

TSU Weekly Wrap Up – April 9, 2020

By Pete McKay-TSU 1st VP

If ever you needed a short week, this was probably it!

Distance Learning (?) – Somewhat appropriately for the times, the learning curve for teachers seems to be flattening a bit after a steep incline early in the week. Still a way to go before it's completely smooth sailing. As for the students, I'm hearing that those who didn't do the work before are not doing it now. No real surprise, I don't think.

Changes have also been occurring in a number of areas including with regards to accessing materials in schools. The initial concern for the Board was over teachers being able to obtain the necessary tech tools. Now they are allowing for the retrieval of other teaching, assessment and marks material. Principals will coordinate the retrieval and, as with the tech, have it available for you to pick up at the door. This is causing a fair bit of stress for members who have left their grade 12 marks and tests in different areas of the class or school, where it might be tough for the principal to find. We have raised this with the Board who, at this point, are saying that teachers are to provide a mark, as best they can, that most accurately reflects where they believe the student is in her/his learning. We'll see whether there is a change of mind over the weekend to allow you to get what you need to achieve this effectively.

Bargaining – It was announced on Wednesday that the Tentative Deal has been ratified by OECTA members. This means we are now able to proceed with local bargaining, although in this climate it is going to be difficult to get all the balls rolling in the same direction. We will touch base with the Board on this shortly as to how we can coordinate things in light of the multitude of tasks requiring attention currently. There will be an application coming out next week for the Local Collective Bargaining Committee.

Staffing – Thank you to all the LSSACs who submitted their requests for the extra allocation. The Board and TSU met today and the schools who are being allocated the SSF positions should have been notified. Reps should check with their principals to see whether there are to be any changes to the LSSAC decisions of this week.

Executive – At the meeting this week, of note to members was the discussion around the UAGM and Elections process. As with everything else, adjustments will need to be made. The Exec passed a motion which will result in an announcement coming, soon, from the UAGM&N/E Committee regarding how they are responding to the current crisis. Keep an eye out for that.

Video Conferencing – And to tie in to the learning curve mentioned above, the release officers and various committee members of TSU have been sharpening their video conferencing skills, on a couple of different platforms. There have been plenty of meetings in which to do so. Next week will be no different as we attempt to use this mode for the Reps meeting on Wednesday.

And there we have it. A short wrap up for a short week. As we head into a long weekend, we hope you have a safe and blessed Easter.