

# ECSSA News

Edmonton Catholic Support Staff Association

October 2009



Welcome to your ECSSA's Newsletter.

We are the proud Local 52-A of the Communication Energy and Paperworkers Union.

We are here for you, the support staff of Edmonton Catholic Schools.

## President's Letter

Wow what a September. All of the executive and board of directors were busy taking on new commitments letting some old ones go and doing a lot of learning.

For me it was a trip to Winnipeg to the Western National Conference to get up to speed on organizing. What a terrific opportunity it was to meet all the CEP brothers and sisters attending that conference. The team of teachers really knew their material and passed it onto us.

Think of why we organize. We organize to provide workers with a voice at work. What we want for ourselves we want for all. New members strengthen our union, they create enthusiasm and with increased union membership it increases our power and influence with the employer and community. Members can become involved at the local, regional and national level. Talk to your friends and neighbours about unions and the benefits of unionization.

I have the pleasure of sitting on the New Staff Orientation Committee where this year it was decided that ECSSA and the Custodial Group would be included in the orientation. ECSSA has been given the opportunity to share in a Breakout Session where Danny and I will provide a summary of what the Association can do for its members then take questions from the participants. The committee discussed the possibility of having a district booth next year.

I do look forward to fulfilling my duties throughout the year. Please email me at [naoh02@telus.net](mailto:naoh02@telus.net) with any concerns or questions you might have.

Keeping you informed

### **Wilma**

Wilma Ellenburgh

President.

Edmonton Catholic Support Staff Association

Please Join us for our General Meeting on November 30 at J.H. Picard 5:00

7055-99 St.

### Join the Board of Directors

Meetings at St. Joseph High School at 5:00

November 4

December 9

January 13

February 3

March 3

April 7

May 5

June 9

Please note that this is the correct list. Some of the dates in the FAST FACTS edition were incorrect. ECSSA would like to apologize and thank the very wise, observant and patient person who brought the error to our attention.

### F. A. Q.

**I would like to know if as support staff we are covered by Worker's Compensation if we volunteer to help with a school initiative outside our regular job description - as part of our community involvement?**

*Unfortunately the answer is that in the past WCB has denied claims for our members when participating in activities that WCB view as "volunteer". E.g. staff vs. student games, etc.*

**When do our new benefits come into effect?** Article 20.2 of our new collective agreement states "*Effective January 1, 2010, the following employer paid benefits will be amended as follows: Vision - \$350/24 months adult, and 12 months for child; Hearing aids - \$3,000/36 months (\$3,000 lifetime repair or replacement due to accidental damage; Physiotherapy/Acupuncture/Chiropractic - \$40/per visit, \$700 annual maximum per practitioner combined to an annual maximum of \$1,200 per participant per year; and, Dental to fee schedule as set by Alberta Blue Cross.*"

**I applied on a position in the bulletin, and was not successful. What should I do?** *Our school district encourages the "first contact" policy in any issue. You should first contact the person you interviewed with and discuss the issue with them. If you are given an answer that you are unsatisfied with or feel that the job was awarded unfairly, please contact ECSSA at 780 456 3277. ECSSA will investigate the job posting for you (without identifying you). Our new collective agreement states: 5.1 (j) A notice with the names of successful candidates from the previous notice of vacancy shall be posted on the District portal by the 5<sup>th</sup> working day of the next school month for at least three (3) working days."*

*Last year ECSSA was successful in grieving a job posting and the continuous person was awarded the job retroactively.*

**Why are the ECSSA meetings always at 5:00 p.m.?** *This time has been our traditional time for many years. The thought behind it is that it is late enough for most of members to finish their shift and it allows people to go to the meeting before going home for the evening. There is thought that a later meeting time (7:00) would not be as successful as people would go home and then not want to leave their family responsibilities and activities to come back for a meeting. Tell us your views on this question:*

**What is the best time for ECSSA meetings?** *Email your name, your site, and your answer to [ecssa@shaw.ca](mailto:ecssa@shaw.ca) for your chance to win Cookies! Winners will be picked by a random draw.*

### Round Table Meetings

Once again we will be holding informal information sharing sessions throughout the district. These very successful and well attended meetings were held last year and were a great opportunity to ask questions about our collective agreement and share your ideas for making ECSSA CEP 52-A a stronger voice for you.

St. James - October 19 / St. Dominic - October 20 / St. Mark - October 21

All meetings will be in the staffrooms and will begin at 5:00 p.m.

*Pick the location most convenient for you*

## The Administrative Support Training Program

Doug Aitkenhead, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resource Services asked ECSSA to share the following information with you,

“In the Winter of 2009, a committee of school based administrative support personnel representing all levels, a cross section of site based administrators, Central Office personnel reps from HR, EATS and Financial Services and members of the ECSSA executive met to review the roles and responsibilities and challenges of the “School Secretary” position. One of the strong recommendations from this committee was to establish a training program that would provide an opportunity for prospective school secretaries (now referred to as Administrative Support), to prepare for their new role. The District Budget Committee approved allocation of funds to allow for the placement of 8 new clerk positions in our single secretary smaller schools throughout the District and one full time trainer.

The Training Program is divided into 3 phases. Phase one – Ruth Hamaluk, the trainer, will work with the 8 clerks over the course of October, November and December, providing training sessions in all aspects of Administrative Support roles and duties and visiting the pilot school sites to work one on one. Phase 2 – after Christmas - Ruth will work with new school secretaries and the new clerks to review required reporting functions, new software applications, student demographic information programs etc. Phase 3 – Spring of 2010 - Ruth and representatives from EATS, HR and Financial Services will provide networking/PD opportunities for all Administrative Support personnel to discuss common issues and challenges in a collaborative team model setting.

As we move into year one of this pilot project we know that it will be an excellent opportunity for our Administrative Support personnel to experience a hands on approach learning new skills, fine tuning existing skills and keeping current in their roles.”

## Job Reclassification

If you are requesting a reclassification, it is important that you indicate the **“Requested Classification”** on page one of the job description. Also, it is important to outline the changes to the job in the section titled **“Changes Since Last Classification Review”**.

### Accessing Job Descriptions

To assist you in developing a job description, the following information is accessible on [myecsd](#):

- Sample Job Descriptions
- Job Specifications
- Revised Job Description Format
- Writing a Job Description

This information is accessible on [myecsd](#) by following these steps:

**Click on: [Departments & Services](#) → [Human Resource Services](#) → [Department Documents](#) → [Documents](#) → [Support Staff – Job Descriptions](#)**

This will take you to a list of sample job descriptions. These job descriptions represent the most common support work in the district, so it is likely you will find one that resembles your job. The sample job descriptions are protected on a “read only” basis; if you highlight the entire description and paste it on a blank document you are then able to revise the sample to reflect details of a specific job.

The basic groundwork in developing a job description has been done, so with some polishing and revising you should be able to easily create your own job description. Not to be confused with job descriptions, job specifications are examples of the full range of work being done within an organization. The information is general and outlines typical duties at a given classification level. Job descriptions provide a written statement that identifies key information about specific work within an organization. The sample job descriptions represent live jobs in the district and are used as benchmarks in classifying work. The sample job descriptions are also intended to be used as a template from which you could develop a specific job description within your school or department.

Please contact Patricia McLaughlin, HRS Specialist – Compensation, at 780 441-6120 or [mclaughlinp@ecsd.net](mailto:mclaughlinp@ecsd.net), if you have any questions about the Support Staff job description, job specification or classification review process.

## ECSSA Report

Another summer has passed...another school year has begun. Another year filled with challenges, learning opportunities, new friendships, new adventures. ECSSA will have another busy year as well. We will be looking forward to welcoming new members to our Board of Directors and Executive.

It was suggested in the past that the ECSSA Board of Directors, Executive and Employer Liaison Officer let all members know what is happening. We will include a report in the newsletters to update you.

Last month ECSSA dealt with on your behalf: many phone calls and emails regarding FTE and breaks. If you are still unsure; phone! In one case we found a member was working an extra 20 minutes a week for free.

There were many meetings with Human Resource personal about staffing and transfers. We filed a grievance on your behalf on the Alberta Average Weekly Earning and the new pay grid. We have been denied this grievance at Step 3 and have now indicated to the school board that we are moving to Step 4—Arbitration. This can be a long and complex procedure. There will be more details available at the General Meeting.

We met formally with the District through our monthly Liaison meetings where we discussed your concerns regarding workplace issues. At the September meeting asked that all Secretary/Admin. Support Level 5 positions be reclassified to a Level 6. We also asked that the Clerk 2 positions involved in the pilot project be reclassified to a level 3. We will keep you updated on this process. We continued our grievance surrounding the late FTE cuts last spring.

We attended the Trustee meetings, sent out resources from our library, answered questions about our Professional Development fund, sent wishes to our member suffering form illness or loss. We welcomed new members and visitors to our Board of Directors meetings and are looking forward to seeing you at one of the Round Table meetings and at the General Meeting.

Always remember we are here to serve our members. If you need help interpreting the collective agreement, if you have a work conflict issue, if you need any information or guidance, please contact us. Please remember that we depend on you as well; for negotiations input, to keep us apprised if a member is ill or bereaved, but most of all to attend our meetings. We usually have two general meetings each year which last no longer than an hour or so. This is our venue to share information with you and more importantly, to hear your concerns. We need you there when we are having elections for our Executive, voting on By-Law changes, or ratification of agreements. In order to conduct the business of serving our members we must have quorum for our general meetings. We look forward to another year of service to our members. If you have any items you would like to see in this newsletter or articles you may want to share with other support staff, please contact ECSSA. We would be pleased to include them in our newsletter.

We would also like to extend a big thank you to all our 12 month employees who toil through the summer months ensuring that our district continues to provide service to all our employees and students.

### **Edmonton Catholic Support Staff Association**

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*Support Staff*

*The glue that holds it all together!!*