

ECSSA News

Edmonton Catholic Support Staff Association

September 2006



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. Once again, we will be involved in negotiations, as our current collective agreement expires August 2007. We will be depending on our members to provide us with input as to what they would like to see changed and/or improved in our agreement. That will be an important item on our general meeting (October 4) agenda—see information below. 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. Hope you enjoy our “new look” for the ECSSA News. 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.

General Meeting

Wednesday, October 4

5:00

St. Joseph High School
Archives Room

This meeting is extremely important as we are holding elections for the positions of Vice-President and Treasurer. Please attend.

ECSSA General Meeting

Come and join us for this meeting. As a kick-off to the new school year we will be providing refreshments and “munchies”, door prizes and a display of some of the wonderful resources that are available to our members through our Professional Development and Wellness Library. Important items on the agenda include input for our next round of negotiations and elections of Vice-President and Treasurer. Take an hour for yourself on the way home from work that day. Relax with your colleagues, meet some old friends, explore our resources display and bring us your suggestions for negotiations. See you on October 4!!

September Pay

This month there will be an additional 3% on your pay, due to the negotiated increase in our last round of negotiations. There will also be two additional days pay for August 30th and 31st. September 1 was a day off without pay for ten month support staff, so one day will be deducted. You may have also worked additional hours for school opening, and submitted time sheets. This makes your September pay a bit complicated. It is very important that you check your pay advice and ensure that everything is correct. If you wish to know your new rate of pay with the additional 3% increase, you can visit our website and follow the link to the new collective agreement where you can find the new pay grid. ECSSA advises that you check your pay advice every month, particularly when there is a change in your pay rate or you have submitted time sheets for additional hours worked

Thursday Early Dismissal

Many of our members have regularly scheduled time off on Thursday afternoons when there is an early dismissal at their school. When there is a Statutory holiday week, many schools extend the Thursday to a full day. If Thursday afternoon is your usual time off and you are requested to work that afternoon, you are to be paid for those additional hours or you can take time-in-lieu. The choice is your decision whether you are paid or take time-in-lieu. In order to be paid for these additional hours your **MUST** submit time sheets. The district will cover the cost of the following dates, identified on the school calendar as district full days – no early dismissal (Sept. 6/7, Oct. 11/12, and April 11/12). Any other occurrences will be charged to the site. On August 28th, Brian Murphy, Director of Human Resource Services, sent an e-mail to all school principals clarifying this practice.



Caring Report

We extend our sympathies and prayers to Anna Podloski of St. Leo on the loss of her mother; Cindy Ouelette of St. Dominic on the passing of her grandmother; Jean Dowling of Mary Hanley on the loss of her mother and to Elizabeth Wong of Mother Theresa, who also lost her mother. Best wishes for a speedy recovery go out to Emily Brewus of St. Francis of Assisi and Ursula Jaworska of St. Cecilia.

Please remember to contact ECSSA whenever a support staff co-worker is ill or bereaved. The Caring Form is on our website in the newsletters folder at the bottom. We need all of the information filled out and then faxed to the contact information provided. We depend on our members to pass along this information.

*Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brethren
to dwell together in unity. It is like the precious
ointment upon the head.*

Psalms 133: 1-2



Education Funding Task Force

Over the summer months, ECSSA became involved in a task force seeking input from Albertans regarding the status of education funding in this province. This is an issue that should be of grave concern to ALL support staff in Alberta.

More and more, as school boards face the daunting task of maintaining balanced budgets, it is support services that have faced the most severe cuts. We are asking all our members to participate in this initiative and to encourage other family members, colleagues and friends to do the same. This is your opportunity to have your voice heard. It will only take a few minutes of your time to support this cause. Please take the time to review the information below and please, please fill out the on-line survey and encourage others to do the same.

Public Interest Alberta has launched a province-wide advocacy campaign calling upon the provincial government to deal with urgent issues in education and to “develop the full potential of all Alberta students.” Despite Alberta’s remarkable wealth, most Albertans can clearly see that our education system has not been given the resources or supports required to develop the full potential of all students. This is why it is vital that individuals across the province send a strong message to their government about what they know is missing or needing improvement in our classrooms and schools.

Please get involved with the [campaign](#) about public education by completing the Public Interest Alberta’s online provincial survey at:

www.schoolsurvey.ca.

The survey will remain online until October 11th and the results will be compiled and released in November.

Your help is also very much appreciated in sending along the request to complete the online survey. It is important that as many people as possible representing the broadest spectrum of Albertans complete the surveys.

Education is not just an issue for parents and teachers. It is of vital importance to all citizens.

Special Needs Teacher Assistants Workshops

Human Resource Services Staff Development is committed to providing further professional development opportunities to our SNTA staff. There will be many interesting opportunities coming up in the near future: Here are just a few examples:

- Behavior Management Techniques—Thursday, September 28 (1:15-4:30) at St. Alphonsus
- Information Overload—Thursday, October 26 (1:00-3:30) at St. Alphonsus
- A Sense of Belonging for Staff & Students (Teacher/Teacher Assistant Team Building). This workshop is two half days (either Wednesday, November 1 and Wednesday, January 17 OR Wednesday, November 8 and Wednesday, January 24 (1:15-4:30) at St. Alphonsus

For more comprehensive information on these workshops, please consult the Staff Development Calendar available on-line through the Human Resources Website.

United we stand...divided we fall.

ECSSA Meetings

Wednesday, August 23.....	Public Interest Alberta Task Force
Thursday, August 31	Public Interest Alberta Task Force
Tuesday, September 5	ECSSA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, September 6	ECSSA Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, September 13	Public Interest Alberta Launch of Education Funding Initiative
Wednesday, September 13	Liaison Meeting
Tuesday, September 19	Public Interest Alberta Task Force
Tuesday, September 19	ECSSA Executive Meeting
Saturday, September 30.....	CEP Fund Raising Barbeque for Spina Bifida
Monday, October 2	ECSSA Executive Meeting
Wednesday, October 4	ECSSA General Meeting and Elections
Wednesday, October 4	ECSSA Board of Directors Meeting
Sunday, October 15-Thursday, October 19	CEP Biennial Convention

There are no problems that we cannot solve together, and very few that we can solve by ourselves.

Lyndon Baines Johnson



Did You Know? Overtime

Any overtime hours that you work must be authorized, in writing, by the supervisor, prior to being worked. You must exceed 35 hours per week to be eligible for time and one half pay for overtime. If a part time employee works extra hours, they would be paid at straight time unless they exceed 35 hours. It is the **employee's** choice whether they are paid or take time-in-lieu for overtime worked. You do not have to take time-in-lieu if you would prefer to be paid. If you do take time-in-lieu it should also be at time and one half for hours worked over 35 per week. For further information on overtime please see Article 8 of the ECSSA Collective Agreement.

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Support Staff

The glue that holds it all together!!