

# OSSTF/FEESO ADVICE



for Associate Teachers



# OSSTF/FEESO Advice for Associate Teachers

*Welcome!* You have made a great professional choice to become an Associate Teacher for a Faculty of Education. All teachers have benefitted from the mentorship of Associate Teachers who welcomed them into their classrooms to complete their practicum placements. This manual will provide you with some information and advice to consider when giving back to the teaching profession.

## Topics include:

- ⇒ Benefits of being an Associate Teacher
- ⇒ Role of an Associate Teacher
- ⇒ Teacher Candidate Evaluation
- ⇒ A Note on Professionalism
- ⇒ Issues and Concerns with the Teacher Candidate
- ⇒ Honorarium
- ⇒ Relevant Bylaws and Policies
- ⇒ Associate Teacher Checklist

## Benefits of Being an Associate Teacher

Becoming an Associate Teacher is an incredibly rewarding experience. A recent OSSTF/FEESO survey revealed that our members benefit in many ways. Here are some direct quotations from that survey...

*“It makes one reflect on teaching practices.”*

*“It allows me to articulate my philosophy of education.”*

*“I feel energetic and positive.”*

*“I often learn new pedagogy, methodology and ideas from my Teacher Candidate.”*

*“It is a win-win!”*

*“I’m revitalized by the Teacher Candidate’s enthusiasm.”*

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# Role of an Associate Teacher

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As an Associate Teachers, you will be creating a positive learning environment, modeling exemplary teaching, facilitating the development of skills, coaching through timely and constructive feedback, and supporting the Teacher Candidate in reflecting on his/her planning and practice.

In addition, you will provide the Teacher Candidate with

- ⇒ a place to work, and
- ⇒ access to instructional, planning and assessment resources.

You should introduce the Teacher Candidate to

- ⇒ the Head of your Department,
- ⇒ other members of your department and staff,
- ⇒ support staff, particularly any working in your classroom, such as Education Assistants or Child and Youth Workers,
- ⇒ the Administration,
- ⇒ the OSSTF/FEESO Branch President at your school.

You will support the Teacher Candidate in understanding and integrating into the school culture.

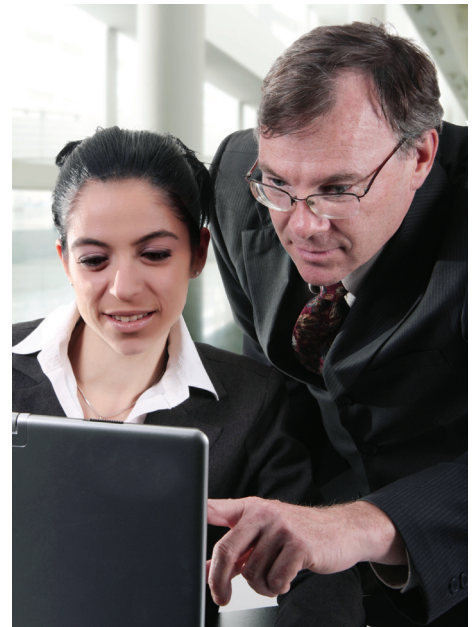
The Teacher Candidate will need the opportunity to observe you, and perhaps other teachers, teaching classes, and using a variety of positive classroom management techniques. You should also provide opportunities to discuss

how you solve problems and plan lessons. With the Teacher Candidate, you will review the individual needs of each student on your class lists.

The Teacher Candidate will gradually assume day-to-day responsibility for planning, instruction and assessment. This will require regular dialogue to review his/her plans and reflect on his/her practice. You should record and share your observations of the Teacher Candidate's teaching practices and strategies. Your patience and encouragement will support your Teacher Candidate to take risks and to learn from mistakes. Constructive written feedback will provide valuable support for professional growth.

Legally, you are responsible for the students in your classes and so under no circumstances should Teacher Candidates be left alone in the classroom. You must be in the class or just outside of the class where you can hear/see what is happening. This is both for your protection as well as that of the Teacher Candidate.

Teacher Candidates are not qualified teachers and as such may not have any legal protection should anything occur which could involve charges of assault or negligence while they are alone with a class. Such an instance could result in the end of a teaching career before it starts for the Teacher Candidate, as well as criminal action and/or investigation



by the Ontario College of Teachers against the Associate Teacher who left him/her alone. For the same reasons, Teacher Candidates are not to be used as “on-call” teachers without a certified teacher also present, and absolutely not as supply teachers.

For the Teacher Candidate to experience all aspects of the teaching profession, he/she should have the opportunity to participate in all assigned duties, staff meetings, and professional development with you. As Associate Members of OSSTF, Teacher Candidates are welcome and encouraged to attend Branch meetings and Federation events.

# Evaluation of the Teacher Candidate

You will be required to evaluate your Teacher Candidate's performance. Your expectations of a Teacher Candidate should not be the same as the expectations one would have of an experienced teacher; this will likely be especially true of the first or early practicum sessions of the school year. Teacher Candidates will require mentoring and support to help them to improve their practice throughout the practicum.

You will need to schedule sufficient conferencing time. Best practices for Associate Teacher interaction with the Teacher Candidate throughout the practicum include:

- ⇒ timely and constructive appraisal;
- ⇒ anecdotal feedback;
- ⇒ formative and summative assessment;
- ⇒ next steps for growth;
- ⇒ honest and candid evaluation.

timelines, and forms required pertaining to evaluation of the Teacher-Candidate.

If the Teacher Candidate is struggling, remember that it is your role to be a supportive mentor to help him/her improve. If the Teacher Candidate is unwilling to accept your advice or unable to improve, make early contact with the Faculty of Education according to the protocol that the Faculty has outlined for Associate Teachers.

It is essential that you consult the documentation from the Faculty of Education for the protocols,



# A Note on Professionalism

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Your role as an Associate Teacher requires a great deal of professionalism. You will model professional conduct and engage in positive collegial interactions. Teacher Candidates are OSSTF/FEESO associate members and have the same responsibilities as statutory members, but not all of the same rights. You are in the unique position of evaluating an associate member of OSSTF/FEESO.

In addition, Teacher Candidates take professional and social cues from you, and so it is essential that you model exemplary professional and courteous interaction with your colleagues, other education workers, the administration, students and parents.

In the Associate Teacher/Teacher Candidate relationship, you are in the position of authority and so you must assume a supportive, mentorship role for these adult learners. You must not compromise professional boundaries in that relationship.

# Issues and Concerns with the Teacher Candidate



Most Faculties of Education have procedures for addressing incompatibility or conflict between Associate Teachers and Teacher Candidates. Addressing issues early is important. Refer to the Faculty of Education handbook.

An Associate Teacher who feels harassed by a Teacher Candidate should identify harassment correctly.

*“Harassment and discrimination can take many forms and may be verbal, physical, or psychological. They can involve a wide range of actions including comments, gestures, looks, pictures, messages, touching, or more aggressive actions. These acts may be indirect or overt. They may be isolated or repeated.”*

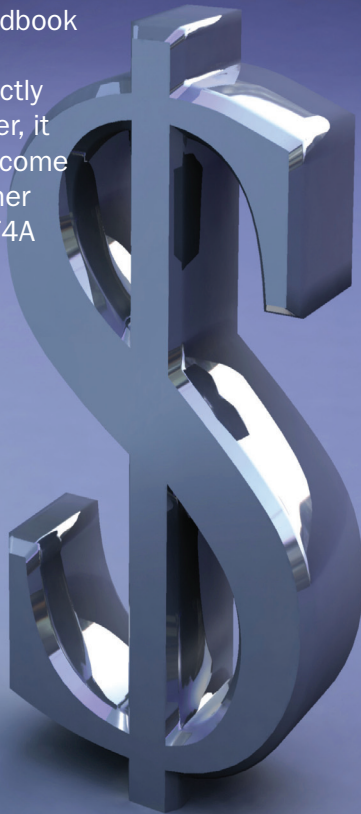
If you feel you are being harassed by your Teacher Candidate, take the following steps:

- ⇒ SPEAK UP; discuss your concerns with the Teacher Candidate, and try to resolve them together in a professional and collegial manner.
- ⇒ If the problem persists, contact the Faculty of Education immediately.
- ⇒ If they can not resolve the problem, consult the Board’s Anti-Harassment policy, and follow its procedures. Also inform your OSSTF/FEESO Branch President.

—OSSTF/FEESO Anti-Harassment Policy

# Honorarium

Although Associate Teaching is voluntary in nature, some Faculties of Education provide honoraria for their Associate Teachers. The honorarium can take the form of monetary remuneration given directly to the teacher or provided to the school for time-release. Other faculties may designate funds to the school or the department. Sometimes the Faculty will give the Associate Teacher a tuition discount for Additional Qualification courses. Please refer to the Faculty handbook for details. Note: if the honorarium is paid directly to the Associate Teacher, it must be declared as income for tax purposes, whether the faculty provides a T4A form or not.



## Relevant Bylaws and Policies

According to OSSTF/FEESO Bylaws:

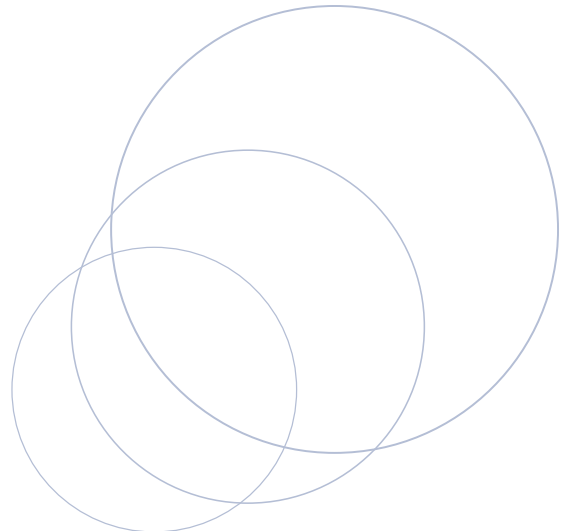
- 2.1.3.1.1: Associate Members of OSSTF/FEESO include teachers in training at the Ontario Faculties of Education.
- 5.1.3: Associate Members shall be entitled to receive routine information and official communications.

OTF Policy VIII Teacher Education, E. Practicum states

*"It is the policy of the Ontario Teachers' Federation:*

*That it be the professional responsibility of members to provide Associate Teaching services within the Practicum and that Associate Teaching services provided by OTF members be volunteered.*

*That OTF members who serve as Associate Teachers should give priority to Teacher Candidates enrolled in Teacher Education programs at publicly funded, Ontario universities."*





# Associate Teacher Checklist

- 0 Inform your students before the Teacher Candidate's arrival.
- 0 Read the Faculty of Education handbook for Associate Teachers.
- 0 Plan for the Teacher Candidate to have the opportunity to observe your classes and routines before assuming teaching responsibilities.
- 0 Provide a place for the Teacher Candidate to work.
- 0 Provide a copy of the school's daily schedule and information about the school's routines, including announcements, extra-curricular activities, safety drills, etc.
- 0 Provide access to resources: curriculum documents, course outlines, assessment and evaluation materials.
- 0 Provide the Teacher Candidate with a list of dates of upcoming staff/department meetings, Branch meetings, Federation events, and PD opportunities.
- 0 Introduce the Teacher Candidate to the OSSTF/FEESO Branch President, the Department Head, support staff, the Administration, and others.
- 0 Review your class lists with the Teacher Candidate.
- 0 Schedule mutually agreeable times for planning, observations, feedback and reflection.

