



OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY ACT

Effective June 15, 2010 the OHS Act addresses workplace harassment and violence. One of the three R's in the act is the Right to Know. Workers (teachers) must be provided information related to a risk of workplace violence from a person (student) with a history of violent behaviour. The Board must develop policies and procedures to address workplace violence. Workers have the right to refuse unsafe work if they have reason to believe that workplace violence is likely to endanger them. Teachers, however must ensure the safety of the students prior to initiating a work refusal (Reg 837). All other education workers have no limited right to refuse.

CERTIFICATION UPGRADES

If you recently completed courses to move into a new category, you must notify the Board in writing that you have applied for a change in category. Provided the documentation is received by June 15, your pay will be retroactive to September.

All teachers who are not in Category Four should apply for recertification as the requirements have changed recently. A reminder to all teachers to obtain written approval from Provincial Office Certification Department prior to taking any course for upgrading categories. All the requisite forms for new applications, upgrades or course approvals can be obtained from either www.osstfd10.ca or www.osstf.on.ca.

BILL 157 – LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND REPORTING

The following requirements came into effect February 1, 2010:

Board employees who work directly with students – including, but not limited to, teachers and non-teaching staff in social work, child and youth work, psychology, and related areas, as well as educational assistants – **are required to respond to incidents that may have a negative impact on the school climate.**

Section 300.2 of Part XIII of the Education Act states that an employee of the board who becomes aware that a student at a school of the board may have engaged in an activity for which suspension or expulsion **must be considered**, including sexual assault, shall report the matter to the principal as soon as reasonably possible. The employee must consider the safety of others and the urgency of the situation in reporting the incident, but, in any case, must report it to the principal **no later than the end of the school day.**

In all cases, the principal must provide the employee who reported the incident with **written acknowledgement of receipt of the report.** At this stage the teacher has no further responsibilities. The Principal will determine what action to take. OSSTF Provincial Office recommends that once the Teacher has the receipt of the report, do not keep a copy of the report. KEEP RECEIPTS OF REPORTS FOREVER.

RETIREMENT

Retirement workshops this year will be held Tuesday, October 19 at Country View in Chatham and at the District office on Wednesday, October 20. Ruth Kirkham from Provincial Office will provide an excellent presentation and answer any questions you may have. It is recommended that members, within five years of retirement, attend and begin planning for retirement.

ANNUAL LEARNING PLAN

Again this year we have subscribed to the Teachers ALP website to offer suggestions on completing your ALP. On our website (www.osstfd10.ca) under the District News column, you will find the instructions for logging on to the site.

MUNICIPAL ELECTION

Be sure to have your voice heard on Election Day, October 25, 2010. It is then that we have a vote to determine those elected to School Board Trustee positions for all geographic areas in both Chatham Kent and Sarnia Lambton County.

An active OSSTF member, **James Grant**, is running for Sarnia City/County Council. We encourage everyone to get to the polls.

I wish you an enjoyable and professionally rewarding school year.

Barb Young, President
OSSTF District 10
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September 15, 2010