



**ELEMENTARY TEACHERS' FEDERATION OF ONTARIO
THAMES VALLEY OCCASIONAL TEACHER LOCAL
PROVINCIAL TAKEOVER
BULLETIN #3**

November 10, 2008

LET'S CLOSE THE GAP

Provincial Update

The major goal in this round of negotiations is to eliminate the funding gap that exists between the elementary and secondary panels. The funding gap currently stands at approximately \$711 per elementary student. Closing the gap will improve student learning conditions and teacher working conditions.

At the Provincial Discussion Table (PDT), ETFO was offered basically the same deal as AEFO and OECTA were offered. ETFO rejected this offer because it failed to address closing the gap. Over the next few bulletins we will outline the offer's inadequacies. Following are some of the reasons the offer was unacceptable to ETFO.

1. Preamble

If the PDT Agreement were accepted the following statement would be included in the preamble of the teacher Collective Agreement and would impact on the Occasional Teacher Collective Agreement.

"The Thames Valley District School Board and the Thames Valley Teacher Local are committed to improve student achievement, reduce gaps in student outcomes and increase confidence in publicly funded education."

This type of statement does not belong in a Collective Agreement. ETFO lawyers have stated that such a statement could be used against the Federation in resolving any grievances that may be brought forward by the Local.

2. Release Time for Assessment, Evaluation and Report Cards

The PDT Agreement addresses this issue by providing an additional Professional Activity Day in 2009-10 and effective September 2010, two Professional Activity Days. The days would be designated for the purpose of assessment and completion of report cards at the elementary level.

ETFO believes that teachers should have release days throughout the school year for assessment, evaluation and the completion of report cards. An occasional teacher should cover such days. Secondary teachers have ten examination days to cover this part of a teacher's workload. During these days there is no instruction for students.

3. **Elementary Preparation Time**

Elementary teachers currently receive 200 minutes of preparation time for every 1500 minutes of student instructional time. Secondary teachers receive 375 minutes during the same period of instruction.

The PDT Agreement proposes an increase in preparation time of 10 minutes per year in each year of the four-year agreement starting in 2009. At the end of the four years elementary teachers would remain well short of the time currently received by secondary teachers. In fact, if you projected the increase on a yearly basis until preparation time was equal to that of a secondary teacher it would take twenty-five (25) years to reach the goal.

4. **Grade 4-8 Class Size Reduction**

The current class size in grades 4-8 should be based on an aggregate across the Board of 25:1. In Thames Valley, the Board has a dispensation from the Ministry to staff at a higher ratio and is using 25.84:1. The current class size in the secondary panel is 22:1. It is the goal of ETFO to achieve a 22:1 class size ratio in grades 4-8.

The PDT Agreement proposes a class size reduction spread out over the term of the agreement. By August 2012, class size would be reduced from 25:1 to 24.5:1. If you project this decrease on a yearly basis, it would take thirty (30) years to reach the goal of a class size ratio of 22:1.

We don't believe it is necessary to state further why this and the preparation time proposed were rejected by the ETFO.

5. **Teacher Supervision**

Because of the last round of negotiations, the time that teachers are responsible for supervising students has been greatly reduced. Schools in Thames Valley have maintained or gained supervision schedules of eighty (80) minutes or less. Thames Valley Occasional Teachers maintain the timetable of the teacher they replace, including supervision limits.

The PDT Agreement proposes an increase of one hundred (100) minutes of supervision for every week of instruction by including the following language in all collective agreements.

"Elementary teachers shall be available to students in their classroom fifteen minutes prior to the first scheduled class of the day and five minutes prior to the first scheduled class in the afternoon. Such time shall not constitute supervision/on-call or instructional time."

ETFO is not about to accept 'strips' to any of our agreements.

6. **The "Me Too" Clause**

In the PDT clause the following statement exists:

"The parties acknowledge the Government's commitment that OCSTA and OECTA will not receive amounts proportionally less than the overall financial settlements reached in any other PDT Agreements, with any other teacher federation, subject to the parties

fully complying with the conditions associated with this agreement.”

If the government and OECTA believed that this deal was a good one, why would such a clause be necessary?

7. Salary

The PDT agreement proposes a 3% salary increase in each year of the four-year agreement.

ETFO President, David Clegg, has made it very clear in his statements to the press that, “Salary is not the issue and has never been the issue. The real issue is fairness.”

8. Occasional Teacher Provisions

For the first time, the Provincial Discussion Table Agreement referred to Occasional Teacher bargaining. There is a general reference to increasing funding, but it is unclear if this additional money will allow for any improvement in working conditions which would have to be negotiated locally.

Assigned Time vs. Unassigned Time – Elementary vs. Secondary

Elementary	Secondary
Student Instruction – 1500 minutes	Student Instruction – 1500 minutes
Assigned Time – 1300 + supervision	Assigned time – 1125 – includes supervision
Unassigned Time – 200 minutes	Unassigned Time – 375 minutes

Based on a full year, a Thames Valley Long-Term Occasional teacher works the equivalent of 21.9 days more each year than a Thames Valley secondary teacher. The actual number of days is even greater when you examine the total number of minutes of supervision between the panels. This will be explained in more detail in a further bulletin.

Members Need to be Informed about Negotiations: Do Not React to Rumours

As we have said, you will receive regular updates regarding the status of negotiations at both the provincial and local levels through Provincial Takeover Bulletins. Members are also reminded to visit www.etfo.ca and follow the links to the Close the Gap icon for updates regarding ETFO’s Close the Gap campaign. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us at one of the numbers below.

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