

Occasional News

Volume 14 Issue 1
September-October

For your calendar

- **October 12 4:15 - 5:30**
General Meeting
Ger-Bo's, Smiths Falls
UCARRIS explained
- **October 20 4:30 - 6:30**
SMARTBoard 101
Meadowview PS, Addison
- **October 28 Noon to 4pm** Grab Go :
The ULTIMATE Resource Fair
- **October 28 12:20 - 3:30**
Art on a Shoestring wkshop
- **Annual General Meeting**
May 23 McIntosh Inn
Morrisburg
- **Celebration Dinner**
June 7 5:30 - 7:30
The Stone Cellar Perth



From Diane's Desk

Let me introduce you to our very own Thelma and Louise. Thelma Dunlop (left) has been an occasional teacher with UCDSB for 41 years. She is a highly respected professional who is requested regularly in her Perth area schools. Louise Freeman (right) celebrates 40 years as an OT with UCDSB this November. Countless students and teachers have relied on Louise to deliver excellent teaching in the Hawkesbury area. I have great admiration for these two ladies and am proud to stand beside them.

Thelma and Louise joined us at our Celebration Dinner in June where we feted the accomplishments of OT's and enjoyed a really fine evening. Food and wine were excellent as was the company. I strongly urge you to join us next June as we do it all again.



September has been off to a rocky start for many. While many OT's report that UCARRIS is working very well for them, all too many are finding it a challenge to work enough days to survive. As a result, we will carry a UCARRIS info section in the newsletter this year and have invited the Board to our Fall General Meeting in Smith Falls, October 12. It is our hope that you will attend to ask your questions and to voice your concerns.

Our Professional Learning Committee has been busy and events are already scheduled. Check the PL page and watch the website for updates and additions.

As always, I urge you to contact me for answers to questions, to help in solving problems and to advocate on your behalf. In the meantime,

HAPPY NEW YEAR

JUNE AWARDS

Excellent Schools is awarded to the a school in the East, West and Central areas that exhibits support for the work of occasional Teachers. These are places where character education has become action. **2010 Award to Rideau Centennial, South Edwardsburg & Chesterville.** Each received a tray of goodies and a plaque . A press release to local papers highlighted their work.

Presidents' Award was presented this year to Vice-President Sylvia van Campen in recognition to her service to members. In addition to service on a variety of local committees (Awards, Communication, Collective Bargaining, Equity, Finance, Professional Learning, TELC), she has served provincially on ETFO's Special Education Committee , on Representative Council and on the 2010 Equity Task Force. We thank her for her ongoing commitment to UCOL.

Years of Service Certificates were awarded to members with 5, 10, 15 and 40 years of service as an occasional teacher for UCDSB and its predecessor boards.

UCOL Collective Agreement Cheat Sheet

- Your current daily rate is \$224.78.
- Experience is calculated at 1:1 for Long Term Occasional work (10 or more days replacing the same teacher) and at 2:1 for Daily Casual work
- Experience is calculated on September 1 of each year. A full year is 194 days. If you have up to .499 of a year on September 1, there is no change in experience. If you have .5 – 1.0, your experience is calculated as 1 year. At the end of one full year, a new set of calculations is begun that will bring you to the next level. No experience is lost. All is carried forward.
- On the first day of a new assignment, you do not do the first duty of the day. You need this time to get to know the day plan, the layout of the school and the people who can help you do your best job. This duty may be reassigned to another time. First duty refers to the first duty when you arrive whether it is morning, mid-day, or afternoon.
- You are required to be in the school 15 minutes prior to the start of classes. Most Occasional Teachers arrive sooner but that is a choice. Use your preparation period to plan, to mark, to photocopy, to clarify or to organize. This is an important part of your professional day and belongs to you, not the teacher you replace.
- You are entitled to 40 uninterrupted minutes for lunch.
- On the 10th day of an assignment, you are automatically placed on the teacher salary grid and your pay becomes retroactive to the first day of the assignment.
- Once you replace an absent teacher, another occasional teacher cannot replace you unless you are not qualified for the position, disciplinary concerns arise or by mutual consent.
- There are 300 instructional minutes in a teaching day. A half-day is 150 instructional minutes. The minimum you can be paid is for half a day. In balanced day schools this may mean you arrive in the middle of a class to assume the teacher's assignment.
- Jobs can be cancelled only when you have been given a minimum of 3 hours notice. If you do not have notice, or an error was made, they must still pay you. This includes snow days.
- If you were booked for a job and you arrive to find you are not needed, you are still paid. If you were booked for a full day, you are paid the full day. If you were booked for a half day, you are paid for a half day.
- You have 45 days from the beginning of an LTO to get all your documents to the Board for correct placement on the grid. Teaching experience elsewhere counts but you must have a letter from your previous Employer.
- If you work as an LTO, you will be granted 1 sick day for every 10 days in your working period.
- For every 97 days in an LTO you will receive one personal leave day.

A COPY OF YOUR COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT CAN BE FOUND AT

www.uppercanadaot.com

The PL Page - Professional Learning Designed for Your needs

Local Professional Learning can be viewed on the PD folder of www.uppercanadaot.com
PL opportunities are free to members of UCOL and are covered under the Joint Fund.
Registration for events is via ucolprofessional.learning@gmail.com

October 20 - Meadowview PS, Addison SMARTBoard 101 4:30 - 6:30

Worried that you don't know how to turn the thing on? Are you fearful that you have forgotten how to use this piece of equipment? This afterschool event will walk you through everything you need to know to get started. Supper and snacks provided. Please inform us of food allergies or sensitivities.

October 28 -- a double opportunity!! WB George Centre, Kemptville

12:30 to 3:30pm Art on a Shoestring with Caroline Hossick (BFA, BEd)

This workshop will show you all the marvellous things you can do when you arrive to find "Do your own thing" written in the daybook beside ART. Curriculum connection are clear and you will use many of the ideas presented for years to come. This very popular workshop will stimulate creativity without stimulating your bank account.

NOON to 4pm Grab & Go - the ultimate resource fair for OT's

Tables and tables are loaded with free resources. Books, materials, curriculum, activity books, lesson plans --- they are all yours for the taking. Drop in and fill your OT bag!

Got a PL idea?

Have a skill you could teach OT's?

Contact our Chair
paula.carmichael@gmail.com

Coming... **November 3 1 - 5pm More than a Play location TBA 0.5 paid professional learning**

This highly regarded workshop will lead you through a techniques of teaching social justice issues related to poverty, bullying, and discrimination through drama. Your instructor will be the incredible Bob Barton. Google Bob - he is a renowned teacher of drama. Imagine being able to say you studied under Bob Barton!

Provincial PD etfo.ca *Opportunities continually emerge so check this often. As ETFO members, travel, hotel, meals and dependent care are granted once you have registered and been accepted. Many conferences and workshops offer release days as well.*

...and still we rise 2012: ETFO's Annual Leadership Conference for Women Feb.8-10 Royal York Hotel, Toronto
Registration opens October 7 and closes November 3. AMAZING AND HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

Web Resources

Survive and Thrive go to etfo.ca and click on the button at the bottom of the page

This is an online conference for beginning and occasional teachers. It has been specifically designed to meet the needs of teachers whose learning curves are steep and whose needs in the classroom change frequently.

OT website www.etfo-ot.on.ca

Filled with teaching strategies, lesson plans and independent activities, this site will become one of your "go to's". Resources and ideas are available for all grades, divisions and subjects.

Special Education Gateway www.otffeo.on.ca Click on the Spec Ed hotlink

The collection of resources and strategies supports your teaching of students with special needs. You may also share a strategy with other teachers through this website.

Superteacherworksheets.com This is an excellent source of reading comprehension activities

Bitstrips.com This is a creative way to teach using comic strips. To register, use your UCDSB email and name one of your "regular" schools. This is a great student motivator.

UCARRIS - questions & answers from the in-basket

Many OT's are finding that UCARRIS is working well for them. Others have felt lost in the system and frustrated by lack of work. Understanding the callout is key to being able to work regularly. On October 12, Chad Brownlee & Patti McNamee will join us at the General Meeting to answer all your questions.

I am not getting called and am starting to get desperate. When I check the online jobs nothing is posted.

September has always been a low demand time for OT's. It is for this reason that many OT's schedule holidays in September. Low demand has meant that virtually all absences have been filled using each school's preferred list. As a result, jobs are neither going into the general callout nor posted on the web. Certain areas face an additional barrier due to the number of hires in relation to the number of jobs. Cornwall for instance has 195 OT's yet seldom more than 40 jobs on any given day. Carleton-Place/Almonte faces much the same situation.

It is more important than ever to visit your schools, to highlight your skills, and to request to be put on that school's preferred list. At this point most schools are adding OT's who are requesting to be on the preferred list. Make sure you know which schools have you on their preferred list.

You will only see online jobs posted to the schools you have chosen as your family of schools. If you want to view a wider cross-section, you will need to add additional families of schools.

I am a French teacher and am angry to see French jobs going to generalist teachers. / When a call comes in, I often don't see the grade or subject. This is a problem.

Some schools have not set up their preferred list to include specialist teachers. Many schools have not set up a preferred list at all so the calls go directly into the local rotation. The computer does not know that the job is a specialized job as it was not told.

The solution has been to direct principals to have their teachers record their name and assignment on the UCARRIS system (ex. Mme. Dewing, Francais or Ms. Dewing, Grade 4). Unfortunately it will take time for this to be consistent throughout the Board. In addition, principals have been directed to arrange their preferred list in an efficient manner that recognizes the types of skills required for their school.

I am hearing about a "preferred list". What is that? Is it discriminatory?

OT's in UCDSB have always supported a preferred list system. Every year members tell us that when they have taken the time and energy to get to know a particular school's culture, and to build skills that meet that school's needs, they want to be called back to that school over OT's who do not have that knowledge or particular skills. Each school has been asked to identify approximately 6 OT's who are an excellent fit for their school. More than 6 will slow down the system and may result in an unfilled classroom. Each of those 6 is called, in rotation, twice until one accepts the job. If none accepts the job then it goes to the callout procedure.

What is the process for callout?

1. Employee preferred callout: This is for specialized teachers and teachers who have built specific skills that fit the needs of the school (spec. ed.) Regular OT for an employee frequently away. Request is made to the system, voicing the teacher's name or by clicking "prearranged".
2. Location preferred callout: This is the 6 or so teachers who the administration knows to have the skills required and who can be counted upon to accept jobs readily.
3. OT preferred callout: This is the list of OT's who have chosen this school as part of a particular family of schools where they wish to work.
4. Regional preferred callout: Callout is extended to OT's who have indicated they are willing to teach at a family of schools near to the vacancy in callout

I received an early morning call but the system disconnected when I answered.

A few occasional teachers have reported this. Should this happen to you, contact Chad or Patti using the email or number on the next page. In some cases, this has been the result of a dropped call received on your cell phone..

Can I change my contact number on my profile?

You can however it will revert back to the original number within 24 hours. If you wish to change your contact permanently you must do so by contacting Chad.

Where are the LTO jobs? I don't see them online at all.

LTO positions continue to be posted on Apply to Education.

I was calling in to hear jobs. One came up that I wanted but when I accepted nothing happened. I checked with the school and another OT got it. What gives?

While the job is in callout, several OT's may be called, be calling in or may be viewing the job on the web — all at the same time. The first one to click “accept” and receive the job number is the one who has the job. It is for this reason that it is essential to write down each job number.

Can I teach 2 half days in this system?

If the times do not overlap, you may accept 2 half days.

Why was web-search job option changed from 5pm – 10pm to 7pm to 10pm?

This was a safety issue as well as a work-life balance issue. OT's now have time to drive home, run errands, fix dinner, eat and interact with their families before checking for online jobs. Parents of young children/caregivers are not disadvantaged.

Posting is supposed to stop at 10pm but I picked up a job posted online at 11:45 one night.

While no new posts are added online after 10pm, jobs do not disappear. If a job is unfilled, you can accept it anytime.

When I accept an on-line job, I can check for an attachment (lesson plan). When I pick up the job by phone, how come there is no instruction to check for an attachment?

This is true. While many teachers will attach the day's lesson plan to the job, there is no indication of this on phone lists. If you accept a job over the phone, you should check online at home, or when you arrive at school, to see if there was an attachment. Alternately, ask the office to check to see if an attachment was included.

Due to an incident, I have agreed not to accept jobs in one particular school. Will other principals see this when they want to book me? Can a principal put a “do not call” beside my name?

The answer is no to both questions. Principals do not have access to your profile and only Human Resources can create a “do not call”. The “do not call” is specific to a school so will not affect a whole family of schools. Only the administrator of the school involved will see “do not call”.

If I have accepted a job and UCARRIS wants to cancel it, can they just post the job as cancelled online? I'm afraid I might drive to a school only to be told the job was cancelled and I should have looked.

If a job is cancelled, UCCARRIS must speak directly with you. They may not email, leave a phone message or post online. Remember too that your collective agreement says jobs must be cancelled within 3 hours of the start time. This is to ensure you still have enough time to pick up another job for the day.

I saw a SMARTFIND app that I could buy for my phone. Would this be helpful?

Definitely not. This is only useful in those very few places where jobs are posted publically. UCDSB jobs are posted on our intranet and can only be accessed by employees UCDSB.

Issues related to UCARRIS should be directed to chad.brownlee@ucdsb.on.ca or to patti.mcnamee@ucdsb.on.ca You may also call 1-888-593-5556 ext. 1224

**ETFO - Upper Canada
Occasionals Local (UCOL)**

222 Muldoon road
RR5 Kemptville ON K0G 1J0
Courier- Central REC, Oxford Mills

613-291-3147
ddewing@cogeco.ca

Www.uppercanadaot.com for
information, professional learning,
lending library and contacts

UCOL represents the approximately 650 occasional teachers working for the Upper Canada District School Board and is part of the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO). ETFO represents 76,000 elementary public school teachers and is Canada's largest teacher union. With ETFO we seek to make collective bargaining, professional development, teacher support, leadership training and social justice a reality for all our members.



Fall General Meeting

Snacks available from 3:50 onward

Dinner following

Ger-Bo's Restaurant, Brockville Street, Smiths Falls

- 4:15 UCARRIS information and opportunity for questions
- 4:40 Introduction of the UCOL Executive
- 4:50 Presentation by the Professional Learning Chair
- 5:00 Presentation of the 2011 - 2012 budget
- Discussion and passing of the 2011 - 2012 budget
- Questions and Answers
- Dinner 5:30



Professionalism in all you do

Working as an OT is no easy feat. Most of us embrace a world where day to day, and week to week, our classrooms change and our colleagues are seen infrequently. There is a clear challenge to presenting yourself well, in sometimes trying circumstances. Here are some tips to being requested:

- Dress professionally and conservatively. Avoid wrinkles, faded clothing and keep gym wear for gym. Shoes should allow you to move quickly and easily and have no open toes.
- Check in at the office when you arrive. Submit your timesheet then and get the OT handbook. The generic handbook is posted on our website on the newsletter tab so make yourself familiar with it. Items in yellow will be customized by each school. Tips for success should be reviewed.
- Accept more jobs than you refuse. You are more likely to be requested if schools know you will accept.
- Once you accept a job, follow through. OT's who cancel jobs, don't show up for jobs or leave jobs early are not requested. Not showing up or leaving early can also be grounds for discipline. Everyone can experience an emergency or a sudden illness. If one arises, contact both UCARRIS and the school as soon as possible. Plan plenty of time to find parking and review tasks.
- Engage in professional learning. While books, articles and online seminars will give you information, attending professional learning with your colleagues will feed your soul as well. PL can cut through the loneliness of being an OT.
- Stay informed through the website & newsletter. Contact UCOL whenever you have questions

