

District Officer's / Chief Negotiator's Report

21 October 2020

1. Preamble

I just want to take a moment to thank everyone for their warm welcome to the role of District Officer. While I cannot ever replace Kevin McFadden and the amazing work he has done for this Bargaining Unit, I will endeavour to hold the fort as best I can until Kevin makes his grand return. Aileen, Ellen and Deborah have been extremely helpful in getting me settled into the role and educating me to the ins and outs of how the office works. I am quickly getting up to speed and I feel like things are settling down nicely.

2. Health and Safety

- As we are now going through an increase in the number of COVID cases in the province, as well as having some cases appear in our schools, member anxiety is increasing and the number of questions to our office is moving upwards in tandem. The most frequent concerns continue to be about large class sizes, physical distancing and symptom protocols. We are also hearing from branches about janitorial shortages. We are seeking clarification on these.
- We have no new information about hard-of-hearing masks – but the roll out in the system obviously did not quite go as planned. We should be getting replacement shields on a schedule from now on- please advise if not.
- ETFO and OSSTF from our area have jointly sent a letter to senior administration at the request of our provincial reps. This is in response to the OLRB decision that required us to submit our concerns at a local level. We have requested, in writing, the board's justification for current plans around class sizes, PPE, cohorting, cleaning, ventilation and busing versus government guidance/expert testimony. The survey that is being shared to schools is also in support of this increased pressure. There was a meeting with the director about this that Ellen can speak to. The letter will be released to the membership once it is presented at Joint Health and Safety.
- I am current doing an audit of safety materials submitted by admin teams in ebase (H&S reporting system) to determine if schools have documented (checklist, SSIC sign off, due diligence) their back to school plans. Many schools have not submitted their checklists as directed by senior admin – I am following up and will share the checklist with BPs when I receive them.
- There will be a survey of the membership forthcoming about this subject in support of our OLRB case.
- The next system level H&S meeting is Thurs Oct 22nd. Ellen and I will be there representing OSSTF as voting members.

3. Grievance Report

- TBU.19.01 – Generation of Staffing – 5 April 2019 – Arbitration Approval received 28 June 2019
- TBU.19.02 – Sick Leave Application Error – 22 January 2002 – Submitted for Central Grievance
- Grievances will be forthcoming on virtual school staffing and other matters at next meeting.

4. Collective Agreement and Negotiations

- A final review of the local terms of Collective Agreements are underway. We do have a small language change based on central terms clause related to maternity leave top-ups that needs to be included. A final version will be ready for publications in the very near future.
- We are beginning work on getting the changes of our working conditions into official LOUs in order to maintain our CA rights post-covid changes. We will update you on this in the near future.

5. System Staffing

- Since I have taken over as District Officer, there have been no system staffing meetings that I have participated in yet. We are awaiting word on changes due to Virtual HS shifting and collapsing sections for quadmester 2. We are expecting this discussions to appear next week.
- There was a large number of “No-show”, pre-reg students that were not being accounted for in previous staffing models that will now be assigned appropriately for Quadmester 2.
- We are still dealing with students who are in a limbo-situation in schools – not attending or refusing to attend in-person but not yet assigned to virtual school. I am working to gain a sense of how each school is handling this with sharing of lessons, marking, and assignments. We will be seeking out clarification with senior admin about these issues soon. We are also surveying schools to determine how these students are being programmed for now.

6. Future Dates for Protective Services Committee

- October 29th, November 26, January 21, March 4, April 15, May 20 and June 17

In solidarity,



Chris Clarke