

TSU Weekly Wrap Up – November 20, 2020

By Pete McKay-TSU President

Hybrid Model - A number of questions this week about the information provided by the Board on how to do this. Very clear implications that they want you to use a camera, and more, however, please note that on slide 6 it does say that they are only offering suggestions. Unfortunately, they don't offer any suggestions that are helpful to those not using a camera! As I've said to a number of people, there are options on both D2L and Google Class that allow for synchronous delivery without exposing yourself to the students at home. Khan Academy also came up in conversation.

And while I have repeatedly indicated the possible jeopardy of using cameras and invasion of your privacy, particularly at home, I'm hearing some rather disturbing reports. Apparently, some students are asking teachers for a "House Tour"! Why? Because other teachers have been giving them, they say. Whether this is the case, or the students are trying to pull something, I don't know but, please, do not allow students to see anything personal or private in your home. God knows what they will see that could be used against you. That south pacific fertility sculpture might mean a lot to you but....

LSSAC – Still being asked about Zoom meetings of LSSAC for some reason. I have sent another email to Reps, today, for them to share with the LSSAC members, in the hope that everyone will have clarity on the matter. All LSSAC members must be included in the meeting by whatever means necessary for them.

OTs – While many were enjoying thrilling PD in schools or online, today, the OTs were also provided the opportunity for some from TSU. Approximately 50 OT Members joined OTR JoAnne Maher to learn everything they need to know about the CA and other practical aspects of their employment. We are fortunate, this year, to have two other OTs on the TSU Executive, Julianna Conforti and Maria Ferrulli, who were also on hand to provide information and insights for our colleagues. Also involved in presenting were Angela Tersigni, Veronica Tuzi, and Audrey Ferrer. One of the highlights of the day was Paul Davis, an expert on Social Media. Paul is known for his presentations to schools, law enforcement and other organizations and has been featured on TEDx, and various TV shows. As we know social media is a potential minefield, so any assistance we can get is valuable. Thanks, too, to Annalisa Crudo-Perri a TSU OT, who arranged for Paul to attend.

OTs should also have received a copy of the special OT Edition of the TSU Newsletter, this week. If you would like to have a look at it, check out the website. Great job by the communications committee, Alan Orino, Don Schmidt, Chris Loben, and Veronica Tuzi.

And one more OT item this week was the Article 9 meeting, which Angela and JoAnne attended. Of concern is the fact that the Board is putting on hold the required November interviews of OTs who wish to move onto the OT List and be eligible for LTOs. An email from the Board regarding this was sent to all OTs this week, as well. We will be following up on this as appropriate in the near future.

Messages – A couple of important messages from the Board, this week. Yes, there are some! From safe schools, an email regarding reporting of student incidents went out on Monday. Even in the strange models in existence right now the opportunity to report properly still exists. Protect yourself and others by filling in the appropriate documentation as outlined in that email. And from HR, a notice on HM 14, the harassment and discrimination policy. Although we have indicated in the past that we do not feel that this is adequate training on the topic, it is important that people be familiar with it. Again, for your protection, you need to be aware of what constitutes harassment, so that you can steer clear of those behaviours. As we keep hearing, it's impact not intent that is judged.

Teacher Mental Health – A reminder, again, that there are a variety of supports within the OTIP Benefits plan as well as assistance through the Employee and Family Assistance Plan (EFAP). workhealthlife.com and 1-844-880-9142. Please call.

Miscellaneous – And all the usual stuff happened this week, too. There might have been a slight easing of the load to some degree but tough to tell when you're still spinning.

And that's a wrap. Have a great weekend!