

UNION UPDATE

APRIL 2017

UPDATES

SUPPORT STAFF PRO D

The SMS joint standing committee discussed support staff professional development at a recent meeting. Cathy Thornicroft was very supportive that professional development is not limited to tutorial staff but should occur for support staff as well. Support staff members are encouraged to apply for professional development opportunities with their direct supervisor or through Sherry Arlt in Human Resources. If a professional development request is denied for tutorial or support staff please notify the union.

PEA RECOGNITION CERTIFICATE

Congratulations to Natasha Carville for receiving a certificate of recognition by the PEA Association Executive for her contributions to the union. Natasha is currently on a well-deserved one year leave from her position as an Educational Assistant after working full-time and completing her Master's degree in Counselling Psychology at the University of Victoria. Colleagues, students and parents all look forward to welcoming Natasha back to SMS in the fall.

RETIREMENTS

Congratulations to Harry Duimering, Cecilia Penner, Rose Proudfoot, Lisa Richardson and Suzanne Ives on their retirement! Best wishes.



MEMBER INTERVIEW | ROSS ALDEN

How long have you been with SMS and what do you do?

I have been working at St. Margaret's for over 10 years. I am the Groundskeeper.

How long have you been involved with the PEA?

I took an interest in the PEA as soon as I started at SMS. I met many union activists who helped me understand what the school was like before they joined the PEA. I knew I had to get involved.

Tell me how you first got involved with the PEA?

I was approached by the Chair of our Chapter Executive and asked if I wanted to represent support staff. Since the rest of the Executive were teachers, I figured it was important for support staff to have a voice at the table.

What roles have you taken on with the PEA?

I have been a local rep almost since I started as well as various roles on the Chapter Executive. I was lucky enough to participate in three collective bargaining rounds which were real eye openers.

What has surprised you most about working with the PEA/SMS?

I have been pleasantly surprised by how much the union encourages members to participate in professional development and to get involved in so many ways on and off campus.

Why are you involved with the union?

When people have issues at work and don't know where to turn, the union is always there to help. I want to be a part of that.

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SICK DAY BALANCE

Changes were made to sick day entitlements during the last round of collective bargaining. Members should be aware of these changes and understand how their sick day balance may be impacted. Sick days are not given as a bank in September, but are earned over the year and may be carried over (max. 24 days) to the following year.

Sick day entitlement is one day per month worked (prorated for part-time employees). The school and the union recognized that this would put new employees at a disadvantage, so an agreement was drafted which allows for new hires to be advanced 5 days of sick leave in their first year of employment (pro-rated for part-time employees). It should also be noted that if an employee leaves SMS prior to having earned the advanced sick days they will have these days deducted from their final pay. If you have any questions regarding these changes please contact Rhiannon Bray.

* Effective July 1, 2019, regular full-time employees will earn 1.5 days per month worked (prorated for part-time employees)

ROSS ALDEN CONTINUED

What would you say to other members who were thinking about getting involved in the union?

If you care about your job and care about the people you work with, how could you not want to help make things better for everyone.

What do you think will change about SMS over the next five years?

I'm hoping to see the return of "dangerous" activities such as tetherball and playing on swing sets.

What might someone be surprised to know about you?

I save worms from drying out on sidewalks and I'd love to write a children's book.

DID YOU KNOW?

JOINT STANDING MEETINGS

The union and Cathy T. have regular joint standing meetings to address conditions causing concern or misunderstandings. The goal of these meeting is to help maintain good relations between parties before issues become adversarial.

If you have an issue that you would like brought forward to the next joint standing meeting, please let Labour Relations Officer Rhiannon Bray or Joint Standing Committee member Ross Alden.

6.03 REMOVAL OF DOCUMENTS

(a) The personnel file shall contain only valid and relevant material. Provided there is no further documentation of discipline, upon the request of an employee, material critical of the employee or related to the nature of the reprimand shall be removed from the files two years after the filing unless the documentation is related to performance evaluation, a criminal offence, or gross misconduct.

(b) In the event that an employee requests, in writing, that material be removed from the employee's personnel file and SMS declines such a request, then the request will become part of the personnel file. In the event that SMS does not agree to removal of specified material, the employee may file a grievance.

Have an idea for the SMS Union Update? Send it to your Labour Relations Officer Rhiannon Bray at rbray@pea.org