

Bruce Grey OECTA ELEMENTARY February 2026

LOCAL UNIT EXECUTIVE

President-Kristen Fry

Vice President - Corinne Kalistchuk

Secretary - Karen Herchmer

Treasurer -Stacey Dahmer

Human Rights Councillor – Marie Tudor

Councillor –

Councillor – Steph Fortney

Councillor – Tammy Nadeau

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

- Presented by OECTA Counselling and Member services
- Learn about our pension plan and how to apply for it

- Feb 24 at 4:30pm – Virtual- Register NOW at Cvent Registration Link: <https://cvent.me/mRWKrm>

OTIP Walk Into Retirement With a Plan

- April 13 at 4:30 at Best Western Owen Sound
- info about benefit/drugs/dental plans after retirement

REGISTER: otip.my.salesforce-sites.com/wrpen

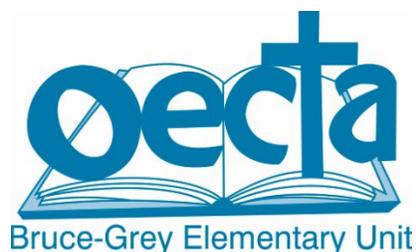
CHECK OUT THIS WEBSITE RELATED TO PENSION MATTERS: <http://mypensionhub.com/>

PROVINCIAL OECTA AGM

The 3 day Provincial AGM is coming during March Break 2026. We have 5 delegates attending: Karen Herchmer, Corinne Kalistchuk, Stacey Dahmer, Deb Meyer, Marie Tudor and Kristen Fry. We have 4 voting credentials so one member will serve as an Alternate/Observer. Also attending is Erin Van Moorsel in their role as a Councillor of OECTA's Provincial Executive.

The catholicteachers.ca webpage has all the resolutions available for you. If you have questions/thoughts about any of the resolutions you can reach out to any of the delegates.

At the Feb 17 Local Unit General Meeting we will debate the most important resolutions and we will take the dispositions of our membership. In this way, your voting delegates will understand the issues that you believe are the most pressing to address at the AGM.



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.

<https://info.starlingminds.com/oecta> Register using OECTAMEMBER or OECTAFAMILY

BANKING OF MISSED PREP TIMES ****NEW 2025**!**

Some items are no longer eligible for banking if you missed your regular prep time :

- Activities for which the teacher volunteered to participate (extracurriculars, field trips, optional PD that you volunteered for)
- Days when you are not scheduled to be in class (PA days, PD and training where an OT has been hired, school closures)

REMINDER: You must submit missed prep times **in the week they occur**.

Each month your principal creates a spreadsheet of the banked preps generated. The spreadsheet "starts" a 5 month deadline to repay you the lost prep time. If you are not repaid the time then you will eligible for a payout in Feb or July according to the formula in the 2022-2026 Collective Agreement.

EFAP ACCESS FOR TEACHERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

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

NEW PROVIDER: TELUS HEALTH

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

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

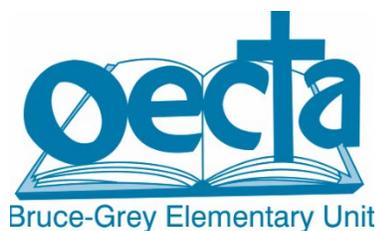
The provider of this program was recently switched to **Telus Health One**.

TPA FOR NTIP TEACHERS

NTIP teachers should endeavour to finish their NTIP evaluations by May. If you receive a "Improvement needed" or "unsatisfactory" on the evaluation, please notify Kristen right away. Many new hires to the board also have paperwork to submit to Stacy Hogg at HR before they can be deemed to be permanent. This might be a pastoral reference, a tax form, your latest QECO evaluation or your College of Teachers information. Call HR if you aren't sure what you need to do.

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 you request requires Human Resources to approve the day. A Deduction will be equivalent to the cost of an 110% occasional teacher or about 313\$ -- the cost will be deducted off your pay.



UPCOMING EVENTS:

February 24- Pension workshop virtual see above to register

February 27- Human Rights Social Justice committee meeting OPSEU hall Owen Sound- register at the link provided in an email on Feb 10

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

March 14 - March break- Provincial OECTA AGM

Mid April - If you are looking to transfer between Elementary schools begin to look for postings for transfers which are done based on vacant positions and on the qualifications and seniority of the applicants. Following the Elementary transfer rounds there will be an opportunity to transfer to Secondary.

T4A Tax form 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 income taxes. This taxable benefit used to be reported on your T4 from the Board and has now been moved from the board to OTIP.

T4 Tax form FOR INCOME TAX

Locate and download the T4 in late February by going to the Employee Portal on the BGCSDB SHINE.

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 a form. The form is called **Appendix B Medical Certificate (found in the middle of the Collective Agreement)** and must come 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.

You are entitled to 11 sick days at full pay, for full time permanent workers. After that you switch to STLDP (Short Term Leave and Disability Plan), with the support of your doctor and completion of the Appendix B Medical Certificate. You will have an additional 120 sick days at either 90% or 100% pay, if you are a permanent teacher.

Permanent teachers have access to a top up bank to be used to top up any sick days that are paid at 90%. (article 3.6). This means that some sick days may be 100% paid, if you are able to use top up.

OTIP: Does Auto Insurance cover belongings damaged in an accident?

If you get into an accident, you probably think first about making a claim, repairing your vehicle, or potential medical bills. But there's something else that often gets overlooked: the fate of your personal belongings inside your vehicle. Items like your phone, laptop, or sports equipment can get damaged or destroyed in an accident. So, does your auto insurance cover these items, or will you have to pay for them yourself?

Read more at www.otip.com/article200.



Get a car, home or leisure insurance quote in **February or March** for your chance to win **\$1,000 cash!** PLUS: receive a \$20 gift card of your choice when you **get a quote!**

***REMINDER* OTPP Pension Benefit for Reduced Workload Due to Childcare or Disability**

As of September 1, 2022, members will be able to purchase credited pension service for periods of reduced work due to disability or childcare responsibilities. The OTF and the Government of Ontario amended the terms of the OTPP to allow for this benefit.

Members be able to access this benefit going forward, and the amendment will allow members to purchase credit for periods of reduced workload due to disability and/or childcare responsibilities back to September 1, 2017, as long as the end date of their leave fell on or after September 1, 2017.

For each of these benefits, members must meet specific criteria. **Members are well advised to make direct contact with OTPP** to ensure that they meet all conditions necessary to complete the purchase of credit. There may be additional requirements depending on the member's specific circumstances.

Criteria for Reduced Workload due to Disability

1. The member was unable to perform their employment duties in which they were engaged immediately prior to becoming disabled,
2. The member is working part-time for their employer during the period under an employer-approved accommodation plan,
3. The member must provide a report signed by the employer detailing the accommodation plan and part-time leave, *and*
4. The member must provide a report to the OTPP regarding their medical condition, signed by a licensed Ontario doctor or nurse practitioner.
5. **N.B.** the period of reduced work ends as soon as the member changes employers.

Criteria for Reduced Workload due to Childcare Responsibilities

1. The member's hours of work for their employer are reduced during the period,
2. The member must have worked for the employer who approved the reduced hours for at least three months prior to the start date of the reduced workload, *and*
3. It is the OTPP's opinion that the employer has approved the reduction in work hours for reasons related to the member's childcare responsibilities.
4. **N.B.** The period of reduced work ends when any one of these changes occur: (a) change of employer; (b) change of employment position; or (c) work hours are reduced permanently as opposed to temporarily.

Purchasing Credit

Members will fall into one of two categories when applying for this benefit: (a) members whose reduced workload ended between the dates of September 1, 2017, and August 31, 2022, inclusive; (b) members who have started a reduced workload post-September 1, 2022.

For members whose reduced workload ended between September 1, 2017, and August 31, 2022, they must make payment for credited service by September 1, 2023, or by the five-year deadline, whichever is later. However, all payments must be made to OTPP prior to the date of the member's first pension payment.

For members who have started a reduced workload post-September 1, 2022, they have five years from the end of the month of when their reduced workload period ends. However, all payments must be made to OTPP prior to the date of the member's first pension payment.

Members can find more information about the new benefit [here](#).

Members can access the application for reduced workload [here](#).

Introducing

Starling Minds Mental Fitness

Personalized. Proactive. Confidential. Free.

Starling Minds is a digital program to help you better manage stress, anxiety, burnout, depression, and substance use. Take simple steps to help you lead a healthier, happier life.



How to get started

- ✓ Go to otipraeo.starlingminds.com
- ✓ Enter your email address and create a password
- ✓ Enter your profile information
- ✓ Select a codename
- ✓ Get started!

How family can get started

- ✓ Family members 16+ years can register
- ✓ Go to otipraeo.starlingminds.com
- ✓ Select "Family Member" as their occupation and fill in the rest of the profile information

Privacy and Security

Our program is highly secure. To further safeguard your personal information, an anonymous codename will be selected by you for program use. Only those persons that directly provide services or member support have access to any of your personal information, and may only access that information in order to support you.



Ready to register?

Scan or go to
otipraeo.starlingminds.com



NEWSLETTER 100\$ GIFT CARD DRAW

CONGRATS TO: Jessica Belisle, Laura Uhrig, Abby Hahn- they have won a 100\$ Canadian Tire Gift Certificate for January!

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 3 monthly prizes available. Deadline is February 28th.



If a teacher is experiencing a prolonged illness or injury of more than 5 days in a row what form might they be asked to provide to the Board to support their absence?

My Name: _____ My School: _____

Send your name, school, answer to oectadrawprize@gmail.com by Feb 28

INCLEMENT WEATHER

The board's Inclement Weather Policy and procedure is found in the Board Policy Manual and the SHINE portal. It is important to keep your safety at the forefront of any decision to travel. If you cannot travel safely let your principal know and you should receive a paid emergency day (you have 5/year).

CHANGES IN YOUR FAMILY/ADDRESS

Birth, marriage, new address, or other family event? Let the Board know, 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 or STARTING A DEFERRED SALARY PLAN FOR SEPTEMBER 2026?

Our Collective Agreement states that you must make application for

- part time work or a request to move to full time from part time,
- a job share,
- a deferred salary (5/4) plan,
- an unpaid leave of absence

for SEPTEMBER 2026 by contacting HR and completing the paperwork 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 Stacy Hogg.