

Welcome Back! Do You Like Blueberries?

June 2010—"If I ran my business the way you people operate your schools, I wouldn't be in business very long!"

I stood before an auditorium filled with outraged teachers who were becoming angrier by the minute. My speech had entirely consumed their precious 90 minutes of inservice. Their initial icy glares had turned to restless agitation. You could cut the hostility with a knife. I represented a group of business people dedicated to improving public schools. I was an executive at an ice cream company that became famous in the middle 1980s when *People Magazine* chose our blueberry as the "Best Ice Cream in America." I was convinced of two things. First, public schools needed to change; they were archaic selecting and sorting mechanisms designed for the industrial age and out of step with the needs of our emerging "knowledge society". Second, educators were a major part of the problem: they resisted

change, hunkered down in their feathered nests, protected by tenure and shielded by a bureaucratic monopoly. They needed to look to business. We knew how to produce quality. Zero defects! TQM! Continuous improvement! In retrospect, the speech was perfectly balanced - equal parts ignorance and arrogance. As soon as I finished, a woman's hand shot up. She appeared polite, pleasant - she was, in fact, a razor-edged, veteran, high school English teacher who had been waiting to unload. She began quietly, "We are told, sir, that you manage a company that makes good ice cream." I smugly replied, "Best ice cream in America, Ma'am." "How nice," she said. "Is it rich and smooth?" "Sixteen percent butterfat," I crowed. "Premium ingredients?" she inquired. "Super-premium! Nothing but triple A." I was on a roll. I never saw the next line coming. "Mr. Vollmer," she said, leaning forward with a wicked eyebrow

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raised to the sky, "when you are standing on your receiving dock and you see an inferior shipment of blueberries arrive, what do you do?" In the silence of that room, I could hear the trap snap.... I was dead meat, but I wasn't going to lie. "I send them back."

"That's right!" she barked, "and we can never send back our blueberries. We take them big, small, rich, poor, gifted, exceptional, abused, frightened, confident, homeless, rude, and brilliant. We take them with ADHD,

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Check out OSTU.CA for ...

- Bargaining Survey
- TOC information
- Our Calendar of events
- Frequently Used Documents
- And much, much more.....

Bargaining Talk: a monthly update on bargaining

As mentioned in both our school visits and by Vice-President/Bargaining Chair, Leslea Pryde at summer pro-d, we will be running this segment of the newsletter each month to bring members up-to-date information about bargaining. As most, if not all members are aware by now, our current collective agreement expires at the end of this school year. OSTU and the BCTF have been actively preparing for the process of achieving a new agreement.

We would like to encourage members to get involved, attend meetings, and give input to both OSTU and the BCTF. At the school visits in May and June 2010 we outlined some of the processes that will be part of the next round of collective bargaining. At that time we announced that we would be building a survey for members to complete on-line. We have had a great response to the survey in the short time it has been 'up' but we would like all members to have a voice. Stay tuned for more bargaining information in next month's newsletter.

Go to www.ostu.ca and click on

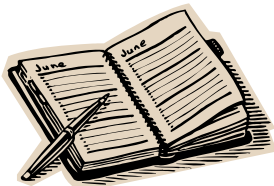
Bargaining Survey

[Click here to take survey](#)

Member input will be shared with the BCTF and used to develop our local bargaining objectives.

Blueberries— *continued from page 1*—junior rheumatoid arthritis, and English as their second language. We take them all! Every one! And that, Mr. Vollmer, is why it's not a business. It's school!" In an explosion, all 290 teachers, principals, bus drivers, aides, custodians and secretaries jumped to their feet and yelled, "Yeah! Blueberries! Blueberries!" And so began my long transformation. Since then, I have visited hundreds of schools. I have learned that a school is not a business. Schools are unable to control the quality of their raw material, they are dependent upon the vagaries of politics for a reliable revenue stream, and they are constantly mauled by a howling horde of disparate, competing customer groups that would send the best CEO screaming into the night. None of this negates the need for change. We must change what, when, and how we teach to give all children maximum opportunity to thrive in a post-industrial society. But educators cannot do this alone; these changes can occur only with the understanding, trust, permission and active support of the surrounding community. For the most important thing I have learned is that schools reflect the attitudes, beliefs and health of the communities they serve, and therefore, to improve public education means more than changing our schools, it means changing America.

Did You Know? Article E.28 Personnel Files —



**Get to know your
collective
agreement**

Each teacher has a confidential file with the District HR department. There are several important rights that all teachers should be aware of regarding their file.

- Upon request, any teacher can view their file.

- Only factual material and material relevant to your employment can be in your file.
- Upon written request, material critical of a teacher can be removed from your file pro-

vided certain basic conditions are met.

If you have questions regarding your file or access to it, please contact Kevin at OSTU.

Consultation 2010

The fact is Bill 33 and the entire Consultation Process has been nothing but a FAILURE for students and teachers. ***Having said that it is paramount that we continue to “ride this broken bicycle” until everyone involved sees the stupidity of it.*** Perhaps the slight progress and the colossal amount of time we’re spending on the 2006-present grievances will have enough impact to get the bicycle replaced! The arbitrator stated that the legislation was intentionally ambiguous. Now why would the government write legislation with holes and end-arounds? Perhaps so they could allow the over-crowding of classes and the warehousing of students with special needs. We have successfully resolved a small number of the grievances and 3 local members have received compensation in the form of time. If we do not participate then we are accepting the situation and have no opportunity for any further action.

This year:

1. Your principal will invite you to a meeting if your class exceeds the standards in the legislation
(no one ever call them limits!)
2. You should accept that invitation and request all relevant materials.
3. At the consultation meeting where you should be accompanied by your staff rep, inform the principal of your agreement or disagreement with the class composition and your reason(s) for your opinion.
4. COMPLETE the *Report to Local Office* and either give it to your staff rep or send it via inter-mail to the OSTU office.
5. Teachers who work with the exact same group of students (eg. The division teacher and the prep relief teacher or Job-share partners) may choose to meet together with the principal but can also request individual meetings.

***Please complete the Consultation Report form
and give it to your staff rep or return it
to the OSTU office as soon as possible.***

Class size

Grades K–3 Cannot exceed:

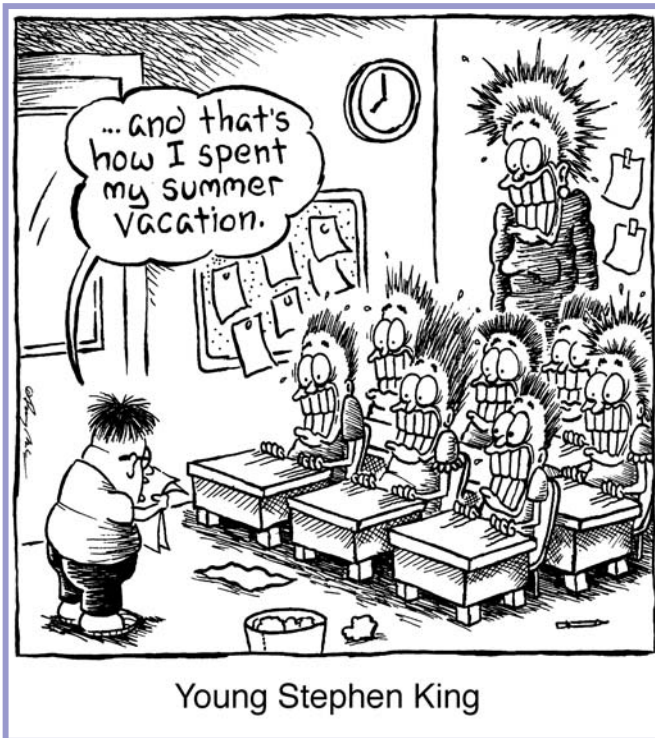
- a. K = 22
- b. 1–3 = 24

Grades 4–7 Must not exceed 30, unless:

- a. teacher **consents**; and
- b. superintendent's and principal's opinions are that more students are appropriate.

Grades 8–12 Must not exceed 30, unless:

- a. principal has **consulted** teacher; and
- b. the superintendent's and principal's opinions are that more students are appropriate.



Interesting & Entertaining Links:

The School Zone—a teacher asks the question.... “What has the Union ever done for me?” <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ChtuqS4RVck&feature=related>

The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us— An economist debunks the myth that money is a motivator. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u6XAPnuFjJc>

Upcoming Dates.....

Sept 14 -
OSTU Executive Meeting @ OSTU

Sept 21 -
RA Meeting @ Days Inn

Sept 22 -
TOC Committee Meeting @ OSTU

Oct 12 -
OSTU Executive Meeting @ OSTU

Oct 20 -
*General Meeting and Induction @ Lakeside (5pm—Bar Service, 6pm Dinner) **Please sign-up with your Staff Rep***

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TEACHERS' UNION

