

# LAST BUT NOT LEAST...

**S**CETF Colleagues, summer has arrived in Simcoe County and the finish line is in sight. The end to another challenging, yet extremely rewarding year is close at hand and I would like to take this opportunity to look back at the past year.

In a Collective Bargaining context, the 2009-10 school year represents the second year of our current four year Collective Agreement. It has traditionally been the second year of our Collective Agreements that are the most challenging in terms of enforcement and implementation. This is due in part to the fact that it is the first year that all the newly negotiated clauses come into effect, and there has often been insufficient time to properly train administrators in all the newly created or modified language. I would suggest the number of grievances filed this year would certainly support the second year theory. In Simcoe County, year two also marked the beginning of a new and hopefully more effective staffing process.

**Tentative Assignments:** In preparation for completing the online One for One Teacher Transfer form, all Teachers in Simcoe County who were not school or county redundant were given their tentative teaching assignments for the upcoming school year on or before March 12th. This early notification was a welcome and refreshing change for those Teachers who were kept in the dark and wondering until late into June or even into the summer what they were to be teaching next year.

**Teacher Initiated One for One Transfer:** This spring 235 Teachers in Simcoe County exercised a right that no other Teacher in the Province has – the right to trade their tentative teaching assignment with another Teacher. They simply completed the online transfer form, monitored the list for potential matches and with a click of a mouse were able to start the transfer process. While the overall number of applicants was low and not everyone was able to find a potential

match, I am pleased to say that fifteen one for one transfers did occur. That is 30 Teachers who were able to control where and what they will be teaching for the upcoming school year. I can only hope that in the coming years more teachers sign up and even more are able to move throughout the county.

**Spring Staffing Postings:** This Spring saw the start of a new seniority based staffing process in which principals had to select a successful candidate from among the (5) five most senior applicants for the position. While it is too early at the time of writing this article to determine the exact number of people who were able to move, I am comfortable in saying more people moved in the first couple of weeks under the new system than under the previous system.



**Mark Buff**  
Chief Negotiator

No system is perfect and the Spring Staffing Process like any new system will take some time and some tweaking. The fundamental problem is that for a process as complex as staffing, it is almost impossible to write Collective Agreement language for every possible situation or scenario. When you completely rewrite the system and change everything there are going to be some rough spots that need to be smoothed out, such as the timing of postings – the turnover rate from week to week was not as quick as anticipated and that is something we will look to address for next year.

If you have any questions or concerns or general comments about the Spring Staffing Process, I urge you to please contact me via email, so that I can compile a list of things we may look to change to improve the process. My email is [mark@scetf.org](mailto:mark@scetf.org). I can assure you one of the topics we will be bringing up in the next round of negotiations are the issues of boundary changes and their impact on teaching staffs.

As I said at the start, the end is in sight and I wish each and every one of you a safe, relaxing and rejuvenating summer vacation. I look forward to seeing you in the Fall, as we once again make our rounds of the schools.

## chalk talk

Vol. XII, No.3  
JUNE 2010

Editing/Layout  
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Photography  
SCETF  
Executive

Printing -  
SCETF Office



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is a  
publication of the

Simcoe County  
Elementary  
Teachers'  
Federation

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