

To: ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local Members
From: Mike Thomas, President, ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local (ETFO TVTL)
Date: December 18, 2025
Regarding: **December Newsletter**

As we approach the winter break, on behalf of your Released Team and your Executive, I want to extend our deepest thanks to each and every one of you for the extraordinary work you continue to do in support of students, colleagues, and our Local. Your care, professionalism, and advocacy are the foundation of strong public education. The impact of your efforts is deeply felt and genuinely appreciated, every day.

The first four months of this school year have been exceptionally busy, reflecting the ongoing challenges facing education, but they have also been meaningful and rewarding. Your students grow and benefit each day from the opportunities for learning and care you show each day. As you know, moving forward our collective voice will continue to advocate for the learning conditions our students deserve and the working conditions educators need to sustain this work, as part of the broader effort to build better schools. Together, our solidarity strengthens both our classrooms and our communities.

As the winter break begins, we strongly encourage you to step away from work and give yourself permission to rest and recharge. Our Local Collective Agreement Communication Protocol exists to support this balance and reinforces the importance of disconnecting during non-instructional time, including scheduled breaks. While it can be difficult to fully release thoughts of work, this time away is essential for your well-being. Be kind to yourself. Spend time with friends or loved ones, enjoy quiet moments, put away technology, or reconnect with something you used to love but haven't had time for recently. Rest is not a luxury; it is a necessity.

Looking ahead to the new year, there are many opportunities to stay engaged and informed. Please stay tuned in January for more details about upcoming workshops and events, some of which include:

- **Experienced Teacher Performance Appraisal Workshop** – February 25
- **Retirement Planning Workshop** – March 5
- **Women's Financial Workshop** – March 10
- **Race Matters. Teaching Students to be Race-Conscious Workshop** – March 24
- **Fostering Self-Regulation in Kindergarten Workshop** – April 2
- **Pregnancy/Parental Leave Workshop** – April 9
- **Estate Planning Workshop** – April 14

In addition, the Local Executive passed a motion at its December meeting to move forward with offering **Red4Ed T-shirts to all members**. This ETFO solidarity wear is intended to strengthen our collective voice, support our shared advocacy goals, and visibly demonstrate educator solidarity in our schools and communities. Further details about timelines and distribution will be shared once we return in January.

Thank you again for everything you do. Wishing you a restful, restorative, and well-deserved winter break.

Sincerely,

Mike Thomas
President, ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local



For any questions, concerns, or simply a friendly chat, the Local ETFO Office is only a phone call away at 519-474-3150 or an email to etfotvtl@etfothamesvalley.com - we're here to help.

c. Released Executive, ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local