

Who Are Occasional Teachers

Occasional teachers are certified teachers who are employed by a board to teach as a substitute for a teacher or a temporary teacher who is, or was, employed by the board in a position that is part of a regular teaching staff. (This includes daily occasional teachers, long-term occasional teachers, and may include uncertified teachers when certified teachers are unavailable).



It is essential that occasional teachers have strategies that allow them to deal with a wide range of behaviour situations. Some examples include:

- Maintain consistent, clear ground rules and state them in a positive way.
- Carry extra supplies like paper, pencils, and pens for students who have forgotten to bring supplies.
- Bring activities such as puzzles and word searches for students who finish their assigned work early.
- Talk about behaviours not students.
- Never ridicule or embarrass students.
- Stop misbehaviour before it gets out of hand. A light-hearted response can often defuse tense situations.
- Make eye contact or using proximity to redirect behaviours.
- Make a contract with disruptive student(s) about how much to accomplish by the end of the period.
- Redirect students who finish early to assist other students can help students stay on task.
- Give students short breaks as needed.
- When all else fails, contact another teacher or administrator for their assistance.

Some good advice for ALL Teachers



- Support staff are critical to the smooth functioning of any school. (A few examples of support staff are educational assistants, child and youth workers, custodians, office clerical). Successful teaching assignments are dependent on collaboration between support staff and the teacher.
- Recognize and accept the diversity of the student population.
- Show respect for students/school regulations/rules.
- Limit the use of your personal electronic devices to before and after class.
- Refrain from having social relationships with any student. Do not become “friends” with students on any social media or text students.
- Keep the door open if you are alone with a student in a room and make sure you can be seen from the open door.
- Keep the window in a door uncovered if the door must be closed.
- Respect personal space.
- Never leave students in your care unattended. If you need to leave the classroom for any reason, call the school office for support. Report all incidents to administration for action (i.e. a student leaves the room without permission or an altercation between two students). Keep personal notes of these incidents.

Reminder If you make an adverse report about another colleague to administration, the OSSTF/FEESO Constitution and Bylaws require you to give that member a copy of said report.

An Occasional Teacher's Guide



Contact



Contact Your District OSSTF/FEESO Office

It is important for individuals to understand the entitlements and obligations that we share as members of OSSTF/FEESO. Members are advised to refer to their school and district representatives or provincial office for proper interpretation of collective agreement language, laws, and OSSTF/FEESO Bylaws.

You can find contact information for your local district office by clicking on the down arrow next to "Districts" on the upper left hand side of the provincial website: www.osstf.on.ca or contact the provincial office 1-800-267-7867.

Contact your local OSSTF/FEESO office immediately and do NOT discuss the matter with anyone until you have spoken with OSSTF/FEESO if:

- You believe you might be disciplined by administration.
- You receive notice from the College of Teachers that you are being investigated.
- You are questioned or might be investigated by police.

In all of the above situations, indicate that you will be happy to cooperate, but that you must seek counsel before meeting or answering any questions.

Right to Refuse Unsafe Work

Under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, you have the right to refuse work that you feel is unsafe due to the lack of proper protective equipment or training. Seek assistance from your local OSSTF/FEESO office.

Your School



Your School/School Board Should Provide You with:

- Classroom keys and computer access as required for your work.
- Safety plans for any students or situations that you may encounter in the course of your work.
- Emergency plans and codes for fire, lockdowns, evacuations, etc...
- Training to prevent discrimination against employees and co-workers according to the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Establishing Rapport with Students, Effective Classroom Management, and Discipline

In creating a positive learning environment, occasional teachers must establish conditions that maximize opportunities for all students by creating a professional rapport with them, establishing rules, developing responsibility, and encouraging excellence.

Some ideas

to create a positive rapport that you might try include:

- Arrive early (when possible), allowing you to review the work that has been left, collecting materials and producing materials as needed. Being prepared for class is the best way to develop a positive rapport.
- Stand outside the door to greet students as they enter the classroom.
- Make a good impression in the first five minutes by introducing yourself and explaining the plan for the day/period.
- Have an air of confidence, showing enthusiasm as well as engaging with the students and their learning.
- Exercise professional judgement when following lesson plans/instructions can help to avoid behavioural issues. Ensure that you leave notes for the classroom teacher explaining what you modified.

