

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## **OSSTF/FEESO to Hold Province-Wide Central Strike Vote November 6–16**

**TORONTO, ON** — The Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF/FEESO) will hold a province-wide strike vote for school board sector members from November 6 to 16 as the current round of collective bargaining continues.

"Our members want fair, negotiated contracts that address the realities they are seeing in schools every day. A strike vote gives us an opportunity to strengthen our bargaining position and sends a clear message to the Ford government that OSSTF/FEESO members are united behind the bargaining priorities we will bring to the table," said Martha Hradowy, President, OSSTF/FEESO.

A strike vote is not a strike, and it does not mean that job action is imminent or inevitable. A successful strike vote is one step in the collective bargaining process. Additional legal steps would be required before OSSTF/FEESO members could be in a lawful strike position. There is currently no strike date and no job action planned.

This decision comes after OSSTF/FEESO and other education unions called on the Ford government to begin bargaining early in March, before collective agreements expired on August 31. Since then, teachers and education workers do not have renewed collective agreements, raising serious questions about the government's commitment to a fair and timely bargaining process.

OSSTF/FEESO's bargaining priorities include sustainable staffing, manageable workloads, protections against contracting out and job loss, and working and learning conditions that allow teachers and education workers to provide students with the support they deserve.

Added Hradowy, "The government talks about stability in our schools, but stability requires serious bargaining and real progress at the table. Teachers and education workers are in schools every day providing students with the consistency and supports they need. We are seeking collective agreements that improve those conditions and Ontario's publicly funded education system."

The strike vote is separate from the ongoing Ontario Labour Relations Board process concerning which bargaining items are negotiated centrally and which are negotiated locally.

Under Ontario labour law, a strike vote alone does not place workers in a legal strike position. The parties must complete additional legal steps before lawful job action could occur.

OSSTF/FEESO will continue to provide information directly to our members about this round of school board bargaining.

*OSSTF/FEESO, founded in 1919, has over 60,000 members across Ontario. They include public high school teachers, occasional teachers, educational assistants, continuing education teachers and instructors, early childhood educators, psychologists, secretaries, speech-language pathologists, social workers, plant support personnel, university support staff, and many others in education.*

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Contact: Caitlin Reid  
Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation  
[caitlin.reid@osstf.ca](mailto:caitlin.reid@osstf.ca)  
416-576-8346