



OECTA Best Practices

By Ron McNamara

Healthy relationships with your staff are built on trust, authenticity and excellent communication. Amongst the more important relationships that need to be based on these principles are the ones held with your school union representatives. A Principal who has a good relationship with these representatives understands the important role they play in the smooth implementation of the collective agreements.

Union collective agreements are signed by both the union and board representatives where both sides agree at the time to abide by the clauses in the agreement. Principals must honour the promises outlined in those agreements and union representatives have an obligation to ensure that their members are abiding by the promises they agreed to. Therefore, it is vital that Principals and Vice-Principals be fully aware of the obligations of both parties to the collective agreement.

Principals/Vice-Principals, as well as Teachers and Early Childhood Educators also have the responsibility to know the Education Act and all the relevant regulations that guide their work at the school. When everyone has a good understanding of both their rights and obligations under the law there may be a reduced chance of conflict at your school. Unresolved conflict or silent opposition can poison a school environment making the workplace a difficult place to come to everyday. Understanding the 'rules' of the workplace can reduce the likelihood that they will be violated. Your staff representatives play an important role in making sure that your school is a great place to work!

Marshall Jarvis, General Secretary of OECTA, provides his insights into "Working with the OECTA School Rep" in the Summer 2018 edition of *Principal Connections*.



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