

Update

2017–2018 • VOL. 45 NO. 3

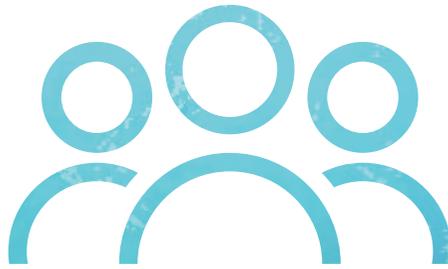
LISTENING TO MEMBERS ACROSS THE PROVINCE

Provincial Executive visiting schools and worksites in most Districts during the winter

Members of the Provincial Executive, along with Provincial Office staff, have begun to fan out across the province to visit schools and worksites in most OSSTF/FEESO Districts. The focus of these site visits, which will continue through the winter, is to ask members what they see as priorities in the next round of bargaining, which could begin as early as June 2019. Contracts for members covered by the *School Boards Collective Bargaining Act* expire on August 31, 2019.

The worksite visits to discuss bargaining goals are among the priorities that have been set for 2017/2018 by the Provincial Executive. While it will be impossible for the seven elected officers to visit every one of the more than 2,000 individual schools and worksites where the Federation's 60,000 members work across the province, the Provincial Executive does want to see as many members as possible over a relatively short period of time. These visits will focus on members who are employed by school boards and covered by the *School Boards Collective Bargaining Act*.

1 UNION



In his address to delegates at OSSTF/FEESO's annual Leadership Conference in August, President Harvey Bischof described the planned site visits as a way "to ensure that we gain a detailed picture of what our members hope for out of the next round of bargaining—not only what issues and priorities they feel need to be addressed, but also how far they are willing to go in support of those issues."

"Our hope," said Bischof, "is to gain a deeper understanding than we can achieve through surveys alone—a more detailed and more nuanced appreciation of what's working and what isn't working for our members in their workplaces."

The visits, which are being coordinated with local District and Bargaining Unit leaders, began in early November and will continue through to the end of February. Most visits will occur before the workday, during a common lunch period or after work.

For members who are not able to speak to Provincial Executive members during this tour, OSSTF/FEESO plans to launch local and provincial level bargaining surveys in the coming year to acquire additional feedback from the member-

60,000 MEMBERS

230 JOB CLASSES

151 BARGAINING UNITS

37 DISTRICTS

ship in preparation for the next round of bargaining. Members can also send feedback through their worksite or branch representatives to their local Bargaining Unit executive, who can ensure that it reaches their Provincial Executive liaison.

OSSTF/FEESO by the numbers

- Over 60,000—Estimated number of members that are active and dues paying at any one time
- 2155—Total number of schools + worksites where OSSTF/FEESO members work in Ontario
- 230—Approximate number of OSSTF/FEESO job classes in public education from kindergarten to post-secondary
- 151—Total number of bargaining units in OSSTF/FEESO
- 37—Total number of districts in OSSTF/FEESO
- 7—Total number of elected Provincial Executive members. 

ÉCOUTER LES MEMBRES PARTOUT EN PROVINCE

L'Exécutif provincial visite les écoles et lieux de travail dans la plupart des districts pendant l'hiver

Les membres de l'Exécutif provincial, ainsi que du personnel du Bureau provincial, ont commencé à sillonner la province pour visiter les écoles et les lieux de travail

dans la plupart des districts d'OSSTF/FEESO. Le but de ces visites, qui se poursuivront tout l'hiver, est de demander aux membres quelles seraient, selon eux, les priorités pour la prochaine ronde de négociation, qui pourrait débuter dès juin 2019. Les conventions collectives des membres régis par la *Loi sur la négociation collective dans les conseils scolaires* arriveront à échéance le 31 août 2019.

Les visites de lieux de travail pour discuter des objectifs de négociation sont parmi les priorités qui ont été établies pour 2017-2018 par l'Exécutif provincial. Bien qu'il soit impossible pour les sept membres élus de visiter chacun des plus de 2 000 écoles et lieux de travail individuels

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1 SYNDICAT

60 000 MEMBRES

230 CLASSIFICATIONS D'EMPLOIS

151 UNITÉS DE NÉGOCIATION

37 DISTRICTS

SUITE DE LA PREMIÈRE PAGE...ÉCOUTER

dans lesquels travaillent les 60 000 membres de la Fédération dans la province, l'Exécutif provincial souhaite rencontrer le plus grand nombre de membres possible dans un laps de temps relativement court. Ces visites seront axées sur les membres qui sont employés par les conseils scolaires et régis par la *Loi sur la négociation collective dans les conseils scolaires*.

Dans son discours aux délégués lors de la conférence annuelle de leadership d'OSSTF/FEESO en août, Harvey Bischof, président, a décrit les visites prévues comme un moyen « de nous assurer d'obtenir une vision détaillée de ce que nos membres attendent de la prochaine ronde de négociation, non seulement les enjeux et les priorités qui, à leur avis, devraient être abordés, mais aussi jusqu'où ils sont prêts à aller pour soutenir ces enjeux. »

« Nous espérons, » a déclaré Harvey Bischof, « acquérir une meilleure compréhension de ce que nous pourrions atteindre que si nous

n'avions recours qu'aux sondages, soit une compréhension plus précise et plus nuancée de ce qui fonctionne bien et moins bien pour nos membres dans leurs milieux de travail. »

Ces visites, qui sont coordonnées par les dirigeants locaux d'unité de négociation et de district, ont commencé au début de novembre et se continueront jusqu'à la fin de février. La plupart d'entre elles se tiendront avant la journée de travail, durant une période commune de lunch ou après le travail.

Pour les membres qui ne pourront pas s'adresser à l'Exécutif provincial durant cette tournée, OSSTF/FEESO envisage le lancement de sondages locaux et provinciaux au cours de l'année à venir afin d'obtenir d'autres commentaires des membres en vue de se préparer à la prochaine ronde de négociation. Les membres peuvent aussi envoyer des commentaires à l'exécutif de leur unité de négociation locale par le biais de leurs représentants en mi-

lieu de travail ou de division, de telle sorte qu'ils parviennent à leur liaison de l'Exécutif provincial.

OSSTF/FEESO en chiffres

- Plus de 60 000 – Nombre total estimé de membres qui sont actifs et paient des cotisations à un moment donné
- 2 155 – Nombre total d'écoles + lieux de travail où travaillent les membres d'OSSTF/FEESO en Ontario
- 230 – Nombre approximatif de classifications d'emplois qu'occupent les membres d'OSSTF/FEESO en éducation publique, de la maternelle/du jardin d'enfants au post-secondaire
- 151 – Nombre total d'unités de négociation au sein d'OSSTF/FEESO
- 37 – Nombre total de districts au sein d'OSSTF/FEESO
- 7 – Nombre total de membres élus de l'Exécutif provincial.

Update

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QUEEN'S PARK NOTES

With the June 7, 2018, provincial election around the corner, Premier Kathleen Wynne's Liberals, in recent months, have made moves in an attempt to shore up their progressive flank with measures such as increasing the minimum wage, strengthening civilian oversight of policing and reforming the criminal justice system.

But, with the imposition of back-to-work legislation to resolve the five-week college faculty strike, Wynne's efforts to present a more progressive-friendly agenda may be imperiled. The collective bargaining process is a crucial component of any progressive agenda and Wynne's interference in it risks damaging any goodwill she has built over the last few months, particularly with the labour movement.

Also, the issues that are central to the college

faculty strike, particularly the precarity of work as it relates to the many occasional and part-time faculty, are issues that Wynne has identified, specifically in the debate around Bill 148 *Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act*, 2017, to be an important element of her attempts to create a more fair society. Yet, the lack of funding for post-secondary education, which is the lowest of any province in Canada, diminishes her message. While Wynne may tout the increased availability of lower and, potentially, free tuition for many students, the length of this strike does little to make those same students, and their parents, believe that she has made post-secondary education more accessible to them. In fact, the perceived good of the lower tuition fees is inconsequential when one has no classes to attend.

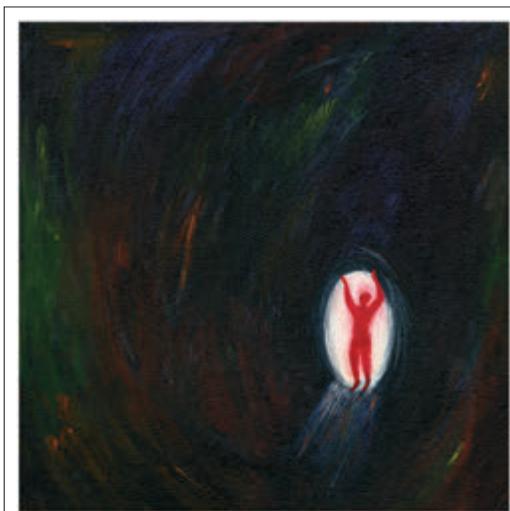
In addition, for many in the elementary and secondary education systems, Wynne's back-to-work legislation reminds them of the Liberals interference and imposition of contracts on education workers over the last few years.

While some may say that Wynne did everything possible to allow the collective bargaining process to conclude on its own, the challenge remains that her actions in the end will not be appreciated by either students, parents or the striking workers. It is likely that Wynne would have

been condemned for imposing back-to-work legislation at any point in the process whether it would have been after one week or ten weeks.

As students and faculty return to classes, the main issue for Wynne and her government to review is the funding formula for post-secondary education. She needs to ask if there is enough money in post-secondary education to allow the proper funding of faculty that are not reliant on precarious work, which in the end, impacts on student learning. Also important is a review of the actions of the employer group and if they were genuinely interested in a collective bargaining settlement or were awaiting government back-to-work legislation to resolve the issue for them.

For elementary and secondary school education workers' unions, the actions of the colleges' employer groups reminds them of similar action by their employer group. It can only be hoped that Wynne will come up with a better plan than the inadequate *School Boards Collective Bargaining Act, 2016*, which did little to address the concerns raised by education unions respecting the actions of the employer group in the collective bargaining act. If not, the current cycle of strikes ended by back-to-work legislation will only continue. And, that, in the end, will only continue to harm the education system and the political party in power. ☹



TAKE A STAND FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DAY | DECEMBER 10

JIM FORSTER HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD

In 2001, the OSSTF/FEESO Human Rights Committee and the Provincial Executive recommended to Provincial Council that an award be established to recognize the work of Jim Forster in the area of human rights and equity. Subsequently, the Jim Forster Human Rights Award was established by Provincial Council.

As president of the former OSSTF/FEESO District 15, Toronto, Forster was an advocate for the empowerment of teachers. During his District presidency, he made progress on improvements to teacher working conditions, including class size.

Elected to the Provincial Executive in 1972, Forster continued to advocate for better learning and teaching conditions. Convinced that a legislative framework for collective bargaining for teachers was essential, he campaigned for these rights as president in 1975 and worked with the Bill Davis Conservative government to produce the *School Boards and Teachers' Collective Negotiations Act*. This legislation was one of the more progressive pieces of bargaining legislation anywhere, until it was repealed by the Harris government.

Forster was the first OSSTF/FEESO provincial president to serve two terms, and it was during his presidency that the Federation accepted his resolution to include sexual orientation in its human rights bylaws.

After joining provincial staff, Forster helped to train District and Bargaining Unit officers in the grievance/arbitration process. He also worked to streamline the process at OSSTF/FEESO's annual meetings, and for years he coordinated and trained AMPA speakers.

Appointed Associate General Secretary in 1985, he became responsible for the support staff at Provincial Office, and in this capacity he



Jim Forster

helped develop a training program, put in place the workplace sexual harassment policy, and made it a priority to ensure equal opportunity for women employed by the Federation.

A key supporter of OSSTF/FEESO's organizing efforts, Forster always recognized the crucial contributions made by all educational workers.

Forster held appointed positions with the Ontario Teachers' Federation, the Canadian Teachers' Federation, and at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. From 1985 to 1993, he served on the executive board of the International Federation of Free Teacher Unions and participated in the creation of its successor, Education International, a global organization representing education workers.

Councillors at the November 2001 meeting of Provincial Council were witnesses to a bit of Federation history—the first presentation of the James Forster Human Rights Award. Roberta Fuller, District 14, Kawartha Pine Ridge received the award, which recognizes exemplary dedication in the struggle for equity and the promotion of human rights locally, provincially and/or internationally over a number of years.

Fuller was a presenter at the World Anti-Racism Conference in 1995 and 1997. She also served as a facilitator for the CLC Equity and Anti-Racism Conference in 1997, and has served on the B'nai Brith Human Rights Committee since 1998. She was awarded the YMCA's Peace Medallion for fostering tolerance, acceptance and peace in 1998.

Jim Forster briefly came out of retirement to present Fuller with the award that bears his name in recognition of his many years of dedication to OSSTF/FEESO and his lifelong commitment to equity and justice.

/Carlos Santander-Maturana is an educational assistant from District 6A, Thunder Bay and is also a member of the provincial Human Rights Committee.

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THE OCT NEEDS TO CHECK ITS PRIORITIES

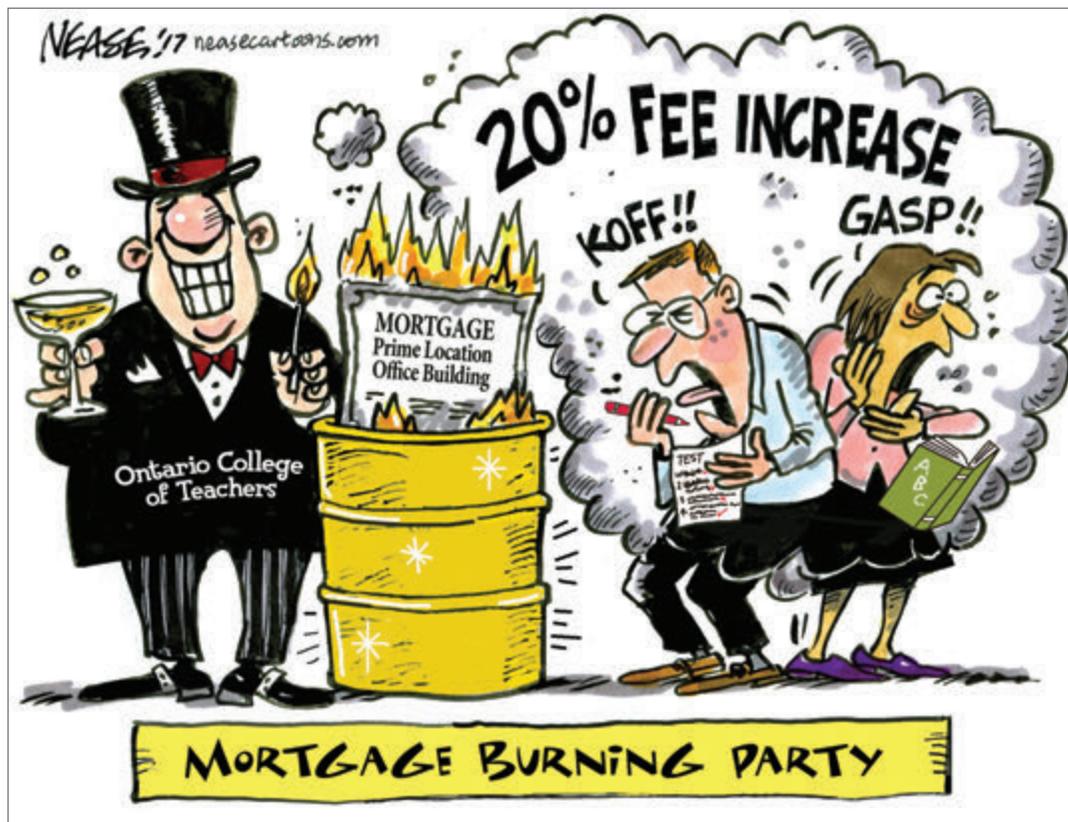
The Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) is expected to recommend a member fee increase of up to 20 per cent for each of the next three years. While details of the College's proposed budget for 2018 are not yet available, it is believed that the chief rationale for the fee hike is the College's desire to pay off the mortgage on its office building in Toronto's Yorkville area near Bay and Bloor Streets, one of Canada's most expensive real estate corridors.

At the June 2017 OCT Governing Council meeting, the College's Finance Committee made two references to fee increase in its report. The figure used in the June report was a recommended \$11 fee increase for three years. The September 2017 Finance Committee report made no direct mention of a fee increase, and stated only that Council members would be briefed on the Committee's budget proposal. The public, however, was not invited to that confidential briefing, but members of the public who were in attendance at the September Council meeting were surprised when a possible fee increase of \$28 was mentioned during an unrelated discussion.

It is not yet clear how much of the proposed fee increase would be dedicated to paying off the mortgage on the OCT's office building and how much would be allocated for other expenditures.

However funds are allocated, the proposed increase raises a number of questions. For instance, in what world does a regulatory body like the Ontario College of Teachers require premium space in one of the country's most expensive business neighbourhoods, shoulder-to-shoulder with luxury retailers like Holt Renfrew, Louis Vuitton and Rolex? Also, if the OCT would like more members to participate in the election of the College's Governing Council, why not ask members to weigh in on the proposed fee increase by including a referendum on the increase as part of the next election? And finally, has the OCT considered the possibility that its members would prefer to pay down their own mortgages rather than the College's?

OSSTF/FEESO has repeatedly expressed concerns about "mandate creep" at the Ontario College of Teachers, and has questioned some of the College's activities. There is no reason for a regulatory body to attend political fundraising dinners, or lobby the government, and it's a mystery how hosting golf tournaments or wine and cheese events helps the OCT to fulfill its regulatory mandate. Those concerns are only exacerbated by the proposed fee increase and the lack



of transparency surrounding it. OSSTF/FEESO will be keeping a close eye the OCT's budget deliberations and the impact of those delibera-

tions on our members. The 2018 budget will be debated and voted on at a meeting of the OCT's Governing Council on December 7-8, 2017.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Thoughts on your editorial, "Twenty years later, why commemorate the Bill 160 protest?" [Update 2017-18 Vol. 45, No. 2]

I believe the legacy of Bill 160 requires each current OSSTF member to develop a clearer knowledge of what is achieved through collective action. As a retiree, the bulk of my teaching career was sandwiched between Bill 100 and Bill 160.

With Bill 100 legislation in the mid-1970s, I became aware of the need to be active in my OSSTF federation. And with Bill 160, I realized that collective security required solidarity with the broader labour community. As the OSSTF oath says, we must think of each other, but now in a broader labour community frame of reference.

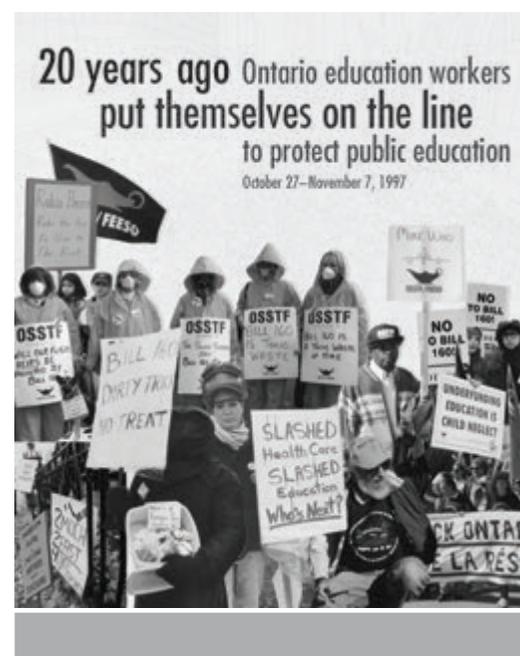
As a member of the provincial political action committee in 1997, the then education minister promised to "create a crisis" (and he did just that), with significant long-term impacts for Ontario's teaching profession, and the broader impacts on Ontario's public education system.

The leadership of OSSTF rose and met the challenges head on. I remember doing the Days of Action protests. I participated proudly in the Ontario-wide shutdown of schools. The membership of today's OSSTF has that legacy

to remember, with its bitter memories, and the experiences of collective action.

Today's OSSTF membership must remember the details of those struggles and real sacrifices linked to the legacy of Bill 160. As Stephen Colbert once commented, "There's an old saying about those who forget history. I don't remember it, but it's good."

Paul Hertel
District 9, Greater Essex—ARM (Active Retired Member)



HARVEY BISCHOF SPEAKS AT RESEARCHED CONFERENCE, OSSTF/FEESO PLANS ITS OWN

OSSTF/FEESO President Harvey Bischof participated on a panel on the opening night of Canada's first ever researchED conference, at Trinity College in Toronto on November 10. Founded in England in 2013, researchED provides low-cost, research-based professional development to teachers, education workers, administrators and academics.

The panel, which also included JUMP Math founder John Mighton, British Council Senior School Advisor Susan Douglas, and Ontario College of Teachers CEO Michael Salvatori, were asked to comment on the prospects for researchED in Ontario.

President Bischof noted that the Ontario educational environment lacks a culture of empiricism, which leaves the education system and its practitioners vulnerable to the influence of self-appointed gurus, ideologues, and advocates who promote unproven trends and fads. While our members frequently know, on the basis of their professional experience, what works and what does not, the government has virtually handed education policy-making over to advocacy groups, like People for Education, that wouldn't recognize the inside of classroom from an educator's perspective. For practitioners to successfully reclaim their professional autonomy, they need

to be able to demonstrate that they are working from a foundation of evidence-based judgment.

"The concept encouraged by researchED," began Bischof, "is that our own members can search out and use solid, empirically-supported studies and have those studies inform their practice. That gets to the very heart of professional judgment."

Trevor Ray, a secondary teacher at Eastwood Collegiate in Kitchener, echoed Bischof's sentiments. "The great part of researchED is that it aligns with what we, as a union, are trying to do...exercise our professional judgment to best meet the needs of our students, without fad initiatives holding us back."

Ray first learned of researchED at OSSTF/FEESO's Leadership Conference in August, where researchED's founder, Tom Bennett, was the keynote speaker. After hearing of the Toronto researchED conference planned for November, Ray quickly registered to attend and is now glad he did.

"The conference has been filled with vibrant and educated speakers who've made well thought-out (and researched) arguments about topics from knowledge-based learning to technology in the classroom. Things we can actually use to go back and improve our teaching practice in the classroom."

"The goal of researchED is to bridge the gap between research and practice in education. Researchers, policy makers, teachers and education workers come together for a day of informa-



tion sharing and myth busting," says founder Tom Bennett, a teacher himself who struggled to find what actually works in the classroom. "Typically researchED conferences take place at a school on a Saturday to keep professional development accessible and affordable."

Conferences usually have six or seven rounds of sessions, each 40 minutes long. Presenters share their work quickly and dynamically, leaving time for discussion. Plenary sessions usually open and close the conference, and panels of speakers are often featured. A researchED conference features both high-profile presenters and local teachers and education workers who apply research in their schools.

We are currently reaching out to find members interested in making a presentation at OSSTF/FEESO's own April 14, 2018 researchED conference. Ideally potential presenters fit one of two profiles:

1. Research—Some of our members, in addition to (or in concert with) their regular school duties, participate in education research. We'd like to hear what type of research you have conducted and how meaningful the results would be to others working with students.
2. Informed Practice—Some of our members are already interested in education research and apply it to their everyday work with students. We'd like hear how you've informed your practice with empirical evidence and published studies, and what results you've seen with students.

If you wish to submit a proposal to present, or if you have a suggestion for a presenter, please contact Randy Banderob (randy.banderob@osstf.ca). Information regarding registering for this conference will be shared in the new year. 🐭



Harvey Bischof, President OSSTF/FEESO participating on a panel on the opening night of Canada's first ever researchED conference

Photo provided by British Council Canada—Photographer Jennifer Toole

WSIB'S NEW POLICY ON CHRONIC MENTAL STRESS IS TOO RESTRICTIVE

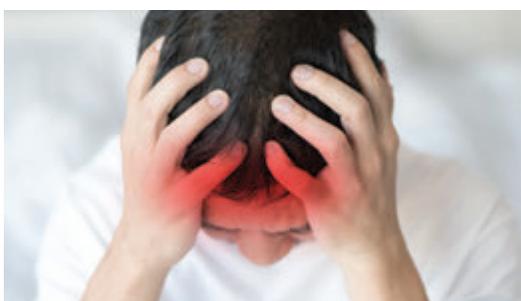
The WSIB's new chronic mental health policy, as it stands, will come into effect on January 1, 2018. It will require workers to prove their workplace was the primary cause of their mental stress injury, which is a different standard than what other injured workers must meet.

This new policy discriminates against workers with chronic mental stress injuries and is only considered substantial when the work related stressor can be proven to be excessive in intensity or duration, in comparison to the normal pressures experienced by other workers. Imposing a more restrictive standard for mental injury entitlement sends a message to workers that their conditions are not taken seriously and that it is "all in their head."

The other glaring issue with the new legislation is that it is not retroactive, meaning it will only allow for benefit entitlements for injuries after January 1, 2018. With no transitional provision, there will be countless workers who are caught in limbo with no access to loss of earnings compensation.

OSSTF/FEESO has taken a proactive approach, sending a letter to the Minister of Labour, Kevin Flynn, asking him to call on the WSIB to uphold the approach to compensate workers for chronic mental stress when the workplace is a significant contributing factor. Chronic work-related mental stress is real and is on the rise. The WSIB is failing in its responsibility to Ontario workers who deserve to know that they are being protected when injured at work. This policy denies workers their Charter right to equal protections and benefits without being discriminated against and needs to be changed before coming into effect on January 1.

/Scott West is a teacher from District 16, York Region and is a member of the Health and Safety/Workplace Safety Insurance Act Committee.



LA NOUVELLE POLITIQUE DE LA CSPAAT EN MATIÈRE DE STRESS MENTAL CHRONIQUE EST TROP RESTRICTIVE

La nouvelle politique de la CSPAAT sur les troubles chroniques en santé mentale, telle qu'elle est en ce moment, entrera en vigueur le 1^{er} janvier 2018. Elle exigera des travailleurs qu'ils prouvent que leur lieu de travail est la cause prédominante de leur lésion attribuée au stress mental, ce qui est une norme différente de celle que tout autre travailleur accidenté au travail doit satisfaire.

Cette nouvelle politique se révèle discriminatoire envers les travailleurs ayant des lésions de stress mental chronique et celles-ci sont uniquement considérées comme étant importantes lorsqu'on peut prouver que le facteur de stress relié au travail est excessif, en intensité ou en durée, par rapport aux pressions et tensions normales que subissent les autres travailleurs. L'imposition d'une norme plus restrictive en ce qui concerne les droits pour lésion mentale fait comprendre aux travailleurs que leurs problèmes de santé ne sont pas pris au sérieux et qu'ils ont imaginé tout cela.

L'autre enjeu flagrant de la nouvelle législation est qu'elle n'est pas rétroactive, ce qui signifie qu'elle accordera des droits à des prestations en cas de lésions qu'après le 1^{er} janvier 2018. Sans disposition transitoire, il y aura d'innombrables travailleurs qui seront



laissés pour compte avec aucun droit à des indemnités pour perte de revenus.

La CSPAAT manque à ses obligations envers les travailleurs de l'Ontario qui méritent de savoir qu'ils sont protégés lorsqu'ils sont blessés au travail.

OSSTF/FEESO a adopté une approche proactive, envoyant une lettre à Kevin Flynn, ministre du Travail, lui demandant de réclamer à la CSPAAT de soutenir la démarche d'indemniser les travailleurs en cas de stress mental chronique lorsque le lieu de travail est un facteur contributif important. Le stress mental chronique relié au travail est réel et est en progression. La CSPAAT manque à ses obligations envers les travailleurs de l'Ontario qui méritent de savoir qu'ils sont protégés lorsqu'ils sont blessés au travail. Cette politique prive les travailleurs de leur droit, reconnu par la Charte, à la même protection et aux mêmes prestations sans discrimination et doit être modifiée avant son entrée en vigueur le 1^{er} janvier.

/Scott West enseigne au District 16, York Region et est membre du Comité sur la santé et sécurité/Loi sur la sécurité professionnelle et l'assurance contre les accidents du travail.

Introducing our **NEW**



OSSTF/FEESO is proud to introduce a new provincial **Equity Mentorship Program** designed to support OSSTF/FEESO members of Equity Seeking Groups who wish to increase their involvement in federation leadership. This may be for you. For more information, go to www.osstf.on.ca/equity

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE MAIN FOCUS OF 2017 H & S CONFERENCE

OSSTF/FEESO's commitment to addressing health and safety challenges faced by members on a daily basis, and to confronting the issue of workplace violence in particular, was evident at the Federation's recent health and safety conference. The conference, entitled "End the Silence, Stop the Violence," was held on November 3 and 4.

Members of the Provincial Executive were in attendance to hear President Harvey Bischof open the conference with an address to the delegates, who numbered about 120, up substantially from 90 at the 2015 conference. Bischof spoke about OSSTF/FEESO's Violence in the Workplace Task Force, the work of our representatives at government tables on workplace violence, and our recent campaign against a new Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) policy regarding Chronic Mental Stress (CMS), which will have a negative impact on our members if allowed to come in effect as planned on January 1, 2018. He reaffirmed the Provincial Executive's commitment to on-going support for the Task Force's initiatives, and thanked participants for their efforts to protect member health and safety at the local level.

The delegates received detailed updates on the work of the Violence Task Force and the status of the Provincial Working Group on Health and Safety (PWGHS), and were given an opportunity for input into the next steps that the Task Force should undertake. The second day of the conference saw a wide variety of concurrent sessions, including a workshop on Emergency Preparedness, a session on the issue of Domestic Violence, an introduction to the newly updated Health and Safety handbook for OSSTF/FEESO representatives, a presentation on the Roadmap to Reporting from members of the PWGHS, and a presentation on the basics of assisting members with WSIB claims. It was a busy, high-energy conference, and participants left educated, informed and reinvigorated as they returned to their Districts and Bargaining Units to continue their work as health and safety advocates for OSSTF/FEESO members.



OSSTF/FEESO climbers from Provincial Office and District 12, Toronto raise money for United Way by participating in the annual CN Tower stair climb



OSSTF/FEESO President Harvey Bischof congratulates Victor Barker (District 22, Niagara), winner of the 2017 OTIP Award for Teaching Excellence in the Secondary category



IT PAYS TO DO THE MATH



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OFL'S 14TH BIENNIAL CONVENTION ADOPTS COMPREHENSIVE ACTION PLAN

Celebrating its 60th anniversary this year, the Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) held its 14th Biennial Convention in Toronto from November 20–24.

OSSTF/FEESO member Patty Coates from District 17, Simcoe, was acclaimed to a second term as OFL Secretary-Treasurer. President Chris Buckley was re-elected for a second term and Executive Vice-President Ahmad Gaied was acclaimed, also for a second term. All three successful candidates had received the endorsement of OSSTF/FEESO, and Patty Coates was nominated for re-election by OSSTF/FEESO President Harvey Bischof.

The convention considered and adopted a comprehensive Action Plan for the next two years. Multi-pronged in its approach, the Action Plan considers three main areas of action. The first broad area of concern is worker issues, with specific attention to health and safety, young

workers' concerns, women's equality, and defending the rights of Indigenous workers, workers of colour, LGBTQ workers and injured workers. The second action area laid out in the plan is a focus on the labour movement itself, with emphasis on member engagement, promoting a unified labour movement, and organizing the unorganized. And the third action area is advocacy and political action, with a focus on promoting peace and inclusion, fighting for a green economy, standing up for public services, working against poverty, and electing provincial, municipal and federal governments that are more closely aligned with the concerns of the labour movement.

The convention also featured a number of resolutions, reports, panels and keynote speakers. Among the speakers were Hassan Yussuff, President of the Canadian Labour Congress, provincial NDP Leader Andrea Horwath, Federal NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh, Farrah Khan, Co-chair of Ontario's Roundtable on Violence against Women, and Stephen Lewis, former Ontario NDP Leader and former Canadian Ambassador to the United Nations.

On November 22, convention delegates rallied and marched to Queen's Park where, later that day, Bill 148, the *Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act*, received third reading in the legislature. Many of the positive measures in Bill 148 are the direct result of intense lobbying efforts on the part of the labour movement, spearheaded by the OFL. 🌐



OSSTF/FEESO President Harvey Bischof nominates Patty Coates for re-election as OFL Secretary-Treasurer

AMPA NEWS

Applications are now being accepted for four positions on this year's news team at the 2018 Annual Meeting of the Provincial Assembly (AMPA). The four-day event will take place in Toronto from March 9 to 12 and members of the team will work throughout the duration of the event to produce a series of newsletters for the over 500 delegates. These are volunteer positions, how-

ever; travel, food and accommodations will be covered.

The positions available are: editor, photographer, English-language reporter, and French-language reporter. Interested members may forward a letter of application detailing their related experience to Michael Young at michael.young@osstf.ca. The deadline for applications is Friday, January 19, 2018. 🌐



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