices at your site towards the latter half of January.
- 3. PD workshop attendance** – It has always been our position that we are professionals and as such, when we sign up for a workshop, it is to be assumed that we were in attendance there unless notification was given otherwise. It is up to you if you wish to sign in at a PD workshop. Many members choose to do so because it will be reflected as "attended" on PD Place and they like to see a record of their workshops for employment or promotion purposes, or for credits accumulated for things such as the ILP program. Members are advised that if they choose not to sign the attendance sheet at a PD workshop, they may be questioned as to whether they were in attendance or not especially if information arises suggesting that they were not. You should be able to provide an explanation or evidence that you were there should this happen. If you sign up for a workshop and do not attend with no justifiable explanation to your principal, you could be accused of time theft and disciplined accordingly. If you are unable to attend a workshop for any reason, please ensure that you contact your principal right away. If you are unable to reach your principal, the best default position would be to return to your home school and sign in with the office to ensure there is a record of your being at work during the school day.

- 4. Accommodation vs Modification** – Many members can be confused between these two terms and the consequences can be quite drastic. When a student is modified in your classroom under direction by the Special Education team, the course code is also modified so that the 6th character is coded with “M”. This essentially means you are teaching a split class and so the class size must be 2 less than the smaller class, in this case, it would be 14 students. If you are teaching in such a situation where you are modifying for even one student in your class and your class size has not dropped to 14, please give us a call at the District Office as soon as possible.

Below is a reminder of the difference between the two terms taken from *Growing Success*:

Accommodations

Students with special education needs may require accommodations to allow them to participate in the curriculum and to demonstrate achievement of the expectations. Accommodations include individualized teaching and assessment strategies, human supports, and/or individualized equipment.

In a subject or course identified in the student’s IEP as “Accommodated Only”, the provincial curriculum expectations are not altered.

Assessment accommodations are changes in procedures that enable the student to demonstrate his or her learning. These may include:

- visual supports to clarify verbal instructions, assistive devices, or some form of human support;
- alternative methods for the student to demonstrate his or her achievement of expectations (e.g., allowing the student to take tests orally) or the allowance of extra time to complete the assessment;
- alternative settings that may be more suitable for the student to demonstrate his or her learning.

If accommodations are required to assess and evaluate student learning, the strategies to be used are outlined in the student’s IEP.

Modified Expectations

Modifications are changes made to the grade-level expectations for a subject or course in order to meet a student’s learning needs. Modifications may include the use of expectations at a different grade level and/or an increase or decrease in the number and/or complexity of expectations relative to the curriculum expectations for the regular grade level.

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- 5. December 6th Memorial Donations** – The District 13 Executive has made donations to 3 local women’s shelters across the District in honour of the 14 women who were murdered in Montreal on December 6th, 1989. This is the third year that District 13 has financially supported local women’s shelters in this manner. Violence against women has continued to rise in the Durham Region and continues to be under supported by municipalities and the Ontario Government.
- 6. Negotiations priorities surveys** – Central and Local negotiations priorities surveys will be forthcoming. Keep an eye on President’s memos and District email for your opportunity to provide input at both levels of negotiations for the next contract. Both surveys will be carried out in the new year to be ready for negotiations once our current collective agreement ends August 31st, 2019.
- 7. District 13 Email** – Are you receiving information from District 13 to your personal account? If not, email shane.stagg@d13.osstf.ca from a non-board email address. Indicate your school or that you are an occasional teacher or PSSP member and we will add you to the District 13 email list. As we move into negotiations, receiving District updates becomes even more important.