

# ECSSA News

Edmonton Catholic Support Staff Association

December 2009



## *President's Message*

*It was just a day ago that I heard on the news that there are 200 homeless pregnant women living on the streets of Edmonton. How does this happen in this day and age.*

*Some women have no choice with what they are facing in life and the decisions they make will often place them in risky situations.*

*Streetworks*, is a downtown agency dedicated to helping Edmonton's homeless, and women who've struggled through pregnancy on the city streets. They believe in people's strengths rather than their weaknesses. If you treat people with dignity and respect they will rise to high expectations.

How amazing we have agencies like Streetworks in our City. Let us take the time to reflect on how we can fulfill someone's needs at this time and throughout the year. As members of ECSSA and Edmonton Catholic I challenge each of us to find a social justice project to be involved in to do God's work.

The quote from George F. McDougal says it beautifully

"Best of all, Christmas means a spirit of love, a time when the love of God and the love of our fellow men should prevail over all hatred and bitterness, a time when our thoughts and deeds and the spirit of our lives manifest the presence of God."

I wish every member a blessed Christmas and may the Lord carry you in the palm of his hand to guide you through this wondrous time of his birth.

Wilma

During our meeting with the Board of Trustees , ECSSA and the Trustees have agreed to launch a new campaign and we need your help.

We are looking for Good News stories. Stories of success . Stories of how support staff can and have benefitted the students they work with. Stories of how through your hard work and dedication you have enabled the student you work or worked with lead a better life.

The Trustee's sent out an invitation to our district's principals asking for candidates and one of these has been chosen to be in a video that the Trustees will use when they meet and try to convince the Tory Government that more funding for Special Needs students is necessary.

ECSSA is hoping to have more candidates come forward to be the subject of an article to be published in the Edmonton Examiner.

Please contact ECSSA if you feel you are or know of a strong influence in one of our children's lives.

## Catholic Women's League of Canada

Catholic education strives for the development of the human person in every aspect of their being, in order that they may develop spiritually, physically and socially. The Catholic Women's League of Canada (CWL) is a national organization rooted in gospel values calling its members to holiness through service to the people of God. One of the objects of the League is to uphold and defend Christian education and values in the modern world. Who better to help the CWL fulfil that role than those already involved in Catholic education?

The strength of the League is in its membership. Having a membership in the CWL affords any woman, at any age, to make a difference in her own way. Perhaps all you want to do is be a member who does not attend meetings. You can do that. You may be a member who wants to help write resolutions. You can do that. Perhaps you want to be a member who helps with the Catholic Girls League in her council. You can do that. The options and opportunities are limitless. Many women in the field of education are currently CWL members. Our goal is to invite all to be members. Please call Fran at 780-466-8880 or email at: [cwlabmk@cwlab.ca](mailto:cwlabmk@cwlab.ca) for information on how to become a CWL member today.

### Administrative Support Review

Last year it became very apparent that our administrative support members were being overwhelmed by some aspects of their job. With hope and faith we joined the district in a review of their roles and were please with the many recommendations that come out of this review.

With disappointment we have watched as only two of the recommendations were put into practice and the many other concerns have not been addressed. ECSSA on your behalf then asked for a group reclassification to move this group from a Level 5 to a Level 6 or higher.

Sadly the District has refused our request.

So now we ask that if you are a Administrative Support and feel that the complexities of your job, your role and the different knowledge required have changed over the many years since the last review., please take the time to contact Patricia McLaughlin, Compensation Specialist about having your position reclassified.

Please contact the ECSSA office if you have any question or need to have your views heard.

### General Meeting

Our General Meeting scheduled for November 30 was cancelled due to lack of quorum. Thank you to those that did make an effort to become involved in your union and please encourage your co-workers to come with you to the next meeting to be scheduled in the New Year.

## Caring Report

We extend our prayers and sympathies to Dorothy Purcell of J.J. Bowlen on the passing of her mother, Glenn Ann Patterson of Austin O'Brien on the loss of her mother-in-law, Janis Tanouye of Austin O'Brien on the passing of her grandfather, Diane Krauskopf of Learning Support Services on the loss of her mother-in-law, Pat Desilets of Katherine Therrien on the loss of her father, Brandi Providence of St. Richard on the passing of her brother-in-law, Marian Butz-Gauk of St. Gabriel School on the loss of her husband and Cherie Kiryluk of St. Augustine on the loss of her mother-in-law.

Flowers and wishes for a speedy recovery were sent to Diane McKee of St. Joseph, Sandra Green of St. Hilda and Brenda Eigeard of Archbishop O'Leary.

Please remember to notify ECSSA if someone at your site has experienced a loss or is ill. The caring forms can be found on our website [www.ecssa.ca](http://www.ecssa.ca) and then click on the " Newsletter and Caring Forms" link. Please ensure that all information requested on the form is filled out. Thank you.

## Substitutes / Cookie Contest

Once a month ECSSA meets with your employer to discuss common concerns and share information. One of the concerns raised again at the Round Table sessions was supervisors asking our members (SNTAs) not to book substitutes for their absences. This confuses ECSSA as in case of illness your site is not charged for the cost of the substitute.

The District agrees that this is wrong and can place undue burden on our coworkers and the employee. The District has asked that ECSSA provide an idea of how prevalent this practice is. So this month's cookie contest is: *Send your name, site, and whether or not your supervisor/principal asks that substitutes be booked for absences.* Winners will be picked by random draw. And this information (without using your name) will be compiled to address this issue.

## Support Staff Conference

Mayfield Inn

February 25, 2010

Please watch for details and registration information.

*There are only two ways to live your life. One is though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle.*

Albert Einstein.

## ECSSA Report

During November, your Board of Directors were busy on your behalf. They sent out resources from our library to members, attended meetings on: Health and Safety, the Board of Trustees and Liaison. Cards and wishes were sent out to our sick or bereaved members and the social committee is busy planning a site contact night for the new year.

The ECSSA office received many calls and emails about concerns over benefits, the Health Care Spending Account, returning to work, pensions and sadly some concerning conflicts with other staff members. Some of these issues were a lack of communication and were able to be resolved. Some needed to be addressed through the Harassment Policy as set out by the District. Thank you to those members who were brave and confronted this issues and a reminder to all that harassment or bullying is not acceptable within our district . Please do not hesitate to contact ECSSA immediately if you are faced with any harassment .

Your ECSSA remains committed to providing you support and service with your career with Edmonton Catholic Schools. Please contact us with any concerns or if you have great ideas on how we can provide better service to you.

**THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF ECSSA  
WISH YOU AND YOURS A VERY  
MERRY CHRISTMAS  
AND HOPE THAT YOU FIND TIME OVER THE BUSY  
HOLIDAYS TO RELAX AND ENJOY.**

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*Support Staff*

*The glue that holds it all together!!*