

TSU Weekly Wrap Up – June 26, 2020

By Pete McKay-TSU 1st VP

You made it!!

Distance Learning – Weekly conversations with the Board are scheduled for throughout July to discuss the return to school in September. OECTA is dealing with the high level stuff with Ontario Catholic Schools Trustees Association (OCSTA) to ensure that whatever direction it is providing to Boards does not violate collective agreements the two parties have been involved in. Within whatever plans are developed, TSU will be ensuring that the needs of the members are being looked after. The big one, of course is Health and Safety. And we've had quite a few concerns from members over that. In addition, how can teachers do what the government is suggesting when they are also parents? These and other "smaller" issues will be fully addressed over the next few weeks at all levels. While I would normally say, you don't have to look at emails for the next 9+ weeks, the times are not normal. So, have a look at your email once in a while for anything that might come to you over the summer, in case it's of importance. No doubt you will hear much in the media but accurate and detailed information will come from TSU and the Board.

Health and Safety – Somewhat in conjunction with the reopening of schools, TSU convened a meeting of worker representatives from throughout the Board, this week. Concerns over the approach to and handling of H&S exist throughout the system and with all worker groups. It is hoped that by discussing our concerns with each other we can better provide the Board with an understanding of the bigger picture in this area. Obviously, September is foremost in people's minds and the intersectionality of roles in the Board needed to be discussed so we each understand our different, as well as common, issues. E.g. if one action is taken for teachers what impact does it have on EAs, or custodians? We cannot allow one to group to be vulnerable at the expense of another. Working in solidarity will help avoid that eventuality.

Local Bargaining – We would ask you to please complete the Survey that went live last week. <http://tsuoecta.org/2020-local-collective-bargaining-committee-survey/> It is still open for the next few weeks, expecting that you were too busy to get to it until now. Although, we are glad to see that so many were able to respond, already.

Staffing – Fourth round postings came out on Wednesday. Some questions were raised about jobs discussed at LSSSACs not appearing on the list. There are still a number of surplus teachers who need to be placed and, as with the third round, they were put into some of the open positions, by seniority and qualifications, before the postings were released. Thankfully we have been able to find positions for them and avoid having to place them as Supernumeraries in LTO positions for September. Unfortunately, there are still quite a number of people waiting for positions, who will become Supernumerary on June 30, unless there is a significant uptick in retirements in the next week.

Executive – Another week, another meeting. The committee selection process was completed on Wednesday and members will be contacted over the course of the summer regarding appointments. We also confirmed the Association Reps for next year, although, we do need to have confidentiality forms completed to fully conclude that process.

Investigations – As we hit the end of the year, the Board wanted to wrap up a number of investigations this week. So I had the "pleasure" of attending five of those. The impact of these

on people can be very stressful, particularly when the outcomes are not favourable. In all cases of discipline, the Unit files grievances with the Board. There is increased concern over social media being used in these investigations by the Board. We may not agree with the way in which it is being used or the conclusions being drawn from it but members need to be aware of this reality. Even the most innocent posts can be misinterpreted and lead to “reasonable suspicion” of wrongdoing, even if none occurred. As you enjoy the summer, please be aware of the fact that the OCT does not seem to have a sense of humour and may see what you and I might laugh at as breaching standards of conduct they have set. And, despite all the laughs we have with the Board they tend to enforce those standards very strictly, too. Please be careful.

We were also involved in Return to Work meetings, mediations, grievance meetings and writing them. And we held an office meeting to wrap up some items for the year. The office will be open for the next couple of weeks, if there is anything that you need contact us for. (And if you want to help lug furniture between offices, feel free to join us.)

So that wraps up not only the week but the year!

On behalf of Gillian, Angela and myself, thank you for all your questions and your support, throughout the year. And we hope you have a safe and restful summer to recharge, especially after having done such a great job of dealing with the most difficult of circumstances.

Take care!