



ETFO Niagara Occasional Teachers

25 February 2009

Hi All:

This is Gary Anderson writing. I wanted to give you the “**so what, big deal**” on what the Provincial Framework means to us here in Niagara over the four year period the framework has been signed for, (from 2008 to 2012).

First and foremost, signing the framework does not make our situation any better locally than it was before it was signed, but it does give a bit of a “framework” to supposedly guide negotiations. Occasional teachers, (sadly, but understandably), play an insignificant role in the minds of the Government. As such we are reduced mightily when it comes to being given a chance to articulate our issues (**salary** and most importantly here in Niagara, our **working conditions**) and that reduces us to the equivalent of temporary workers in the minds of many in the Education sector.

Most of the Framework agreement that you are getting today is for the permanent teachers. Only #4 has a bearing on you directly as an Occasional Teacher for the DSBN.

As I’ve stated to you before, leaders from across Ontario got together and worked on the creation of our bargaining goals, goals that the Federation was willing to adopt for all Occasional Teachers in the Province!

Here is what we’re fighting for. Those that were at our annual meeting will remember how we all worked together last May and found that **we too, table by table, came to the same goals that our Executive and my Provincial counterparts did.**

- Goal #1: ***To negotiate paid professional development.***
- Goal #2: ***To negotiate experience credit to include casual days and long-term assignments.***
- Goal #3: ***To negotiate language to provide priority hiring for permanent positions.***
- Goal #4: ***To negotiate language to ensure that all long-term occasional teaching positions are hired from the occasional teacher list.***
- Goal #5: ***To ensure that each teacher absence is covered by an occasional teacher.***
- Goal #6: ***To negotiate benefit improvements.***
- Goal #7: ***To negotiate capped lists.***
- Goal #8: ***To negotiate real salary increases.***

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Now, as you can plainly see, all of these would have a drastic impact on you right now! Contract “strips” (removing even what people already have bargained for), is the real reason why ETFO couldn’t sign the first efforts at a framework. Our counterparts in secondary ended with the same abysmal working environment that they’ve always had. **We will not accept ANY strips to a contract that is already a LONG way from acceptable! I will not discuss strips or get caught trying to get back to status quo.**

I’m not sure where how talks will go yet, nor if we’ll finally find Mr. Hoshizaki and company offering practical support for the incredible job we do, but you have an Executive and a Federation, ready to go the distance!

We have put together a fantastic contract submission that addresses the problems that have plagued Occasional Teachers, particularly at the DSBN. Nepotism and unfair hiring practices, lack of work, being forced to work during prep times (which incidentally is YOUR decision to determine how to use), and the appalling lack of Professional Development, and SEMS baloney, are just a few of the many insulting issues we deal with on a daily basis.

By the way, there have been no meetings since I refused to meet on the Board property, asking instead for a neutral site which the DSBN refused to pay their share for. At a Board meeting recently the Trustees (as directed by the Director), approved a \$243,000 extension of the parking lot at the Ed Centre to connect the parking lot to the Service Road, a distance of about 10 feet, and yet they provide our whole membership, nearly 600 of us, the amount of \$8 dollars per person PER YEAR for professional development and can’t meet with us off – site due to “cost”.

Do ANY of you have the same frustrations that I have as I uncover truth after truth about these people and their REAL attitudes towards us and by extension, to the children that they claim to be so concerned over?

Together, we teach about 50,000 days for the DSBN....isn’t it time we sent a message from us all...together?

We’ll be calling you to ask you what you think. This is a critical stage for our Local. Check online too!

Isn’t it time you took some of this personally? I know I do!

Sincerely,

Gary

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