



RCTL Teacher Handbook

Section A:

Your Local

Your Local Executive



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Your Local Executive

Katherine DeGeer

Executive Advisor



Jen Johnson

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Executive Advisor

Collective Bargaining

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Executive Advisor

Collective Bargaining

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Collective Bargaining

Board Contacts to Note

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Board
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- Sick leave
- Medical accommodations
- Medical absences



- Vacancy
- Staffing questions



Michelle Gould

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When Should I Contact My Local?

Scheduling Issues

Staffing Questions

Missed Prep

Before Taking Leave

Allegations Against You

Health and Safety

Conflicts with your principal

TPA Concerns

Section B:

Professional Development and Professional Resources

Funds for Members

\$200.00

Professional Resource Fund

Did you know that if you save your receipts, you can be reimbursed for up to \$200.00 when you purchase resources for your classroom. Subject to application guidelines.

- Teachers Pay Teachers Resources
- Books for your classroom
- Subscriptions to online educational platforms
- Resource Books (Daily Math, Science, ect)

Please Contact
VP Kayla
Gilchrist
(rctlvp@gmail.com)
for all
Application
Inquiries

Funds for Members

\$500.00

Professional Development Fund

If you're considering taking an Additional Qualification Course, know that there are funds available to help you pay. Please review the application guidelines BEFORE enrolling in any courses to see if you can access these funds. Some AQs that you can take are, but not limited to:

- Any AQ courses
- ABQs
- Registration fee to attend conferences

Please Contact
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Your local and Your Union



Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario

ETFO Provincial

Register at <https://members.etfo.ca/> to find workshops, programs, resources, and much more that your union has to offer.

Once you have registered you can go to the Events website (<https://events.etfo.org/>) and check out ALL the events that ETFO has to offer throughout the year.

Renfrew County Teachers Local

We have a Facebook page that is exclusive to RCTL members. Please be sure to join our page.





USEFUL WEBSITES:

- Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario (ETFO)
<http://www.etfo.ca>
- Canadian Association for Young Children
<http://www.cayc.ca>
- National Association for Education of Young Children
<http://www.naeyc.org>
- Ontario College of Teachers (OCT)
<http://www.oct.on.ca>
- Qualifications Evaluation Council of Ontario (QECO)
<http://www.qeco.on.ca>
- Ontario Teachers Federation (OTF)
<http://www.otffeo.on.ca>
- The Heart and Art for Beginning Teachers
<http://www.heartandart.ca>

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES AND VARIOUS SUPPORTS:

- NTIP: Work with your mentor;
- Develop relationships with fellow colleagues;
- Network with teachers from other schools and sites;
- Participate in ETFO conferences/workshops/events;
<https://events.etfo.org/>
- Participate in RCTL workshops/events;
- Familiarize yourself with curriculum documents and professional journals, books, articles;
- Consider AQ Courses offered by many of the universities or through ETFO @
<http://etfo-aq.ca/>.

Section C:

What Every Teacher Needs to Know

What Every Teacher Needs To Know

Every year, we seem to have some recurring questions and issues. Hopefully this information sheet will clarify some of the issues for members.

How many **sick days** do you have?

A full time teacher gets 11 sick days @ 100% of their salary (prorated for part time). Teachers also have 120 sick days @ 90% of their salary. Sick days not used in the previous year can be used to “top up” the short term sick leave to 100%. For example; if you have 3 days left from last year and you’ve used up 11 sick days for this year, then 30 of your 120 short term sick days can be paid at 100%.

I’m going to be away for **3 or more days**. How many days do I need to plan for?

When you are on sick leave, you are responsible for planning the first 3 days. It is strongly advised not to be responding to emails from your principal while you are on sick leave. Your focus should be getting well and concentrating on your recovery.

What Every Teacher Needs To Know Con't.

Special Leave

Each teacher may be granted leave of absence for reasons other than illness without deduction of salary up to a maximum of five (5) days in any one school year. All special leave absences need to be put into SFE where you are required to give an explanation, as per the *Employee Special Leave Quick Guide*.

Please note one (1) of these five (5) days are a personal/discretionary day to attend to a personal matter. This day has a separate procedure when applying to use it. The google form can be found on the board's website under Our District> Human Resources> Human Resources Forms> Special Leave.

Should you have any questions about these leave days, please reach out to the local or HR.



Employee Special Leave Quick Guide

August 2023

For information about leaves specific to your employee group and general inquiries can be directed to your school admin or the Human Resources Department at hrdept@rcdsb.on.ca.

- Employees must enter all leaves into Smart Find Express (SFE) prior to the absence.
- Employees must advise their Supervisor, Principal and/or Vice-Principal of all requests.
- Depending on the type of leave, employees may need to provide supporting documentation.

Paid/Unpaid Special Leave

Permanent employees are allocated up to five (5) **Paid Special Leave Days** (prorated based on FTE and start/end date of your assignment). If employees do not have access to paid special leave they may apply for **Unpaid Special Leave days (LWOP)**. It is up to the employee to track their **special leave balance**. Employees are expected to review [AP-426 Special Leave Guidelines](#) for information on what reasons may be considered for approval as well as their [Collective Agreement](#) for further information regarding special leave.

Special Leave Absence Approval

Employees applying for planned special leave (paid or unpaid) should have their absence entered into SFE at least **10 school days prior** to the start of the leave, except in cases of emergency.

Please note, you will receive an email to your RCDSB email account when your leave has been processed (approved or denied). A google form request will still be required for Inclement Weather.

See [Memo - Absence Approval for Employees in SFE](#) for step-by-step instructions on how to enter your absence into SFE.

Special Leave Reasons

To assist with processing and timely responses, we require employees to provide adequate information in their absence details on SFE. **The comment box in SFE is to be used to enter your leave details. Absence requests without sufficient details will be denied. However**, if you receive a notification that your leave has been denied for insufficient details, you may re-apply providing more information. Please note, the system **will not call out** for a replacement **unless** the request has been **approved** so we ask that all requests be entered as soon as you are aware of them to avoid delays in filling jobs.

Examples:

Insufficient Details	Unanswered Questions	Sufficient Details
My child has an appointment	✗ Nature of appointment? How long? How far? Can your child attend without you?	My 6 year old has a doctor's appointment in Ottawa at 10am. ✓
Personal appointment	✗ Nature of appointment? How long? How far? Could it be scheduled outside of school hours?	I have an appointment with my lawyer to sign for my new house. They are only open from 10am to 2pm. ✓
Funeral	✗ Could it be considered bereavement? How long? How far?	Funeral for my best friend's mother in Pembroke at noon. ✓
Court	✗ Subpoena required. How long? How far?	I have been asked to testify in a legal proceeding. Subpoena has been sent to HR via email. ✓
I'm in a Wedding	✗ Wedding invitation required. Relationship and other details are needed to account for absence length.	I will be standing in my sibling's wedding. I will need to be early, around 10 am, to get ready. Wedding invitation has been sent to HR via email. ✓

What Every Teacher Needs To Know Con't.

I'm having a **conflict with a co-worker**. What should I do?

Conflict is unfortunately something that may arise in the workplace. We aren't always going to see eye-to-eye with each other. Please speak professionally to that person in order to attempt to resolve the issue between each other. Discuss the problem honestly with the person. Remember, we are **not** at work to judge or evaluate other ETFO members and it is unprofessional (and unkind) to discuss issues about one ETFO member with another. It is also not recommended that you get Admin involved in member-to-member conflict. The best course of action is to address the concern with the member, in a professional and courteous way. If the problem persists, contact the Local for support.

What Every Teacher Needs To Know Con't.

Do I need to provide the Board with a **medical note** if I am off of work? (Will the board pay for it?)

Normally, teachers will not be required to provide medical documentation for absences less than 3 days. Absences longer than 3 days will require a medical note. If you are absent for an extended period of time, please ensure that the Local President is aware. Contact the Local before submitting any medical information to the Board or if you are asked for a note for an absence shorter than 3 days. The Board will not reimburse the cost to provide the medical note.

My Principal switched my **supervision**, can they do that?

Yes, supervision duties can be switched in situations where there is a shortage of coverage. Admin will do the switch. Teachers should not be changing their duties. Admin changing duties should not be occurring on a regular basis and the first option in a coverage shortage should be that Admin or other non-teaching staff covers the duty. However, the 80 minute cap cannot be exceeded in any 5 day cycle.

How do I bring a **Health & Safety** concern to the attention of my principal?

If you have a health and safety concern, it is imperative that it is put in writing. Simply telling the Principal and custodian does not suffice. We often hear, "Well, I told my Principal about it". Putting it in writing often ensures concerns are dealt with swiftly and allows for tracking of the concern. Health and Safety concerns should also be sent to the Health and Safety Committee members at your school.

What Every Teacher Needs To Know Con't.

How do I go about **transferring** to another school?

Voluntary transfers (teacher initiated) are part of the staffing process. When staffing surplus teachers, teachers requesting a transfer are put on the same list as surplus teachers (according to seniority), and if a vacancy exists in the specific school and division requested, they will be placed in the vacancy. It is no longer the Superintendent who grants transfers. Transfer requests are due by March 1st and they are to be sent to the Superintendent of HR with a copy to the RCTL president.

Do I need to fill out an **aggressive incident** report if I was hit by a student?

Yes! Any **aggressive incident** (attempt or threat of violence against a teacher) needs to be reported on an Aggressive Incident Form. The **Aggressive Incident Reporting** form can be found on the **Staff Site** of the Board's website. It does not matter if the child is young or identified, you should still report. Please do not just inform admin about the incident. It is extremely important for us to have accurate data on these incidents and the form is vital in doing so.

Do I have to have parent **volunteers** in my room?

No. You do not need to allow parent volunteers into your classroom. They may offer to come in, but it is your decision if you want them to help or not. Any volunteer coming into your classroom must have a Criminal Background Check. Please do not feel pressured to allow certain parents into your class or have them attend class trips. If this is happening, contact the Local for support.

What Every Teacher Needs To Know Con't.

Why do I have to be careful about what I put on **Facebook** or **Social Media**?

As teachers, we are held to a very high standard. Photos that depict alcohol use, posts that are critical to your employer or any content that is questionable, could land you in hot water. Please be very cautious about what you post on Facebook or similar social media. This is increasingly becoming an issue across the Province. We advise you to not have students or parents as your friends on Facebook or social media.

Can my principal come into my room whenever they want?

Yes, it is perfectly normal and common practise for Principals to visit classrooms, see what you are working and interact with students. This is not a formal evaluation. It should not be used as part of the TPA process nor should you feel uncomfortable when it occurs. It is simply of a means for the Principal to be aware of what is occurring in their school.

The **Occasional Teacher** who was in for me didn't follow my day plans and now I'm behind. What do I do?

Please keep in mind that OTs are our colleagues and should always be treated as such. It is recommended that if you have a problem with an occasional teacher that you speak to him/her directly. We **do not advise** that you speak to Admin about your concerns with an OT.

What Every Teacher Needs To Know Con't.

I'm in financial hardship. Is there any **financial assistance** available to me?

Our Local has a hardship fund that can help when a member is in a difficult, unexpected situation financially (divorce, prolonged illness of a spouse, an accident etc.) Members can contact the Local President to put forth their name or the name of someone who may benefit from financial help during a difficult time in their life. The process is entirely confidential and only the President will be aware of the identity of the member.

I **missed prep** today due to an OT shortage. Now what?

If you did not get your scheduled prep minutes one day please make your Admin aware. Your Admin team has 10 school days to pay it back to you. They can do this by giving you an extra prep period and covering your class with an OT or covering your class themselves. Please inform the Local if your prep has not been paid back to you within 10 school days.

Do I have to sign up for **Extra-Curricular** activities?

Nope. Extra-curricular activities are entirely voluntary. Some examples include Scholastic Book Fairs, coaching sports, pizza fundraisers, fun fairs, or any before and after school teams. Some members may choose to participate, others may not. Please respect your colleagues' personal choices.

What Every Teacher Needs To Know Con't.

I slipped and fell outside during my duty and **hurt** my back. Do I need report that to anyone?

Yes! If you are injured at work, even something small like your glasses breaking if you're hit with a ball, please make sure to report it to your office and your local, and also fill out the appropriate paperwork (WSIB). Sometimes a member may think that their injury is "nothing", but then it turns into something and time off work is required. Often, it is days after the injury that the member realizes their injury is more serious and requires medical attention. The delay in reporting could impact your claim. These forms are readily available in every school office. If you are injured, please do not drive yourself home.

My principal has called a **division meeting** after school, do I have to attend?

Please remember that you attend one staff meeting a month. All other meetings, outside the instructional day, are voluntary.

Do I have to toilet a student?

No, teachers do not toilet students.

What Every Teacher Needs To Know Con't.

I just need the last hour of the day off for an appointment, do I really need to book the whole afternoon off?

No. Many teachers think they must book off at least half a day if they have an appointment in the instructional day. This is not the case. If you only require a half hour, hour, 20 minutes ... that's what you book off. You do not have to book off more time than what is required. OTs, however, must be booked for a minimum of half the day - but that does not mean that you half to book off half the day. Admin will assign the OT duties for the remainder of the half day that they are not covering you. When booking off a short period of time, follow these instructions:

1. Indicate the date/time you will be absent (ex. Tuesday, 2:30pm-3:45pm)
2. Indicate the date/time the Occasional Teacher will be required (ex. Tuesday, 12:45pm-3:45pm)
3. Notify your Principal that you are going to be away starting at 2:30pm on Tuesday and the Principal will assign the OT other duties from 12:35pm-2:30pm.

Section D:

Numbers to Know

Minutes to Know

10
minutes

A teacher requesting a voluntary transfer has 10 minutes to accept or reject a position that is not a direct match

75
minutes

Maximum length of a staff meeting

20
minutes

Preparation time shall be scheduled in blocks of **time not less than 20 minutes**. This applies to all teachers (full-time and part-time)

80
minutes

Maximum number of duty minutes assigned to full-time teachers over 5 instructional days

30
minutes

A surplus teacher has 30 minutes to accept or reject an assignment

240
minutes

Full-time teachers' **minimum** preparation time.

40
minutes

The length of lunch, **uninterrupted** by duty, preparation, or teaching

300
minutes

Length of school day.

Section E

Staffing Overview



Staffing Timeline

March 1st

Transfer/increases to entitlement requests are due March 1st.

Tentative School Org Charts

Enrolment is taken in March with projected numbers.

April

Tentative org chart made by principals in April.

May

Surplus/redundant letters are sent in May.

Staffing information meeting in May.

June

Staffing placement day in June

Recall

Teachers can stay on recall for 3 years.

Contacting your Local



Kelly Melanson

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rctletfo@gmail.com

Kayla Gilchrist

Vice President/Treasurer

rctlvp@gmail.com