



LOCAL MESSAGE

To: ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local Members
From: Mike Thomas, President, ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local (ETFO TVTL)
Date: March 11, 2026
Regarding: **Spring Break Newsletter**

ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local – Spring Update

March always seems to arrive at just the right time. Spring birds are returning, the sun is shining, and the snow is melting away! Up to now, the rhythm of the school year has been demanding, and by this point everyone has been giving their energy, creativity, and patience to students, colleagues, and the entire school community for many months straight. Before the pace picks up again for the final stretch of the year, Spring Break offers a welcome moment to step back and recharge. We hope you are able to use this time in whatever way restores you best.

If you are travelling, we wish you safe journeys and wonderful adventures. If you are staying closer to home, we hope you enjoy some well-earned downtime surrounded by friends, family, and loved ones, or perhaps simply a few quiet mornings where the only schedule is your own.

Upcoming Local Events

We have several great opportunities coming up for learning, connection, and celebration:

- Race Matters Workshop: Supporting educators in teaching students to be race-conscious and equity-focused
- Fostering Self-Regulation in Kindergarten Workshop: Practical strategies to support our youngest learners
- 25-Year Celebration on March 26: Celebrating members who have dedicated 25 years to the profession
- Pregnancy and Parental Leave Workshop on April 9: Information and guidance for members planning or navigating leave
- Estate Planning Workshop on April 14: Planning ahead for peace of mind
- Local Annual Meeting on April 21: Important Local updates, discussions, and decisions

And stay tuned as some social events are also on the horizon, including our Annual Golf Tournament.

Bargaining Survey

We want to extend our appreciation to everyone who took the time to complete the Local bargaining survey. With nearly 20% of members participating, the response reflects a strong commitment to ensuring that our bargaining priorities are grounded in the realities of our classrooms and schools.

Your participation ensures that the Local brings authentic member voice to the bargaining table, and we remain committed to advocating for working conditions that support both educators and students.

Creating Change - Together



Red4Ed: Building Solidarity

After the break, you will hear more about Red4Ed initiatives and some fun ways to bring solidarity into your schools. We will be sharing ideas, contests, and creative ways for schools to participate together.

Remember we are wearing Red4Ed as a visible way for all of us to stand together in support of public education, to emphasize the need for healthy and safe learning conditions for students, and a public education system that supports the critically important work we do. Small actions taken collectively will send a powerful message.



Creating Change – Together

As part of our ongoing focus on Creating Change – Together, we continue to advance our work through the following three key priorities.

1) Building Positive Relationships

Our work continues to focus on strengthening relationships with members and the Board while promoting a culture of professionalism, trust, and collaboration across TVDSB. School visits and member-focused activities remain central to this effort as we work toward visiting every school this year. Joint training with Superintendents and the Released Team has focused on respectful communication and collaboration, and this work continues this week with Workplace Steward and Principal training. We continue to address workplace concerns including violence in schools, absence patterning, progressive discipline, preparation time during mandatory training, and report card expectations, while member events such as **Storybook Skate Night** and **Family Day at the Movies** help strengthen connection across the Local.



2) **Serving the Membership**

Listening to members remains central to our work. Through school visits, meetings, focus groups, and professional learning opportunities, we continue to address concerns and provide representation while enforcing the Collective Agreement when necessary. Recent work has included support related to Health and Safety concerns, violence prevention, CAS matters, harassment, sick leave provisions, WSIB return-to-work planning, TPA support, and Long-Term Disability governance work with OTIP. Staffing discussions for 2026–2027 are underway, with the Local advocating for fair and consistent staffing practices.

3) **Creating a Professional Union**

We continue to strengthen communication, engagement, and professional learning opportunities for members. This year's initiatives have included many professional learning opportunities which support professional growth and meaningful connections across our membership. We are excitedly planning our Professional Learning direction and will be needing **your help** to make it successful, so keep your eye out after the Spring Break to see information on what we are planning....

As we head into Spring Break, we want to once again express our sincere appreciation for the care, professionalism, and commitment you bring to your work every day. The impact you make in your classrooms and for your students reaches far beyond any single lesson or day.

Over the break, we hope you give yourself permission to slow the pace and disconnect from the day-to-day demands of school life. Whether it is time outdoors, good conversations with family and friends, travel, hobbies, or simply a bit of quiet, we hope the days ahead offer moments that restore your energy.

The work you do matters deeply, and taking time to recharge helps ensure you can continue bringing your best to students, your colleagues, and your family. Thank you for everything you contribute to our schools and to the strength of public education.

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