

OSSTF/FEESO Statement

December 6, 2024 – National Day of Remembrance

Thirty-five years ago, on December 6, 1989, a male gunman entered l'École Polytechnique de Montréal, now known as Polytechnique Montréal, and opened fire, specifically targeting women.

14 women died and 10 others were injured.

It remains one of the worst mass shootings in Canadian history. The women were targeted simply because they were women. In the thirty-five years since this vile mass shooting, it has been horrifying to watch as violence against women and gender diverse people has grown.

On average, one woman or girl is killed every two days in Canada and 1 in 3 workers have experienced domestic violence.

Entire communities are shaken to the core when a femicide occurs, and yet, this horrific crime is on the rise in Canada. OSSTF/FEESO calls on all members and community members to take time today to reflect on the true impact of gender-based violence on our families, schools, workplaces, and communities.

We can and must do more to keep women, girls, gender diverse people, and those who are Two-Spirit safe. Sharp increases in incidents of misogynist, transphobic, and homophobic hate, both online and in person, at work and in our communities, continue to exacerbate long-standing injustices.

As a public education union, we must fulfill our own mandate to help end gender-based violence and all forms of misogyny and hate in our workplaces, schools, campuses, and communities.

OSSTF/FEESO continues to support the Women's Advocate Program, and we are proud to share that the Federation has Women's Advocates in nearly every OSSTF/FEESO District across Ontario. Women's Advocates are specially trained OSSTF/FEESO members providing support and resources to members who may be facing domestic violence.

Earlier this year, OSSTF/FEESO joined hundreds of survivors and advocates to urgently call on the Ford government to declare intimate partner violence (IPV) an epidemic in Ontario and implement the recommendations of the Renfrew inquiry. While the Ford government is deliberately dragging its heels on declaring IPV an epidemic, we remain steadfast in our commitment to this movement. We will continue to do everything we can to support IPV activists and survivors.

Nationally, OSSTF/FEESO is calling on the Trudeau government to implement the International Labour Organization's Convention 190, an international standard that establishes a clear framework for ending violence and harassment in the world of work.



Even though the federal government ratified C-190 earlier this year, they have yet to take active steps to implement it.

Workers need a plan now!

Today we come together, not only in remembrance, but also in support and solidarity. We declare in one united voice, "Never again!" Visit the United Nations' [16 days of activism against gender-based violence](#) webpage to learn more about actions you can take to help end gender-based violence.

