

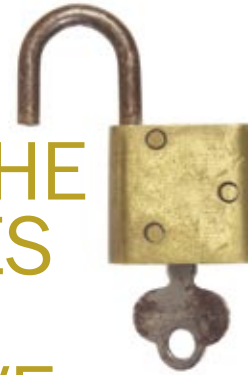
COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

On guard for your workplace rights

Collective bargaining: at first glance it may seem like a remote process that surfaces every couple of years with a great deal of fanfare, and then mysteriously disappears. In fact, your collective agreement is a document which affects you each and every day of your working life. It is the most important mechanism there is for protecting your rights as an employee. Your principal and superintendents may be well-intentioned and committed to helping you do your job. But good intentions are no substitute for the negotiated, legally enforceable document that unambiguously sets forth your workplace rights.

Once each round of negotiations is concluded, and the membership has voted to accept the new collective agreement, the important process of enforcing it begins. Your local executive and school stewards are constantly monitoring how the employer implements the agreement. Your hard-won rights cannot become a reality unless you know what they are. For that reason, it is important that you unlock the treasures – and read your collective agreement.

UNLOCK THE TREASURES IN YOUR COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT



As an educator, you are a member of a highly regulated profession. From the *Education Act* to the *Teaching Profession Act* to the *College of Teachers Act*, your chosen field is hemmed in on all sides by statutes, regulations, policies, and guidelines. But you may not realize that the most important document governing your working life is your own collective agreement.

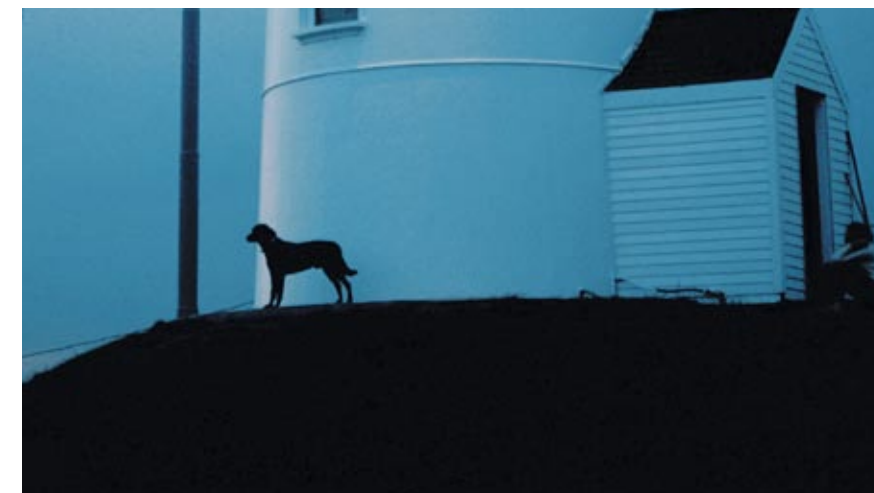
CLOSE the GAP

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COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

/// PROTECTIVE SERVICES ///





TAKE A CLOSER LOOK

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING UNLOCKS THE POTENTIAL IN THESE AREAS:

Your Salary It is not set by law. Your yearly salary increase, and the experience grid which causes it to rise even further in the first several years of your career, is the result of collective bargaining.

Your Insured Benefits Insurance coverage for prescription lenses, drugs, dental services, hearing aids and many other benefits is negotiated at the bargaining table. So, too, is your life insurance and your long-term disability coverage.

Your Sick Leave Your employer is not obligated to provide paid time off when you are sick – unless the collective agreement stipulates otherwise. By the same token, any retirement gratuity you may receive as a result of banked sick-leave days exists only because your negotiators fought for it at the bargaining table.

Your Workday The general framework in the *Education Act* with respect to school day and student instructional time leaves wide scope for collective bargaining. This means that your collective agreement can set parameters for the instructional day, preparation time, supervision time, staff meetings, and overall working conditions.

Your Work Assignment For teachers and for educational and professional support personnel, seniority, transfer, and lay-off provisions are all governed by the collective agreement. For occasional teachers, the size of the call-out list, the right to remain on the list, the call-out system, and the posting of long-term occasional teaching positions are all bargainable items.

Your Peace of Mind One of the most important parts of your collective agreement is the “just cause clause.” This is the provision that protects you against arbitrary discipline or termination. Without it, your job would be much less secure.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING SUPPLEMENTS EXISTING LAWS.

Provincial legislation to protect employees goes only so far, and parts of it do not cover teachers (for example, minimum wage and maximum hours of work). Your collective agreement can give you *additional* protection beyond the basics already provided by human rights law, employment standards legislation, and occupational health and safety statutes.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING PROVIDES THE FLEXIBILITY NEEDED TO COPE WITH EVER-CHANGING WORKPLACE REALITIES.

As an educator, you may sometimes feel as though you are at the mercy of whatever educational trend or innovation happens along. For example, changes in the assessment process – new kinds of report cards, new tests and other assessment instruments, new paperwork – have been numerous in recent years. Through the bargaining process, provisions can be negotiated to help provide the time and resources you need to help you manage these and other changes.

YOUR COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT BELONGS TO YOU, THE ETFO MEMBER.

It has been negotiated, and improved upon, by your local bargainers over the years. These individuals have been supported by your fellow educators past and present, who have demonstrated their solidarity and resolve over successive bargaining rounds.

Time and again, this collective strength has paid off. In the last few years, significant improvements for teachers have been achieved in increased preparation time and reduced supervision time. Occasional teachers have achieved significant improvements in day-to-day working conditions.

Collective bargaining protects you. And through your Union, you have input into the kinds of provisions that are negotiated. Please read your collective agreement, and learn about your rights.

FIND THE TREASURES



For more information please visit our website: www.etfo.ca

