



PHOTO CREDIT : MICROSOFT STOCK IMAGES

OUTDOOR SUPERVISION: STAYING SAFE AND WARM IN WINTER

CANADIAN WINTERS ARE NO JOKE, ESPECIALLY IN QUEBEC. MANY DAYCARE EDUCATORS, SPECIAL EDUCATION STAFF AND STUDENT SUPERVISORS (LUNCH MONITORS) WORK OUTSIDE DURING THESE CHILLY MONTHS. HERE ARE SOME TIPS AND GUIDELINES TO HELP YOU STAY SAFE, WARM, AND PREPARED FOR THE COLD.

COLD WEATHER CULPRITS

There are three main factors that impact how our bodies react to the cold:

- **Temperature:** As the temperature decreases, the risk of frostbite and hypothermia increase.
- **Wind Chill:** Cold air feels even colder when it's windy. When the wind chill feels like -28°C , exposed skin can freeze in under 30 minutes.
- **Humidity:** Wet clothing, sweat or damp conditions can reduce your insulation and speed up heat loss.

DRESS FOR SUCCESS

Layering is your best friend. Start with a moisture-wicking base layer, add an insulating middle layer, and finish with a wind and water-resistant outer layer. Don't forget:

- A warm hat, scarf, thick mittens or gloves.
- Warm waterproof boots with treads or crampons.
- Cover your skin when the wind chill dips below -10°C .

KEEP YOUR BODY MOVING

Moving around generates heat, so keep active when possible. For longer supervision periods in moderate to extreme cold:

- Avoid standing still for long periods (keep walking around).
- Watch for signs of frostbite (numbness, whiteness of skin) and hypothermia (shivering, confusion).

WATCH OUT FOR ICE

It's easy to slip and fall in the schoolyard and on walkways. Ice can be hiding underneath the snow. If there's a risk of falling, be sure to advise your school administration. Many schools rely on snow removal contractors, and the administration needs to notify them promptly to address the issue.

WHEN IS IT TOO COLD?

When temperatures are cold enough to risk frostbite or hypothermia for students, the school administration will usually keep students indoors for recess and lunch.

STAY TOASTY

By dressing appropriately, staying active, and recognizing the risks, you can enjoy a safer, more comfortable winter season outdoors. Stay warm, stay safe, and don't forget winter is a part of being Canadian, so we might as well make the best of it. ■

SELF-FINANCED LEAVES

TAKING A SABBATICAL IS NOT JUST FOR TEACHERS!

To help accelerate your path to a diploma or any other life-enriching experience while reducing the strain on your budget, consider self-financing your leave of absence by taking a deferred sabbatical.



This plan allows an employee to pay for their own leave by reducing their salary over a period of 3 to 5 years. In

this way, the employee can benefit from a continuous income during their leave of absence.

Only regular or surplus employees are eligible for this benefit. More information on self-financed leaves / deferred sabbaticals can be found in chapter 5-11.00 of the S-18 Collective Agreement.

For more information contact **Ms. Heleine Lefebvre**, Admin. Tech., Human Resources at **514-483-7200 (7282)** or by e-mail at hlefebvre@emsb.qc.ca.

The application deadline is March 1st of every year. ■

INTERNAL BUMP-UPS IN SPECIAL ED: THE 20-WEEK CUTOFF EXPLAINED

UNDER OUR COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT, TEMPORARY VACANCIES IN THE SPECIAL EDUCATION SECTOR LASTING 20 WEEKS OR MORE ARE FILLED THROUGH A PROCESS CALLED INTERNAL BUMP-UPS. THIS ALLOWS A QUALIFIED STAFF MEMBER FROM THE SAME SCHOOL OR DEPARTMENT TO BE TEMPORARILY "BUMPED UP" INTO THE ROLE.

However, when a position becomes vacant with fewer than 20 weeks left to the end of the school year (June 30th), the process is different. In such cases, the vacancy is offered directly to individuals on the Priority of Employment list (POE) instead of being filled internally.

For this school year, 20 weeks before the end of the year falls on **February 3rd 2025**. This means that any temporary vacancies opening on or after that date will be filled using the POE list.

HOW IT WORKS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION SUPPORT STAFF:

- If a position opens before February 3rd the opportunity to fill the role is offered by seniority to regular qualified staff working in the same office, department, school or centre.
- If a position opens on or after February 3rd the vacancy is offered directly to individuals on the Priority of Employment list (POE), as fewer than 20 weeks remain in the school year.

For example, if a position becomes available after March Break, fewer than 20 weeks remain in the school year, and it would not be offered as an internal bump-up.



This sequence, outlined in clause 7-1.18 of the S18 collective agreement, ensures a consistent and fair process for filling temporary vacancies in the special education sector.

If you have questions or would like more details, please reach out to the APPA and we'll be happy to help. ■

HEY YOU! TAKE YOUR BREAKS, THEY'RE YOURS TO KEEP!

BREAKS AT WORK AREN'T JUST A LUXURY; THEY'RE A NECESSITY. WHETHER IT'S A QUICK CHAT OVER COFFEE WITH COLLEAGUES, A WALK OUTSIDE, OR SOME TIME TO SIT DOWN AND ENJOY A SNACK, THESE MOMENTS HELP RECHARGE YOUR ENERGY, IMPROVE FOCUS, AND SUPPORT YOUR OVERALL WELL-BEING.

In fast-paced school environments, it's easy to feel like you should always be available. But here's an important reminder: your break time is yours. You have **the legal right** to step away, reset and reduce your stress level.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

If your supervisor asks you to meet during your break, you have the right to **politely refuse** and propose an alternative time. Your break is not just a pause in your schedule—it's part of your working conditions, meant to give you the downtime you need.

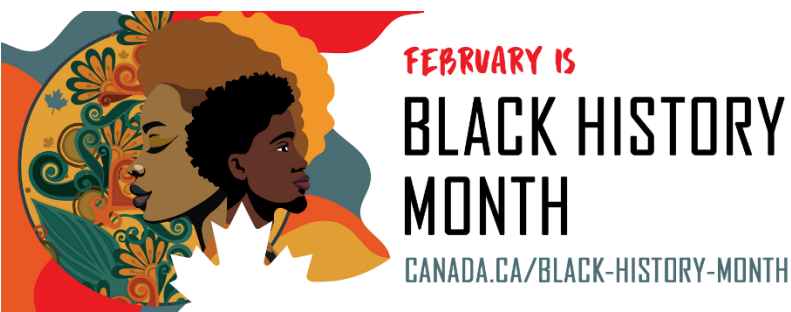
THE COST OF SKIPPING BREAKS

Research has shown that skipping breaks can contribute to burnout and decreased productivity. [A study from the University of Waterloo](#) found that employees who feel pressured to work through their breaks experience higher levels of stress, fatigue, and reduced performance. Despite knowing the benefits, many employees avoid breaks due to demanding workloads.

[Research from Simon Fraser University](#) emphasizes that a break's effectiveness depends on how it's spent. Activities like walking or even a short nap can lead to increased well-being and improved task performance. Without breaks, workers are more likely to experience exhaustion and mental drain, affecting their ability to concentrate and make sound decisions.

Those of you who have spoken to the APPA know that we strongly urge our members to take their breaks. Protecting your break time isn't only about you. It is also about maintaining a healthy and respectful workplace.

The next time you're tempted to skip your break; remember you're entitled to this valuable time. Use it! ■



Visit canada.ca/black-history-month for more topics on the achievements of black communities in Canada, listen to their stories, and learn more about their history and contributions to Canadian society.

UNLOCK THE EMSB VIRTUAL LIBRARY: A HIDDEN GEM FOR SUPPORT STAFF



PHOTO CREDIT : PEXELS FROM PIXABAY

DID YOU KNOW THAT AS A MEMBER OF THE EMSB SUPPORT STAFF, YOU HAVE ACCESS TO A TREASURE TROVE OF RESOURCES THROUGH THE EMSB VIRTUAL LIBRARY?

WHY SHOULD YOU USE IT?

The Virtual Library offers thousands of resources at your fingertips from dozens of providers free of charge:

E-BOOKS, AUDIOBOOKS & MAGAZINES

Borrow eBooks and magazines on [Sora](#). From bestsellers to self-help books or magazines, there's something for every interest. Listening on the go? Audiobooks are just a click away.

NEWS ARTICLES & ONLINE NEWSPAPERS

Employees can access the [Montreal Gazette](#), the [National Post](#) as well as other local and national newspapers.

STREAMING RESOURCES

Explore video content on [NFB Campus](#), an option that's perfect for personal growth or supporting students in their learning.

PROFESSIONAL TOOLS

Find books, articles and academic journals in the [Canadian Reference Centre](#) to help you and your students research more effectively. Login through Google using your EMSB email and password.

HOW TO GET STARTED

Visit virtuallibrary.emsb.qc.ca, select [School Staff](#) and explore the list of resources. **Access information can be found on the [ePortal](#).**

CONNECTING TO SORA

Use Sora on your computer from the [EMSB Virtual Library](#) or download the Sora app to your device from the Apple Store or Google Play.

LOGGING IN TO SORA

At the bottom of the screen, click "I have a set up code" and enter the code "**emsbca**". Then, use your EMSB email address and password to log in. For subsequent logins, click "**Sign in using English Montreal School Board**" (you may be prompted to enter your EMSB email address and password).

DON'T LET IT GO UNUSED

Whether you want to expand your professional knowledge, unwind with a good book, or catch up on the latest news, this resource is a valuable tool you shouldn't miss out on.

Take a moment to explore what's available—you might be surprised at just how much it has to offer. Share it with your colleagues, use it in your role, or simply enjoy it for yourself. ■

CONTACT YOUR UNION



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