

Bruce Grey OECTA ELEMENTARY January 2026

LOCAL UNIT EXECUTIVE

President- Kristen Fry

Vice President - Corinne Kalistchuk

Secretary - Karen Herchmer

Treasurer – Stacey Dahmer

Human Rights Councillor – Marie Tudor

Councillor – Stephanie Fortney

Councillor – Tammy Nadeau

Councillor -

Councillor- Teresa Dantas

Beginning Teacher Rep –

H&S Rep - Corinne Kalistchuk

OT Rep – Deb Meyer

Unit Contacts

Unit phone - 519 386 6575

Email-bgoecta@gmail.com

Through the courier- at the CEC to the attention of Kristen Fry

Unit website- www.brucegreyoecta.com

Provincial text alerts: sign up at Members only area catholicteachers.ca

UPCOMING RETIREMENT WORKSHOPS

Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan Information

- **Virtual-** Presented by OECTA's Simon Dallimore from Counselling and Member services
- how to apply for your pension, how much you expect to take home, how the pension works etc.

- Feb 24 2026 Virtual- 4pm – 7pm

REGISTRATION LINK COMING SOON

OTIP Walk Into Retirement With a Plan

-**Virtual-** on February 28 at 9 am and on March 4 at 4:30 pm- register to attend at www.otip.com/events

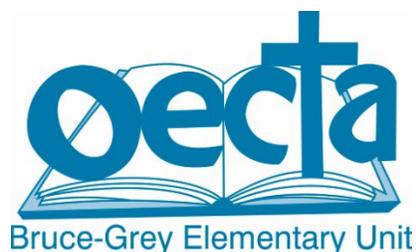
and

-**In person** Spring 2026 –more details soon! OTIP retirement planning workshop at 4:30 pm OWEN SOUND Best Western – learn about benefits and insurance needs in retirement.



COLLEGE OF TEACHERS FEE

The College of Teachers fee is \$200 for 2026. It will be deducted by the Board from your first and second pay in January in two installments of \$100. If you are on a leave of absence you will have to make arrangements to have the fee paid on your own.



OTIP TEACHING AWARDS 2026

The Ontario Teachers Insurance Plan (OTIP) and the Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF) are proud sponsors of the OTIP Teaching Awards. The deadline for receipt of nominations is March 31, 2026. Further information www.teachingawards.ca.

STARLING MINDS- MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCE

Starling Minds is a 24/7, confidential digital mental health program to help you better manage stress, addictions, anxiety, burnout and depression. It uses Cognitive Behavioral Therapy to help you cope.

[Starling - Building Your Mental Fitness](#)

Register using OECTAMEMBER or OECTAFAMILY

ACCESSING YOUR 2 SELF FUNDED PERSONAL DAYS

Our new Collective Agreement allows for 2 Self Funded Personal days (pro rated if you work part time). A memo outlining the process was sent to teachers on December 3 2024 with the heading: Joint Memo from OECTA and BGCSB. Each day that is requested requires Human Resources approval and **2 weeks notice**.

A Deduction will be equivalent to the cost of an 110% occasional teacher or about 307\$ -- the cost will be deducted off your pay.

You also still have access to your earned leave days and there are no changes to Earned Leave.

EAP ACCESS FOR TEACHERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

As part of our employee benefits all members and their family have access to the Employee Assistance Program. To access our provider go to:

PROVIDER: TELUS HEALTH

1-844-880-9142 or 1-844-671-3327

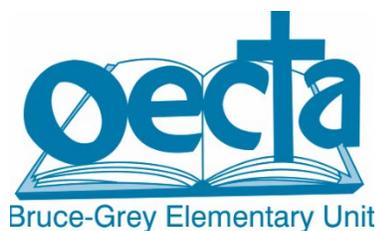
One.telushealth.com Username: EAP-bgcsb/ Password: EAP

OECTA YOUNG AUTHORS CONTEST

Submit your students' writing (English or French) and the application form to Karen Herchmer at Chepstow by courier or email, karen.herchmer@bgcsb.org to enter a draw for a \$10 gift certificate. The form is found on the last page of this newsletter. **Excellent student work is submitted to the Provincial Young Authors Awards for possible publication in the Young Authors book. Deadline is February 1, 2026.** [Young Authors Awards - Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association \(OECTA\)](#)

SAFETY AT WORK

If you see something that you think is unsafe for a worker in a school board site then you should immediately report it to the supervisor (in most cases, your principal). **Report the unsafe condition by speaking directly to the principal.** The principal should immediately respond to you and address your concern. If you do not get a response within a day (or immediately if the matter is urgent), then please send a follow up email and cc: Corinne Kalistchuk at Notre Dame. There is a worker concern form that can be used and it's found at the SHINE portal.



UPCOMING EVENTS:

Feb- April - OECTA Spring AQ courses are available for online sign up now

February is Canada's Black History Month. You can find resources at blackhistorycanada.ca

January 30 - PD day - Report Card Writing Day

February 16 - Family Day

February 17 - Unit Winter General meeting- 5pm-online-review and give dispositions on AGM Resolutions - RSVP to Kristen to receive the meeting link

February 28 - Deadline to apply for part time or Leave of Absence or Job share for Sept 2026

March 13 - March break- Provincial OECTA AGM

T4A FOR LIFE, ACCIDENTAL DEATH AND DISMEMBERMENT FROM OTIP

You will receive a T4A for the above benefit, since these are taxable benefits, from OTIP in late February. It must be reported on your taxes.

WORKPLACE VIOLENT INCIDENTS

Just a reminder that there are Workplace Violence forms on the SHINE PORTAL under Health and Safety Reporting. All incidents should be reported if you experience workplace violence as defined here: [Workplace Violence in School Boards - A Guide to the Law](#)

You may also need to fill in a Safe Schools form if a student was the cause of the violence you experienced. Call the unit office if you have questions.

PROLONGED ILLNESS? INJURY?

Our Collective Agreement states that if you expect to be off work for prolonged illness or injury that you may be asked to provide the Appendix B Medical Certificate (found in the middle of the Collective Agreement) from your doctor. A doctor's note is not sufficient. The board may ask for this form after 5 consecutive days of absence, so plan ahead with your doctor. (article 3.7.1) The board is "entitled to make reasonable follow up requests and seek reasonable periodic updates" using the same form, typically every 8 weeks.

YOUR SCHOOL LEVEL OECTA REP

Every school and worksite has an OECTA representative. This person volunteers their time. Here are a few of their responsibilities:

- ❖ Helping members deal with issues concerning their administrators, colleagues, students and parents
- ❖ Gathering and distributing information
- ❖ Answering questions about our Collective Agreement
- ❖ Bringing concerns to unit executive monthly meetings
- ❖ Documenting complaints and issues
- ❖ Acting as a Witness/Recorder if asked to attend a meeting with a Member with a principal or Human Resources personnel
- ❖ Bringing immediate concerns to the Unit President
- ❖ Assisting the Unit President with union business
- ❖ Attending monthly meetings and distributing the minutes after the meeting



INCLEMENT WEATHER and EMERGENCY DAYS

The board's Inclement Weather Policy and procedure is found in the SHINE portal. It is important to keep your safety at the forefront of any decision to travel. If you cannot travel safely to any worksite then let your principal know and enter your absence into ATE as an emergency day and you should receive a paid emergency day.

NOTE: you have 5 paid Emergency Days a year total for a Fire in your Home, an incident of Domestic Violence, Inclement Weather, or the Hospitalization of a family member. They must be approved by HR typically. Additional days may be granted but will likely be unpaid.

INDIGENOUS CULTURAL LEAVE DAYS

New this year- Indigenous Members of OECTA also have access to Indigenous Cultural Days, which come from the same bank of 5 paid days as the Emergency Leave above.

CHANGES IN YOUR FAMILY/ADDRESS

Birth, marriage, new address, or other family event? Let the Board know, OECTA Prov and OTIP Health Benefits Plan too. You have 31 days to do so for the benefit plan.

SEEKING PART TIME /JOB SHARE/ LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR SEPTEMBER 2026?

Our Collective Agreement states that you must make application for part time work (or a change to full time), a job share, or an unpaid leave of absence for SEPTEMBER 2026 **by Feb 28.**

It is very important that you consider your options **now** and make application on time. The Board does not have to consider any requests after the deadline. Check the SHINE portal for forms and contact

LOCAL UNIT NEWSLETTER DRAW

CONGRATS TO: Jen Critchell, Crystal Ridley and Stephanie McLean– they have won A 100\$ Canadian Tire Gift Certificate for December!

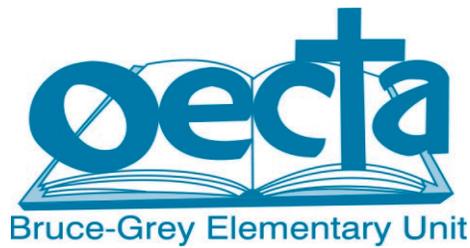
Want to win a \$100 Gift Card? Look in the newsletter for the answer to the question below. Submit your answer to enter into a Draw at oectadrawprize@gmail.com Deadline is Jan 31 2026.



Who must approve a request for a Self Funded Personal Day under the new Collective Agreement? _____

My Name: _____ My School/Site: _____

Submit by January 31 2025 to oectadrawprize@gmail.com to win!



Bruce Grey Elementary Unit

WINTER GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday February 17 2026

**5:00 PM at Online via Webex
RSVP to receive the meeting link**

Agenda: Minutes of Fall General Meeting
Provincial AGM -resolutions
President's Report to Members

**All Elementary perm and OT members are welcome- RSVP to Kristen
at bgoecta@gmail.com by February 4th 2026 to receive the meeting link.**



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