



From the President

November, 2016

Shawn Martin, GEETF President – smartin@geetf.ca

Donations Made to Area Food Bank

In October I brought 46 pounds of food and \$30 in cash donations to the Brantford Food Bank. Our generosity directly benefits the families and the students we teach in Grand Erie. Many are faced with the struggles of unemployment or not receiving a living wage. I encourage you to please bring a non-perishable food item (or a cash donation) to be given to an area food bank when you visit the GEETF office. Donations will be shared between Brant, Haldimand and Norfolk food banks. The top items of need are: peanut butter, Kraft dinner, canned fruit & vegetables, soup, spaghetti sauce and dried pasta, pork and beans, cereal and oatmeal. Thank you for your generosity. I encourage members to surpass last month's donation.

The GEETF Participates in NTIP Training

I, along with Nancy D'Aurora, our First Vice President, made presentations to our newest GEETF members at the New Teacher Induction Training. We spoke about how our Federation operates, who to call for assistance, the benefits we have under our Collective Agreement and professional boundaries. Next on the agenda for our newest teachers is working with a mentor.

New Newsletter Format

I will be sending out a monthly newsletter to highlight important events in our Local and to keep you informed on current issues in education. I will also be including a monthly update from our committee chairs so you are aware of our accomplishments and events planned for the next month.

GEETF Executive Retreat

The newly elected GEETF Executive spent a day and a half last month planning the future direction of your Local. We participated in team building activities, professional learning, and discussion about how to better serve our membership. We are looking at adding a few new committees. Please look for upcoming announcements and think about joining a GEETF committee. We hope to see you at our events.

Status Committee Supports the Brantford Basketeers Program

The Status committee is once again encouraging GEETF members to support the Brantford Basketeers Program. This program provides much needed items to women who are forced to start over due to domestic violence. I encourage your school to participate in this outstanding event to help support those in need of our generosity.

ETFO Charter Challenge and Town Hall Meetings

GEETF members were invited to participate in the Town Hall meeting held the evening of October 6. An excellent explanation of the legal outcome from our successful court challenge to Bill 115 was given. Sam Hammond, ETFO President, explained the current situation and what we could expect going forward with respect to a remedy.

Progress Reports - November PA Day

Progress Reports are to be sent home between November 14th and 16th. Teachers who make themselves available for interviews with parents during the evening of Thursday, November 17th (for a minimum of 150 minutes following your school's normal dismissal time) may use the afternoon of the Friday, November 18th PA Day at their discretion. Teachers who do not have interviews scheduled Thursday evening are expected to stay for 150 minutes in order to have Friday afternoon off. System level teachers are not able to access this afternoon free from duties.

Student Aggression

The topic of student aggression and violence comes up at almost every Federation meeting I attend. As the Local President, I find myself almost daily supporting our colleagues because of the aggressive actions of students and parents.

Several forms are used by our board to report, document, and ensure follow-up action. Your Union Steward has a paper copy of the three main forms. Depending on the scenario, it's very important to complete

either one or more of these forms if you encounter violent actions or threats by students, and to inform administrators of behaviours that could lead to student suspensions.

Documentation of violence from students or harassing/objectionable behaviour by parents leads to support. It gives direction for improvements and provides the paper trail to support you. There is a reporting flowchart that outlines which form(s) to use and when. This chart should be posted on the Federation bulletin board in your school for easy reference. ETFO is taking the necessary steps to address student aggression and to ensure our schools are safe places for learning and teaching.

Online Resources for Teachers

ETFO has two online resources that I thought were worth pointing out. The first is etfoassessment.ca – this website is a collection of assessment resources. The other page is etfolearn.ca – this website offers many ideas for junior/intermediate teachers. Our Social Justice Committee would like to share rickhansen.com/Our-Work/School-Program to promote disability awareness.

Thank You

Thank you for your support as I make the transition from the classroom to my new role. It's truly an honour to serve as your local president. Please contact the office if you need advice, support, or information. Nancy, Cory, Maggie and I are here to assist.

-Shawn Martin