Bruce Grey OECTA ELEMENTARY
October 2026

LOCAL UNIT EXECUTIVE

President- Kristen Fry

Vice President - Corinne Kalistchuk

Secretary - Karen Herchmer

Treasurer – Stacey Dahmer

Councillor – Tammy Nadeau

Councillor – Lisa DesRoches

Councillor - Steph Fortney

Councillor-

Human Rights Councillor – Marie Tudor

Beginning Teacher Rep – Elisha DiGiovanni

OT Rep - Deb Meyer

H&S Rep - Corinne Kalistchuk

HOW TO CONTACT OECTA

LOCAL UNIT OFFICE

Unit phone - 519 386 6575

Email-bgoecta@gmail.com

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

Unit website- www.brucegreyoecta.com

PROVINCIAL OFFICE:

65 St Claire Ave E, Toronto ON

Phone: 1-800-268-7230

Webpage: catholicteachers.ca

UPCOMING EVENTS

OCTOBER 27 - FALL GENERAL MEETING- 5PM CARGILL CHURCH BASEMENT

OCTOBER 24 – DAY OF ACTION RALLY- TORONTO OR LONDON- 1PM

OCTOBER 31 - DEADLINE TO SUBMIT FOR AQ SCHOLARSHIP

NOVEMBER 12,13—STRIKE VOTE- DIGITAL BALLOT SENT TO PERSONAL EMAIL ADDRESS

STARLING MINDS: MANAGE MENTAL HEALTH

Why do so many of us avoid our mental health, even when we need support?

Starling Minds has created an accessible digital program to help you manage stress, anxiety, burnout and depression - no matter what your day looks like.
Unsure of what your stress or feelings mean? Explore how to manage and identify your moods with StarlingMinds.

Struggling to track progress? Let Starling Minds be your personal, digital journal to track your journey.

Starling Minds can provide you with unique training sessions and tools to improve your mental fitness, no matter where you are or how your feelings change.

Ready to get started? Here are your access codes:

OTIP members/customers: **member**

Eligible family members: **familymember**



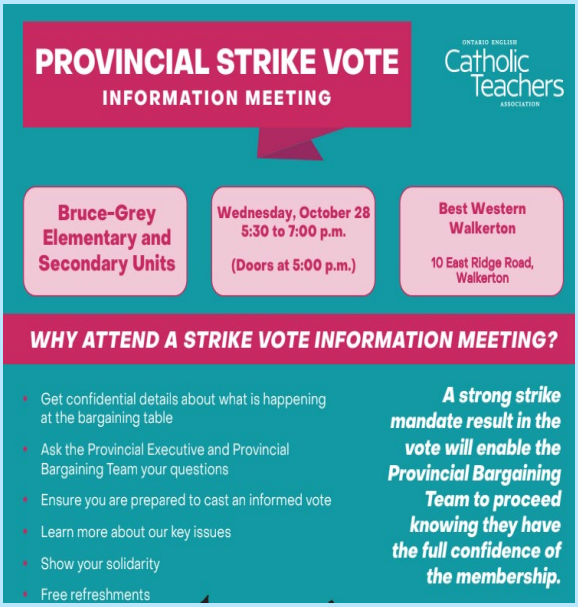
AQ SCHOLARSHIP

The unit AQ scholarship will be offered again this year. To apply you must submit the request form by **October 31st** to Kristen Fry (president) by email. The criteria for applying are on the form. The form is available here, on the Unit website or from your school rep. $4000 has been allotted and the money will be divided equally among the applicants to a max of $400. Proof of successful completion of the AQ must be submitted by June 1, 2027. You are limited to one application per year. You should apply even if you aren't sure your plans for the spring of 2027. Courses you took this last summer are eligible.

INDIVIDUAL PD FUND

Every year the Unit offers members access to funds for Individual PD. Members may access $100 to offset the costs of attending a workshop or conference. If more than one member from the same school applies for the same workshop or conference the members must share the $100. To receive the money members must fill out the Individual PD Request form and submit it by emailed PDF or by courier to the President. After attending the conference or workshop the member must complete a Workshop/Conference Evaluation form and submit it with receipts to the Unit President to receive the money.





Strike vote info session Oct 28- 5:00 doors open, Walkerton Best Western

YOUNG AUTHORS

Each year OECTA sponsors an award that recognizes the excellent writing of the students in our schools, in French and English. Once again, we will be asking you to collect excellent writing from your students and submit it to the Young Authors contest. Submissions are welcome from all grade levels and categories. Take a moment and submit the writing of one of your students! Winners at the Provincial level have their writing published in the Young Authors Book. This year a draw will be **held each month for a 25$ gift certificate for teachers who submit writing to Karen Herchmer at Chepstow School. At the end of the year a $100 Gift Card draw will be held.**

Pop the writing in the courier or email the writing to karen.herchmer@bgcdsb.org with the student's name, school, age, grade.

https://www.catholicteachers.ca/For-Your-Benefit/Awards/Young-Authors-Awards

SEND US YOUR STUDENTS' GREAT WRITING EACH MONTH…and win a prize!

Bruce-Grey Elementary Unit

AQ SCHOLARSHIP BRUCE -GREY

AQ Course Scholarship Criteria:

i) in each fiscal year $4000 (four thousand dollars) will be allotted for AQ Course Scholarships.

ii) applications for an AQ Scholarship shall be submitted by October 31st of the fiscal year to the Unit President by PDF email at bgoecta@gmail.com or in the courier to the CEC cc: Kristen Fry

iii) the scholarship money will be divided among the eligible applicants to a maximum of $400 (four hundred dollars).

iv) proof of successful completion of an AQ course must be submitted by June 1st of the fiscal year.

v) members shall be limited to one application per fiscal year.

Application Date _____

Name _____

School _____

Course Name _____

Course Location (if known)_____

Course Dates(if known) _____





COMMUNICATIONS

Besides this newsletter, there are several ways used to make sure you are informed.

1) Email (gmail)

Communication should occur through personal home email. Please ensure I have your home email by dropping me a line at bgoecta@gmail.com

2) Twitter and Instagram

Go to @OECTA_bg_Elem or OECTA BG Elementary on twitter

Instagram – bgoecta or OECTA Bruce Grey-Catholic teachers

3) Phone

Kristen carries a Unit cellphone at all times. (519) 386-6575. You may contact the Vice President of our Unit, Corinne Kalistchuk, if you are having difficulty contacting me, by calling her at Notre Dame school or using email. In case of emergency phone OECTA Provincial. 1-800-268-7230 and ask for the Duty officer.

4) Local website- HOME | oecta-brucegrey

5) Provincial website

Home - Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA) is the Provincial OECTA webpage. To sign up for Prov emails send your personal email address to membership@catholicteachers.ca or OECTA Email Collector

LOOKING FOR BOARD FORMS and PAYSTUBS?

The BGCDSB SHINE site has the Board level forms that teachers use the most.

Looking for Safe Schools or Violent Incidence forms?
Scroll down to Health and Safety on the SHINE site.

To access the Employee Centre where your paystub is accessible you need to be using the Board's wifi network. You can use SHINE or this link:
Employee Centre
Login in using Firstname.Lastname and your email password.

POLICE, CAS or COLLEGE OF TEACHERS

If you face an allegation of improper conduct, regardless of the situation, it is imperative that you respond appropriately:

1. **CONTACT OECTA** immediately (contact me or your school rep)
2. **DON'T** provide any information or make any statements without first consulting with OECTA staff or legal council
3. The only statement you should make: **"I am willing to cooperate but I am unable to comment until I contact OECTA or my legal representation."** (See page 2 of your planner for legal assistance advice)

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

To access the OECTA pamphlet, Electronic Communications, go to the OECTA website at Catholicteachers.ca and log in to the portal. This pamphlet contains timely information about the appropriate use of electronic communications. Please read this brochure and direct any questions you have to the Unit President directly.

You are a teacher 24/7 and your use of social media and electronic communications can cause you to be disciplined by your employer.

OTF Connects - has hundreds of archived webinars and adds more each month. https://www.otffeo.on.ca/en/learning/otf-connects/

Survive/Thrive for New Teachers-a comprehensive webpage with tons of information for teachers who are new to the profession or their associate teachers. http://survivethrive.on.ca/

Teachers' Gateway to Special Education – www.teachspeced.ca/home- resources for teaching students with special needs in Ontario's elementary and secondary schools.

OECTA's PD for TEACHERS

AQ courses – Registration is opening SOON for Courses starting in Feb and ending April 2025. Register today

Mini Courses, Literacy Seminars and Web Experiences, Learning Institutes -available all year long.

Curriculum- http://www.catholicteachers.ca/For-Your-Classroom/Curriculum-Resources

Register online at catholicteachers.ca and log in to the Member's Portal

OECTA RESOURCES

Pregnancy and Parental Leave- A guide-catholicteachers.ca/OECTA/media/pdfs/Communications/OECTA Publications/2020/GRPA_25_001_PregnancyBooklet2025.pdf

Teaching in the 21 st Century- Teaching in the 21st Century - Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA)



DISCONNECTING FROM WORK

Please be mindful when sending any after-hours communications to colleagues which pertain to work-related matters. The Board has a policy on Disconnecting From Work. It is found on SHINE in the Policies and is called **"4-415-POL BOARD POLICY Disconnecting from Work".** So, when crafting any work-related communications to your colleagues, be certain to make use of the ***"Schedule Send"*** option. If you are continually receiving after-hours communications from a colleague, kindly remind them of this feature.

"Disconnecting from work means not engaging in work-related communications, including emails, telephone call, video calls or the sending or reviewing of other messages, so as to be free from the performance of work."

ANNUAL LEARNING PLANS

Members are reminded that they must maintain an Annual Learning Plan in accordance with Article 6.3.1 of the Central Terms of the collective agreement.

*"The Annual Learning Plan (ALP) is a component of the performance appraisal framework for experienced teachers. Experienced teachers must complete/update their ALP in accordance with Ministry and regulatory requirements. The ALP is **teacher-authored and directed** and is developed in a consultative and collaborative manner with the principal, or designate."*



LOCAL UNIT NEWSLETTER DRAW



Want to win a $100 Cdn Tire 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 prizes monthly. DUE DATE IS OCTOBER 31

Name one event or resource that OECTA Provincial is providing to members to learn more about Artificial Intelligence, in the coming months.

_____

My Name: _____ My School: _____

Send your name, school and answer to oectadrawprize@gmail.com **by OCT 31**

HOW MANY SICK DAYS DO WE HAVE?

You are entitled to 11 days of sick leave for the school year. These days will be paid at 100% of salary. You are also entitled to 120 days of short-term disability leave paid at 90%.

To access a long sick leave (more than 5 days) you will need to consult with your doctor and have them complete Appendix B Medical Form which is found in the middle of our Collective agreement. Go to bgcdsb.org and then FOR STAFF and then COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS.

Longer absences are paid at 90%, HOWEVER you are also eligible to carry over any unused sick days from the previous school year, for the purpose of topping up to 100% any days paid at 90% salary. You will be able to see how many unused days you have by looking at your Days Absent Form, sent to you by the Board very soon.

Any leave of absence in our CA that utilizes deductions for sick leave, for reasons other than illness, shall be granted without loss of salary or deduction from sick leave, **to a maximum of 5 days. For us, this includes Emergency Leave (article 13.04) and snow days.**





OECTA's NEW ARTICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) HUB



OECTA has launched a **new AI Resource Hub** to support members as artificial intelligence continues to affect our classrooms.

What Is Now Available- EVENTS, RESOURCES, ADVISORIES, TRACKERS, PODCASTS

- **OECTA's AI Advisory** – the Association's official guidance on the use and misuse of AI in Catholic education, examined through a Catholic lens.
- **Live PD Webinar Series** – "What Teachers Need to Know About Artificial Intelligence" offered on 29 dates between October 2026 and May 2027, 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m., via WebEx, delivered by OECTA's AI Network of Presenters. Free. members select the date that works for them.
- **Upcoming Book Information** – *Artificial Education: What Teachers Need to Know About AI*, OECTA's first book, releasing late fall 2026. Members may sign up now to be notified upon release.
- **School Board AI Policy Tracker** – a running summary of AI policy status across all 29 English Catholic school boards.

PROFESSIONAL JUDGEMENT AND DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENTS

A reminder that our collective agreement states that the teacher decides what tool to use from the Board approved list and the timing of its use. You use Professional judgement to decide which students you will use the diagnostic tool with.
You must use some diagnostic assessment tools. Be ready to speak to your principal at any time about what diagnostics you are using, with which children and why.

Acadience is a screener and is required by the government for Grade K-2. All other diagnostics and their data are up to your Professional Judgement.

OTIP RAEO

You inspire us to serve you better, at work, on the road and at home.



You dedicate your life to helping others, and we dedicate ours to protecting you with complete insurance solutions built for the education community.

Get a quote to receive a $20 gift card!

Why OTIP?

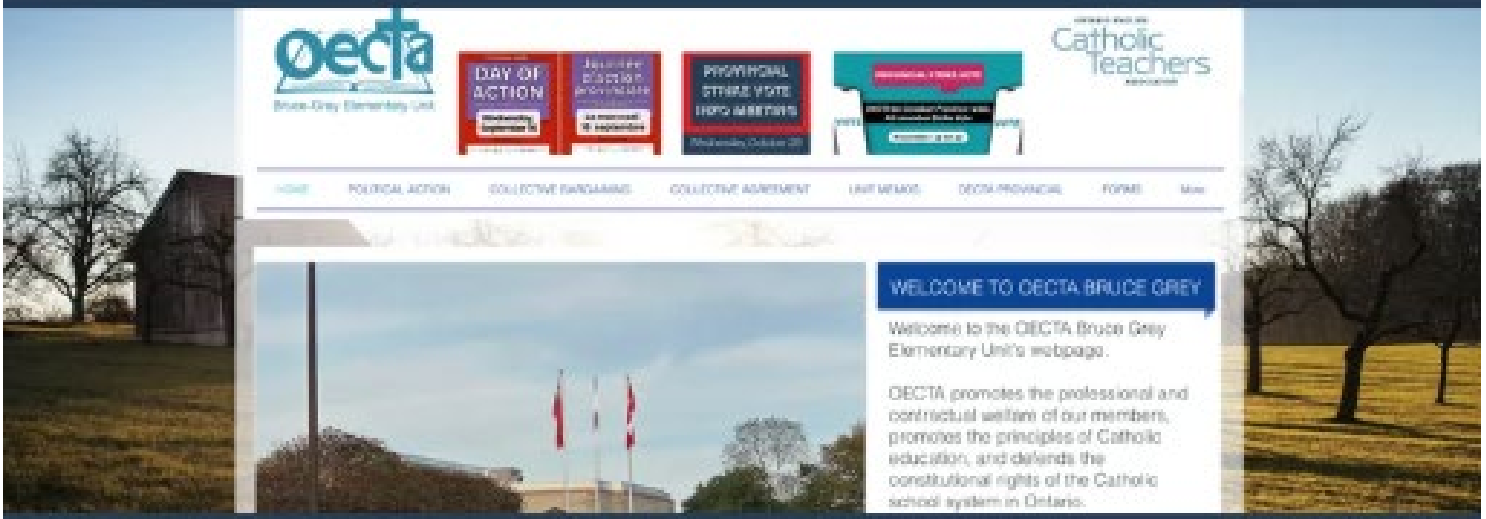
- OTIP has been an advocate for the education community for nearly 50 years
- As a not-for-profit broker, our revenue is invested back into the community through a variety of support programs and services
- Save up to 25% on car insurance, and up to 50% on your home insurance when you bundle your home and auto with OTIP*
- Comprehensive and affordable coverage for motorcycles, boats, RVs, ATVs and more
- Access to our in-house claims experts, Curo Claims, available 24/7, 365

Did you know?

We have a local members' website!



GO TO: www.catholicteachers.ca and log in to the member's portal, then click on Unit Portal



Visit regularly to keep up to date on important issues!

INFORMATION ABOUT THE FORMS FOR SAFE SCHOOLS AND VIOLENT INCIDENCES

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE IN SCHOOL BOARDS: A GUIDE TO THE LAW. Workplace violence in school boards: A guide to the law | ontario.ca and https://files.ontario.ca/workplace_violence_in_school_boards_roadmap_en.pdf

ANY ONE INCIDENT COULD RESULT IN SEVERAL FORMS NEEDING TO BE COMPLETED!

WHAT IS THE DEFINITION OF WORKPLACE VIOLENCE? (from the document above)

a. the exercise of physical force by a person against a worker, in a workplace, that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker;
b. an attempt to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker;
c. a statement or behaviour that it is reasonable for a worker to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against the worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker.
d. Workplace violence against a worker may be a one-time occurrence or involve repeated behaviours over time such as hitting, kicking, and biting a worker that causes or could cause physical injury. Workplace violence may also include an attempt to exercise physical force against a worker, such as an attempt to hit or bite, and may also include a statement or behaviour which is reasonable for a worker to interpret as a threat of violence, such as leaving a worker a threatening note or threatening an act of violence against a worker.
e. NOTE: this definition includes the aggressor as a child, a parent, a visitor, a colleague but the victim is **always the worker**.

HOW TO LOCATE THE FORMS? Go to SHINE and scroll down to Health And Safety Links then Online H and S Reporting

WHAT IS THE REQUIRED RESPONSE? to the Safe Schools Incident Report Form (SSIR)

The required response to the filing of a *Safe Schools Incident Report* is defined in the Education Act and Program and Policy Memorandum 145.

The principal must...

- **Investigate any matter reported through the SSIR** *Ed Act 300.2(3)*
- **Report the results of the investigation to the teacher who filed the report** *Ed Act 300.2(4)*
- **Report to the Parents of Students Who Were Harmed** *Ed Act 300.3(1)(a)*
  *Limited circumstances would prevent this ~ Ed Act 300.3(2) & (3)***TEACHER WHO FILED THE REPORT MUST BE MADE AWARE THAT THE PARENTS HAVE NOT BEEN CONTACTED.**
- **Report to the Parents of the Offender*** Ed Act 300.3(1)(b)
  *Limited circumstances would prevent this ~ Ed Act 300.3(2) & (3)***TEACHER WHO FILED THE REPORT MUST BE MADE AWARE THAT THE PARENTS HAVE NOT BEEN CONTACTED.**
- **Complete Part 2 of the SSIR** PPM 145
- **Take Action to Prevent a Recurrence** PPM 145

If SSIRs are being filed and the response does not align with what is described in the Education Act and PPM 145, please contact the OECTA office for guidance on next steps.