



# President's Memo

Lamia Sabbagh, President

905 668 7100

October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018

1. **OSSTF PD Day is November 16<sup>th</sup>:** The submission date for PD proposals was Friday. The deadline has been extended by a few days. Submissions are now due this Wednesday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> by the end of the day. This is a day for us by us. Please consider putting on some PD for your colleagues. All schools are open on this day and available to host PD sessions. Forms and information can be downloaded from the District 13 website.
2. **Pension Workshop:** The Fall OSSTF Pension workshop will NOT be held on the PD Day this year. Instead it is being held on Wednesday October 10<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 at the District Office. Please contact [ruth.leone@d13.osstf.ca](mailto:ruth.leone@d13.osstf.ca) to register as soon as possible.
3. **Benefits premium deductions:** OTIP instructed the Boards in March to deduct the July and August premiums in September and October. Unfortunately, the Board was unable to implement this on time. This is why the Board sent the following message to our members on Friday, September 29: *September 27, 2018 pay will be one month benefit deduction. October 25, 2018 pay will be three months benefit deductions. The benefits deduction schedule above picks up the July and August 2018 Benefit Premium deductions bringing your Benefit deductions up-to-date. The November 22, 2018 pay will return to a one month benefit deduction. This is the same method that was applied in 2017.* We are working closely with the Board and with OTIP to make sure that this does not happen again next year.
4. **Municipal Elections:** The election is being held on October 22nd. We will be posting a list of endorsed candidates for school trustee on our website by October 9th on time for the advance polls. We strongly encourage you to vote in this election. School trustees play a major role in public education. Let's make our voices heard and make sure the best trustees are elected.
5. **Confidentiality of Student Briefs:** The student brief binder now available in the main office of schools offers valuable information that protects members from violence in the workplace. They include possible triggers and the steps workers should take to avoid possibly violent encounters. The nature of the information contained in these briefs is sensitive and members are reminded of the importance of keeping this information confidential. Do not make copies or share the information with students or anybody outside your school building. Remember to consider the privacy of students along with the need to have the information you need to maintain your own safety.
6. **Private and Professional Life:** Members are reminded that they are teachers at all times including outside of their school. While everyone has a private life, it must be understood that once activities in your private life are shared in such a way that they become known in your professional environment, you may find yourself at professional risk. This issue comes into play when posting pictures or comments on social media. For example, Facebook posts that portray you in a manner that you wouldn't want shared in your school can be a cause for concern. Other examples include comments or photos shared on Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat. Best

advice is to keep these online profiles clean and free of anything that could cause embarrassment if revealed in your workplace or school community.

- 7. Legal Transaction Day:** According to Board Policy 4130, members can apply for a legal transaction day – one per year. To clarify, this day can only be used for real estate transactions for a **primary** residence. This day counts in the hard cap of 5 days which also contains special events or compassionate days, religious holidays, moving day and snow days (on appeal).
- 8. Class Size Surveys:** Your class size survey was due on Friday. If you have not already done so, please complete this as soon as possible and return to your branch president or CBC rep. This year, there is the option of completing the survey online. You will find the link on the front page of our website. If you choose this option, just let your Branch President know so they can check you off on their list. We must be ever vigilant in protecting our class size language by ensuring that no one is being asked to pierce the class size maxima.
- 9. On-Calls:** You cannot refuse an on-call if you are uncomfortable with the lesson provided, the subject matter or the students in the class. You can, however, modify the lesson if necessary while you are in charge of that class to ensure the safety of yourself and of your students.
- 10. E-Learning Teachers:** The Board and the Union have developed a Memorandum of Agreement for the workload of e-learning teachers for the pilot program that was launched this year. If you are an e-learning teacher, please check over these minutes so that you are aware of your working conditions and can address any problems with your Branch President or by calling the office. They are posted on our website under Useful Information – Collective Agreements and Constitutions – TBU Collective Agreement – Memoranda of Agreement.
- 11. Driving Students:** A reminder that members who continue to drive students in their cars are putting themselves at great financial and professional risk. The board's insurance company (The Ontario School Board Insurance Exchange – OSBIE) posts on their website that it is a bad idea to drive students in your vehicle. Consider other options such as taxis or parent volunteer drivers if busses are hard to organize for your event.
- 12. Home instruction:** If you are teaching a student who is on home instruction and is still on your class list, you cannot mark the student present because you would be exposing yourself to fraud and legal liability. You should mark the student absent in your records. If the attendance secretary has marked the student present in Power School, you do not need to overturn this. As long as your personal records are reflective of the reality, you cannot be held liable. The discrepancy can be easily explained if necessary. If your school is asking you to mark the student present in Power School, please let us know so we can address the issue.
- 13. Safe Schools Incident Reporting Forms:** You have a legal obligation to report unsafe incidents that you witness. These forms are now available online. You can access the form through the portal on Employee Self-Serve - Forms online, where you will also find the Violent Incidents Reporting Form. Some incidents require both forms to be filled out. We would encourage you to fill out the Safe Schools form online so that important statistics can be gathered. However, if you are unable to access the form online for whatever reason, please fill out the hard copy in order to satisfy your legal obligation to report.