



The Sentinel



AGM 2023 - Standing in Solidarity with York

Mike Totten - President & LEO of Elementary

AGM 2023 was an incredible show of solidarity to York’s delegation over the attacks we have faced for the distribution of our Safe Space Stickers. On Saturday, President Barb Dobrowolski addressed the issue in her President’s report and the York delegation received a standing ovation from the delegates in attendance. Then during the AIDE Task Force report, Chair Sharon Giroux again acknowledged our delegation and made it clear that the Diversity Advisory Board and AIDE task

force members would be behind us all the way as we moved through the next stages of this process.

On Monday, the final day of AGM, what unfolded before our eyes was nothing short of amazing. Each delegation wore something in the colors of the rainbow to show their support for York. Several presidents went to the microphone to show their solidarity with York Unit and I was personally presented with various clothing and swag. This was again followed by another standing ovation of the AGM delegates.

During what was a truly special moment for me personally, I received an “Ally” button from a member of the Diversity Advisory Board who made it clear to me that these buttons are not just given to anyone until they **know** you are a true ally.

Presidents were also informed that Provincial would be redistributing the door hangers previously issued across all OECTA units. Each local unit will have the option to purchase the original Safe Space door hanger, one that includes the style of the OECTA Pride Flag

or one that matches York Unit's updated Safe Space sticker with the Progress Pride Flag.

Overwhelmed by the support across the province for York Unit, my address of appreciation to the AGM Delegates was as follows:

“On February 28th, 2023, YCDSB experienced one of its darkest days in history as two parents spewed some of the most hateful words as a reaction to York Unit redistributing safe space stickers to our members as a means of protecting both students and members of our 2SLGBTQ+ community. Our Executive was present for the meeting and experienced very personal attacks via social media over the days following this meeting as the lack of Board interjection on the 28th encouraged such behavior from parents. Times have certainly been difficult as we struggled to understand how in 2023 these types of behaviors and words continue to exist in our society.

But know, for all of us who have experienced such backlash for standing for what is right and just, that providing safe spaces for the students we teach who self-identify with this community

and struggle to align it with our Catholic values and safe spaces for our colleagues who self-identify and struggle for fear of repercussions from their employer, we will be on the right side of this fight.

In the weeks that have followed the Board meeting, there has been a very public outpouring of support from the community. Parents have spoken out in increasingly large numbers to both our Board of Trustees and Director to have them address their public lack of action at the February 28th meeting. I have done several media interviews and have spoken proudly of OECTA's inclusive stance on this matter which is based on our Catholic values. The outpouring of support from students, parents, administrators, Senior management, fellow Presidents, Secretariat members, the Provincial Executive and in particular from this AGM has been both overwhelming and humbling and for that I want to thank all of you.

I encourage you to tune in to the March 28, 2023 YCDSB Board Meeting where a public apology will be issued by our Board of Trustees and Director. The

link is available on our Board website under Trustees and Board Meetings. I am also very confident that this year, following our relentless advocating for doing what is right, we will see the Pride Flag raised in June in York Catholic for the very first time.

I have learned a great deal from this experience. I have learned that doing this work is not always easy and can create a great deal of hurt. I have learned that you should never take a silent voice for granted, as that voice will rise when the time is right and become a tremendously loud one. I have learned that we need to be on the right side of this discussion because our failure to do so will spell the end of Catholic education. But most of all, I have learned that we are not alone in this and Together We Will Rise.”

Following my address, I was honoured by the Hamilton-Secondary Unit with the *Horst Schweinbenz Silver Palate Award* given to a delegate at AGM who distinguishes themselves at a microphone. I was both honoured and deeply humbled to receive this award and look forward to carrying on with this very important work in the years ahead.



Secondary Updates

Greg Bolton -1st Vice President & LEO of Secondary

Where should I start? It is a whirlwind of activity in secondary, from staffing to the real impacts of e-learn, to unknown timelines for the new school, preparations for local bargaining, to potential instructional model updates, to workload meetings, and more - it is ongoing.

The staffing process has begun for all schools. In all fifteen secondary schools, the Principals have decided to staff by Qualifications. This is the first time in my career this has happened. When it comes to staffing open vacancies in schools, Principals get to choose either qualifications or seniority. Seniority is union preference and the easier of the two to enact. Keep in mind the choice of qualifications is only in play for new positions opening up (true vacancies). If locally in your school, you are asked to rule on a discrepancy in staffing by qualifications, please do not engage, as it will be for the administration to rule upon. You should make the Unit office aware

there is a discrepancy.

The far-reaching effects of the Conservative government's funding of the system is just beginning to show its true impact. Remember, the government not only said all students would be required to take 2 E-Learn courses to graduate, but they have imposed a shortfall of funding to ensure this happens. The funding of our system is in shortfall by the assumption that all students will take two courses that have a cap of 30 students in each class, well above the average class size cap of 23 to 1. Students do have the options to opt out of the E-learn course requirement, yet the funding shortfall for the system will still remain. Also realized is that if not enough students take the E-learn courses, then there will be shortfalls in the number of sections available for day school due to the funding cuts, and that day school class sizes will be driven to their maximums.

The new school in Stouffville,

St. Katherine of Drexel, has been scheduled to open in September 2023. Those timelines have been up in the air because of construction delays. The Board has just notified us that the school will be opening for only 7-9 in September but will be housed at different locations. Keep in mind this will be a 7-12 school, similar to Our Lady of the Lake. More information is still to come.

There are ongoing meetings around the definition of the Guidance workload as the post-pandemic landscape settles in and more demands are being saddled on the Guidance departments in the system. Keep in mind that the 90 sections from Guidance removed in 2017 have still not been restored, advocacy for the restoration is ongoing especially given the acute increase in needs.

Just as there is in your classrooms, there is a lot on the go at all times across the Unit.

Thank you all for all your hard work, and please make sure you are taking care of yourself and one another.

Do you know a student who could use an extra \$1,500 for tuition?



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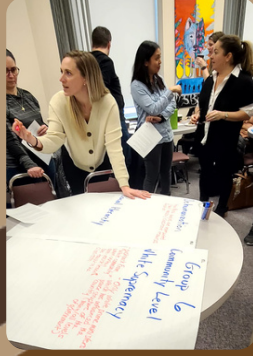
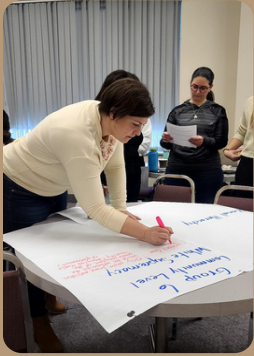
If you're insured with OTIP and you or one of your relatives (e.g. child, step-child, grandchild, niece, nephew, aunt, uncle, sister, brother, spouse, etc.) will be a full- or part-time post-secondary student in the upcoming academic year, enter online for the chance to win a bursary from OTIP.

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 Parents of Black Children

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Whiteness doesn't have to involve white people. ABR framework. Thank you - Sorry - Stay close.

Y.N. St. Joseph (Markham)

Build racial literacy and be the change, and lead the charge.

J.W. St. Brother Andre CHS

I feel like I am better prepared to deal with issues strategically instead of "clutching my pearls". I want this training for everyone who is going to work with students. Thank you OEFTA for being on the cutting edge.

A. M. St. Elizabeth CHS



I loved the quote from the KOJO institute "You can be nice to Black people but you aren't doing anything unless you change the system." This quote really motivates me to ACT!

K.F. St. Brendan

Anti-Black Racism Training with Parents of Black Children and KOJO Institute January - February 2023

Examining the way we are all evaluated in relation to a white societal construct, and how we are rewarded every time we meet the expectations of the construct. The idea that "whiteness" is separate from white people.

L.M. St. Elizabeth CHS

"We are not inherently racist. We were taught to be and we can unlearn to be racist"

*T. D. C.
St. Gabriel the Archangel*

Don't run away from conversations around race. Engage, ask questions and be models for our students by asking questions and address things that don't sound, or feel right.

L.M. Guardian Angels

Discussion around how to respond to racist comments in the classroom, use of racial slurs during the fireside chat. Addressing, correcting the behavior. The specific language and ideas were very helpful in how to address and implement in the classroom.

E.F.C. Cardinal Carter

AGM In Person

Thomas Keslick - Teacher - St Thomas Aquinas

March Break is always a time to look forward to! The weather starts to turn warmer, the days become longer, and teachers and students get a well-deserved break. As teachers and students started their Spring vacations, a group of 52 dedicated York Catholic Teachers gathered at the Westin Harbour Castle Hotel in Toronto for the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA) Annual General Meeting (AGM).

This was my first in-person AGM, and second time attending (the 2022 AGM was virtual). As a first-time attendee, I was excited and nervous to be a part of this important event. The AGM is a gathering of Catholic teachers from across Ontario who come together to discuss issues and make decisions that will affect their profession, their students, and the broader community. There were approximately 640 voting delegates, each representing 75 Catholic Teachers in Ontario.

The first thing that struck me upon arriving at the AGM was the sense of camaraderie among the attendees. Teachers from all over the province had come together to share their experiences and their insights. As a newcomer, I was welcomed warmly and made to feel like part of the team.

The AGM was a busy and exciting 3-day event, filled with a variety of activities and presentations.

Delegates heard reports from the President, Treasurer, Diversity Advisory Board, AIDE (Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity & Equity) Taskforce, and the OTF. We also received updates on the status of our benefits program, the ELHT and LTD. Delegates were also treated to a keynote presentation from Evolutionary Biologist and television personality Dan Riskin. I found these presentations to be incredibly valuable, as they provided details about the work of our Association and the direction in which the Association is headed.

One of the most interesting aspects of the AGM was the debates that took place on various resolutions. There were 143 proposed resolutions, 115 were addressed and 99 were passed - including 21 AIDE task force resolutions. These resolutions were proposed by OECTA members and addressed issues related to education and Catholic values. Members had the opportunity to speak for or against each resolution, and the discussions were lively and passionate. It was clear that everyone in the room cared deeply about the future of education in Ontario and was committed to making a difference. The resolution debates are a shining example of democracy at work.

Another highlight of the AGM was the opportunity to meet and network with other teachers from across the province. I was able to connect with educators who were

passionate about the same things as me and who were working on similar projects. It was inspiring to hear about the amazing work being done by teachers in other parts of Ontario, and I left the AGM feeling motivated and energized.

Attending the OECTA AGM was a truly memorable experience. It gave me a deeper understanding of the challenges facing teachers in Ontario and the important role that OECTA plays in advocating for the rights of teachers and our students. I feel fortunate to have been a part of this event and look forward to attending future AGMs to continue learning and growing as an educator.





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SBRTs During Prep?

Reg Shepherd - 3rd Vice President & Grievance Officer

In April of 2022, the York Unit Executive filed a grievance on behalf of the membership in regards to SBRT (School Based Resource Team) meetings occurring during a teacher's planning/prep time. This grievance was filed as a number of schools were requiring teachers to attend an SBRT meeting during their allocated prep time. This of course was a violation of our members' rights to 240 minutes of uninterrupted, self directed prep time each week.

On December 5, 2022, through negotiations with the Employer, the Board and OECTA came to an agreement on the Grievance. This was settled through what is referred to as Minutes of Settlement (MOS). MOS are the outcome of a grievance where both parties either mutually agree, or are directed to a resolution under arbitration. In this case, the MOS were mutually settled.

Through this process, it was agreed that attendance at an SBRT meeting for the classroom teacher is required to ensure the best interest of the student. The Board then acknowledged that teachers' prep time is self directed and a teacher cannot be *required* to attend an SBRT during their prep; however, a teacher can *choose* to attend an SBRT meeting during their prep.

The outcomes of the MOS are currently in place and will be until the end of the next Collective Agreement (CA), unless otherwise negotiated.

Here is the breakdown of what is to occur when an SBRT is scheduled:

1. Attendance of the teachers is required at these meetings;
2. Unless unavoidable, the SBRT must be scheduled during instructional time and the teacher must be released from their teaching duties;
3. If unavoidable and it must be scheduled during a prep, the following will apply:
 - a. The teacher can use their professional judgment and *choose* to attend the meeting;
 - b. The teacher can *refuse* to attend the meeting, which will then mean the meeting must be re-scheduled during instructional time;
4. When a teacher chooses to attend an SBRT meeting during their prep, the Administrator must ensure there is prep recovery within the next 15 school days.

Even though our prep time has always been self directed in the Collective Agreement, unfortunately there have been many cases where teachers were required to attend SBRT meetings during prep. These minutes clearly outline when and how that may occur, as well as what steps must be taken.

These MOS are specific to SBRT, but the Collective Agreement does ensure that members are never required to attend a meeting, or be directed by their Admin during their prep time. If at any time you find yourself in a situation where this direction may occur, it is important to acknowledge the violation of the CA to your Supervisor, get this direction in writing, and to call the Unit Office.



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Fighting for our Future

Engaging and Supporting New and Beginning Teachers

Nicole Barnett - New Teachers Committee Chair

My story is not unique these days. I worked with our board for over eight years before finally becoming permanent in 2018. I was declared redundant before the end of that school year, recalled, excessed and now finally, hopefully, settling into some normalcy after a few years at the same school. As an occasional teacher, I paid no mind to the union. It was intimidating and foreign and I wasn't permanent, so why bother? Sound familiar? Likely it does because I personally know many new or beginning teachers who feel the same. This is why I'm writing this article - to show first of all why new teachers, occasional and permanent, need to get more *in the know* with our union, and why our union needs to prioritize our newer teachers.

To me, new and beginning teachers are kind of relative terms. While the union typically refers to new or beginning teachers as those in their first 10 years of teaching, some of us "new" permanents have been fighting for a permanent position for longer than that. Some teachers find themselves hired permanently after over a decade of occasional teaching. Maybe we need to reconsider the ideas and definitions around new and beginning teachers. Are we talking about occasional teachers, permanent teachers, both? Remember too, not all occasional teachers are new teachers.

As the chair of York Unit's New Teachers committee for the past three years, I am very much

in the mindset of fighting for the rights of new teachers, even if I myself may be aging out of the category. I notice a serious lack of engagement from the new teachers, something I think should be a concern for the Association as we move forward, assuming these new teachers will one day be Association leaders. While I want these teachers to be involved, I cannot fault them - because I know, I myself used to be just like them.

At the time I was hired the occasional teachers were part of a completely separate unit, which made me even less inclined to get involved. I did not want to stay occasional; this was just a step on my way to becoming permanent. I'd worry about my union and what it was, and how it would work for me after I became permanent and was officially a York OECTA member. Since then, we have actually seen a huge change, as the occasional teachers' unit and the permanent teachers' unit have amalgamated and are all collectively under one unit, with the exception of bargaining. This in itself is massive because now the Unit that represents permanent teachers, now includes occasional teachers on its committees and on the executive. We now encourage and welcome occasional members to join our New Teachers committee. However, still very few new occasional members reach out and engage with union business. The same can be said for new permanent teachers.

As the committee chair,

I have contacted over 300 new permanent hires in the past few years, and only a handful have responded. When I attend school rep meetings, or even the union general meetings there is a lack of newer teachers present. More often than not the teachers present are those who have been union members for years. There is nothing wrong with this, but what concerns me is the lack of representation of the newer teachers. I don't think it's specifically an issue of anyone being at fault, but rather a lack of information, knowledge about the union, and generally the call for new teachers to engage. Often as newer teachers, we see more mature, experienced members filling the staff rep roles, going to union meetings and that can be intimidating for the less knowledgeable members.

In March, I attended the OECTA AGM as a delegate representing York Unit. There I took to the mic to speak to a resolution that sought to bring back the Beginning Teachers committee at the Provincial level. I was proud to see that this year a record number of "first timers" stepped up to the mic, and to speak to this resolution, showing a true need for more representation as well as a place for new and beginning teachers to come together collaboratively to help raise awareness, and encourage and engage new teachers across our province. Ultimately the resolution did not pass, due to financial implications, but I am

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hopeful we will try bringing it forward again next year. In order to do that however, we will need to garner more support. I will need to reach out to other units to back us on this resolution and we will need to encourage more new voices to step up and be heard.

It is my goal to encourage the Union to reconsider the importance of developing and growing the engagement of new teachers across the provincial units. I want to show the provincial office and all the unit executives just how meaningful it is to hear the collective voices, needs and thoughts of our beginning teachers. To do this, however, I first need to encourage new teachers to get

involved on a unit level, engage in staff rep positions, join and sit on committees and attend unit meetings. Get to know the many benefits the union provides, engage in socials and network with other union members and executives. Share collaborative opportunities and see why being a part of a union is important beyond just political action and contract negotiations. Our Association works hard to support us in so many ways, including our benefits, pension and mental wellness. They support us so much more than just in times of grievance and contract breaches. In order for the union to hear our voices and bring back the Beginning Teachers Committee,

we need more voices willing to speak up, we need more people willing to engage and serve.

It is like I said in my AGM resolution debate: it is imperative that we start engaging new teachers in a meaningful way, that inspires us and future new teachers to get involved for the betterment of the Association's future. We are the ones who will eventually propel this Association into the future, but in order to do that, we need not only the support of the Association, but the people willing to get engaged and do the work. New Teachers: consider putting your name forward for the New Teachers committee and any of the committees that York Unit has to offer.

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Life as an OT: The Aftermath of Amalgamation

Loredana Foti - Occasional Teacher Councillor

As an occasional teacher, it can sometimes be difficult to know your place in the school environment. Almost every day you work, you are the new teacher on the block. Travelling from school to school, shifting between daily assignments and LTOs, and having to start fresh in a new school community, sometimes several times a year can definitely lead one to feel displaced, fragmented and never really equal to their permanent colleagues.

Yet, the amalgamation that occurred in 2019 that brought occasional teachers and permanent teachers together under one unit, York Catholic Teachers, certainly helped create a greater sense of belonging for occasional teachers. In fact, the new sense of unity was more than just heartwarming - it was earth shifting. For the first time, occasional teachers were a part of something bigger, something that made the precarious reality of their work and their place in the school community seem less fragmented.

I remember first experiencing this sense of unity in the winter of 2020 when I proudly stood alongside my teacher colleagues in various picket lines during the strike action taken that year. As an occasional teacher, I had participated in strikes in the past, but this time was different since OTs were actually part of the planning and strategizing. This time, the show of solidarity meant something

more. This time, I stood alongside my colleagues as an equal member of York Catholic Teachers, as a member of a newly amalgamated unit that brought together an occasional and permanent staff. This time, we stood together, united, as a newly merged identity.

This was certainly one of the primary goals of amalgamation when the idea first surfaced in 2017. In 2017, the OECTA Provincial executive approved the striking of an OTBU (Occasional Teacher's Bargaining Unit) task force whose mandate was to review the association's current provision of services to occasional members and the governance representation methods for occasional teachers. The task force presented its findings, and the resolutions that stemmed from their recommendations were debated at the 2019 OECTA AGM.

The main reasons for amalgamation stemmed from a growing concern over the lack of OTs interested in serving on the bargaining unit executive and the desire to give OTs access to more union resources. Amalgamation would not only create unity and give OTs an OT representative on the executive to ensure the OT voice is heard but would also allow OTs access to school staff representatives for guidance and support and access to professional development opportunities and other unit events. In essence, amalgamation was to provide occasional members with one point

of contact to meet their needs: the local unit.

Yet, even though amalgamation was to provide greater unity and solidarity and access to more resources, the idea wasn't readily embraced by all occasional teachers when it was first introduced. Some occasional teachers met the idea with resistance, worried about finding themselves in unfamiliar territory and that amalgamation would interfere with their sense of autonomy. Some even feared that their individuality as an occasional teacher would be subsumed by the permanent teacher union and that the OT voice would be lost amongst the voices of permanent teachers.

As an occasional teacher who has been involved in union work since pre-amalgamation, I have seen first hand the transformational opportunity of amalgamation and how it has laid the groundwork for stronger access to union services. Whether you are a daily OT or in an LTO, having one point of contact to meet your needs and having a share in the access to York Unit services has certainly improved the working lives of occasional members. When an occasional teacher calls the unit office for advice, they now have access to both an OT representative and a grievance officer that can assist them with their query in a timely fashion. When an OT wants to be more involved in committee work, an occasional teacher can now work alongside

their permanent teacher colleagues as equals to make a significant difference in a unified team.

Here at York Unit, we immediately began to see the development of a shared culture and a strong merged identity. As a member of the bargaining team in the last round of bargaining, I was able to witness the greater strength in solidarity in contract negotiations and how OT concerns were now being given a different kind of attention with our York Unit President as leader. This time around, the bargaining teams were able to use portions of each other's collective agreements to strengthen the collective agreements of both OTs and Permanent teachers. The outcome for OTs was significant as several gains were made that reflected the specific needs and working conditions of an OT.

Aside from collective bargaining, OT issues are now resolved in a much more expeditious manner, often without having to wait for the outcomes of grievances that could sometimes take years to resolve. OTs also now

have access to more professional learning workshops offered by York Unit and can participate in the numerous social events offered by our unit. Many of the professional and social opportunities offered would not have been sustainable with separate budgets. More importantly, OT participation in unit events together with permanent colleagues has helped create a strong visceral sense of oneness in the workplace.

We are also very fortunate at York Unit to have more than one OT voice on our Unit Executive. Not only do we have an Occasional Teacher Representative as mandated by Provincial, but we also have an additional OT voice in the position of OT Councillor. The idea was to increase the capacity for Occasional Members and to allow another OT voice to be heard at the Executive table. As your OT Councillor, I have been able to work together with your OTR to ensure that OT concerns are heard and that unit initiatives continue to reflect the unique needs of occasional teachers.

Amalgamation at York Unit has also been successful because we have a President and Executive that is truly passionate about increasing OT access to the resources of the union. They are committed to resolving OT issues in a way that yields quick results and recognizes the valuable and significant role occasional teachers play in the unit and for our students. Every decision we make as an executive considers the impact on occasional teachers, and I am honoured to be able to be an integral part of this decision-making process.

Progress is only possible with change, and amalgamation has certainly allowed OTs to move forward and embrace new opportunities. I urge all occasional teachers to participate in our Local's activities not only as a way to stay informed but, more importantly, to network with other Occasional and Permanent Teachers and become a part of the amazing, unified team we have here at York Unit!



YORK CATHOLIC
TEACHERS

PROUD COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Pension Mentions

Karen Ebanks - Recording Secretary

Get to know one of your most important financial assets - your pension. Pension basics include an understanding of the difference between qualifying years and credit service years.

Teachers can retire with an 85 factor. An 85 factor is achieved when a teacher's age plus their qualifying years total 85. For example, a teacher who began teaching at age 25, and taught for 30 qualifying years has reached their 85 factor because they are currently 55 years old and $55 + 30 = 85$. A teacher who works part of a year (ie. 0.3 or 0.5) is eligible to qualify for a full year (1.0) in qualifying years. Qualifying years determine **when** a teacher can retire.

Credit service years determine **how much** pension a teacher will receive when they retire. The formula is 2% multiplied by the credit service years multiplied by the average best 5 years salary. A teacher who works part of a year (ie. 0.3 or 0.5) is eligible for a credit of only the time worked (ie. 0.3 or 0.5) that year. Note: OECTA will purchase service credit for any teacher whose average best 5 years is affected by strike action.

However, a teacher can purchase service credit for time not worked in order to make up the difference in service and salary under specific circumstances, such as parental leave or taking an unpaid leave of absence greater than 5 days. This is called a buy back. For a full explanation of what leaves teachers can buy back and what leaves they cannot, please visit the [Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan website](#) or give them a call at 416.226.2700 or 1-800-668-0105. Note: A teacher's pension is not affected by participating in a deferred salary plan (ie. 4 over 5 or 1.5 over 2) or taking an unpaid leave of absence 5 days or less.

As of September 1, 2022 a teacher may be eligible to purchase pension credit for reduced workload due to childcare or disability. Please read the OTF/FEO article "*Reduced Workload due to Childcare or Disability amendment to the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan*" in this edition of [The Sentinel](#) for details.

Teaching is a profession predominantly held by women. Their pensions may be impacted if they take maternity leave. During the up to 12 or 18 months of maternity leave, a teacher is not earning credit years for the time not worked. The teacher can choose to continue pension payments during the leave, not purchase service credit at all or purchase service credit after returning to work. Purchasing service credit is a buyback. Approximately 70% of the buybacks the Ontario Teachers Pension Plan facilitates are due to maternity leave. One of York Unit's resolutions submitted to OECTA's 2023 Annual General Meeting was to lobby the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan to actively communicate to teachers to consider buying back their maternity leaves and inform them of the implications of the failure to do so.

It can be a financial stress for families where 55% of salary is being earned during the maternity leave; as such, many teachers choose not to continue pension payments during that time. Upon returning to work, a teacher has up to 5 years to buy back the time on leave. Interest on payments is charged beginning one month after returning to work. There are many payment options including through RRSPs.

After the 5 years passes, there is no opportunity to purchase service credit, creating a permanent impact on the service credit years that can be minimized if the teacher works beyond the 85 factor. Paying \$10 000 to buy back a leave could increase your pension by \$2 000/year. If a teacher draws a pension for 30 years, that is a loss of \$60 000. Consider all the interest your pension is earning over the remainder of your career when you purchase service credits within the 5 years. If you are contemplating a leave, contact the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan to find out what your pension payments would be during the leave and what the cost could be to buy back the time after the leave to help yourself financially plan.

If you are a teacher who has recently returned from a qualifying leave, it is helpful if you notify the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan of your intent to do a buyback before April 30. Providing notification after April 30 becomes more complicated with tax implications. Do not hesitate to contact the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan with any pension questions you may have at 416.226.2700 or 1-800-668-0105. York Unit will continue to share opportunities to attend any upcoming pension sessions the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan may be offering.

Please contact me, Karen Ebanks, at the Unit office (905-508-2008 or 1-800-269-3662 or karenebanks@yctoecta.com) if you plan on retiring later this school year and you have any questions about the retirement process. If you are interested in learning more about purchasing Benefits upon retirement, plan to attend a virtual workshop York Unit will be hosting with the Ontario Teachers' Insurance Plan on April 19 at 4:30 pm.



With 3 plans to choose from, RTIP offers the most flexible retiree health, dental and travel coverage for all members of the education community. Use our online plan selector tool to find out which plan is right for you: <http://bit.ly/42Qun0u> #OTIPUpdate

Reduced workload due to childcare or disability amendment to the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan

INTRODUCTION

As of September 1, 2022, eligible members may choose to purchase pension credit for reduced workload due to childcare or disability.

The amendment applies to reduced workload periods that ended on or after September 1, 2017. (For example, if a reduced workload period began in 2008 and ended in 2019 it would be eligible, but if the period of reduced workload ended in June of 2017, it would not be eligible.)

PAYMENT

Members have five years from the end of the month in which their period of reduced workload ends or until the date of their first pension payment, whichever comes first. If the member's reduced workload ended on or after September 1, 2017 and before September 1, 2022, they will have some extra time to pay for this credit. (For those periods, payment must be received by the later of September 1, 2023 or the five-year deadline.)



This benefit is not available to members who have already started to receive their pension, and it is not available to occasional members.

Members can pay for all, or a portion of the period of reduced workload. If the member does not purchase the entire period, they will receive proportionate credit based on completed payments made within the deadline.

Just like other buybacks, members can pay with cash (online banking or cheque), RRSPs or a combination of both, once their application has been approved. Members cannot pay with a credit card or through payroll deduction. Interest will be charged for the cost of pension credit purchase from the first of the month following the end of the complete reduced workload period.

CHILDCARE ELIGIBILITY

The employer must approve the member's reduced workload for reasons related to childcare responsibilities.



The member must have worked for the employer who approves the reduced hours for at least three months prior to the beginning of their period of reduced workload.

Note: The period of reduced work ends as soon as the member changes employers, changes positions with the employer or makes the reduction in hours permanent rather than temporary.

DISABILITY ELIGIBILITY

The employer must approve the reduced workload for reasons related to disability and has arranged for accommodation due to the disability.



The member must also provide OTPP with the following:

- A report about the member's medical condition signed by a medical doctor or a nurse practitioner licensed in Ontario. The report will need to show that the member is suffering from a physical or mental impairment that prevents them from performing the duties of the employment they were engaged in immediately before the disability.
- A letter signed by the employer documenting the details of the accommodation plan and reduced hours.

Note: The period of reduced work ends as soon as the member changes employers.

APPLYING FOR THIS BENEFIT

Members cannot apply for this benefit until they return to a period of unreduced work or the end of the school year in which a continuous period of reduced workload occurs. Members must complete an application based on the type of their reduced workload:



- Childcare – complete [Reduced Workload: Childcare](#) (e-signature enabled)
- Disability – complete [Reduced Workload: Disability](#) (e-signature enabled)

OTPP will automatically receive the e-signature enabled forms. If the member or their doctor are unable to complete the e-signature version of the disability application:

- Print the application form and medical report
- Complete the application form and member information section of medical report
- Give medical report to your doctor to complete
- Upload the completed application, medical report, and letter of accommodation using the uploader tool in your Document Centre

Check out [this video](#) for instructions on how to use OTPP's document uploader tool.

[Link to OTPP Q&A regarding Reduced Workload](#)



**ONTARIO
TEACHERS'**

PENSION PLAN – RÉGIME DE RETRAITE
DES ENSEIGNANTES ET DES ENSEIGNANTS

Email: inquiry@otpp.com

Phone: 416.226.2700 or 1.800.668.0105 (toll free)

FAX: 416.730.7807 or 1.800.949.8208 (toll free)

Call service hours: 9 am to 4:30 pm, Monday to Friday

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Births & Adoptions

Mario Agostino, teacher at St. Cecilia on the birth of his son Massimiliano.
Alannah Azzoli, OT on the birth of her son Nicholas.
Leo Benyamin, teacher at St. Brendan on the birth of his daughter Raeya.
Alessandra DiPede, OT on the birth of her son Walker.
Vanessa Gabrielli, teacher at St. Jean de Brebeuf CHS on the birth of her daughter Amelia Stella.
Sandra Iaboni, OT on the birth of her daughter Lilliana.
Ricki Machala, teacher at Sacred Heart CHS on the birth of her daughter Kasenia.
Christina Mammone, OT on the birth of her son Adam.
Sierra-Maria Massara, OT on the birth of her daughter Gabriella.
Sabrina Panici, OT on the birth of her son Luca.
Sabrina Santeramo, teacher at St. Edward on the birth of her daughter Sienna.
Sabrina Troiano, teacher at St. Anne on the birth of her son Christian.
Vanessa White, OT on the birth of her daughter Karina.



Condolences & Sympathy

Ada Cartaginense and her family, teacher at St. Joan of Arc CHS on the passing of her husband and Occasional Teacher, Anthony Costantini.
The family of Carolyn Miland, teacher at Holy Name.
Lisa Amado, teacher at St. Gabriel the Archangel on the passing of her grandmother.
Joanna Bogdan, Occasional Teacher on the passing of her grandfather.
Nadia Carinci, teacher at OLG C on the passing of her father.
Samantha Ciccirella, teacher at St. Benedict on the passing of her father.
Patricia Chiarella, 2nd Vice-President on the York Unit Executive and Release Officer at the Unit Office, on the passing of her father.
Lorena Colella, teacher at Light of Christ on the passing of her father-in-law.
Sam D'Amata, teacher at Holy Name on the passing of his father.
Mary Da Silva, teacher at Guardian Angels, on the passing of her brother-in-law.
Lisa DeFina, teacher at OLA and St. Paul on the passing of her grandmother.
Rocco Di Donato, teacher at St. Augustine CHS on the passing of his aunt and grandmother-in-law.
Diana Di Monte, teacher at St. Emily on the passing of her father-in-law.
Kelly Douris Wagstaff, teacher at OLG C on the passing of her father.
Barbara Ferraro, teacher at St. James on the passing of her sister and sister-in-law to Enrico Moretti, teacher at St. James.
Alexandra Figliomeni, teacher at St. Brendan on the passing of her cousin.
Isabella Gallo, Occasional Teacher on the passing of her uncle.
Marilisa Giacomino, teacher at St. Mary on the passing of her father-in-law.
Deborah Holenski, teacher at OLG C and St. Elizabeth Seton on the passing of her father.
Linda LeDren, teacher at St. Thomas Aquinas on the passing of her mother and grandmother to
Elyse LeDren, teacher at St. Thomas Aquinas.
Rita Mastrangelo, teacher at St. James on the passing of her mother.

Rossana Ottaviano, teacher at St. Jean de Brebeuf CHS on the passing of her grandmother.

Maria Puopolo, teacher at Blessed Scalabrini on the passing of her mother.

Giulia Provenzano, teacher at St. Robert CHS on the passing of her grandmother and grandmother-in-law to Jessica Ruggiero, LTO.

Reg Shepherd, 3rd Vice-President on the York Unit Executive and Release Officer at the Unit Office, on the passing of his father-in-law.

Mina Spadafina, teacher at St. Mary of the Angels on the passing of her father and uncle to

Frank Spadafina, teacher at St. Mary of the Angels.

Adriano Stillo, teacher at St. Jean de Brebeuf CHS on the passing of his mother-in-law.

Vanessa Zeppieri, teacher at St. Rene Goupil and St. Benedict on the passing of her grandmother.

Planning for retirement when it's ten years, five years, and one year away



Planning for retirement but don't know where to start? You're not alone. Here are some action items you can take as your retirement date draws closer.

Read more at www.otip.com/article160.