

The OSSTF/FEESO Provincial Executive is pleased to present the PE Liaison Report. Please distribute widely and direct questions to your PE Liaison.

Collective Bargaining Updates

Keep Mobilizing! SAP Application deadline is approaching.

The OSSTF/FEESO Local Bargaining Mobilization Fund supports Districts and Bargaining Units in carrying out targeted actions from the Strategic Action Plan (SAP) for 2025-2026. Many applications have already been received, and local bargaining units across the Province are actively engaged in building member engagement, raising awareness about public school conditions, and developing effective bargaining strategies. Activities eligible for funding must align with SAP pillars, focus on grassroots member mobilization, and foster social solidarity within the union and the broader community.

However, time is running out to submit applications. Bargaining Units should reference D/BU #037/2025-2026 (issued in September 2025), in collaboration with Field Secretariat, Regional Organizers, Provincial Executive Liaison, and Local Organizing Leads.

The deadline to apply is Friday, March 13, 2026.



Education Forum: The Podcast Has Launched!

We are excited to share that Education Forum: *The Podcast* is now live! In the first episode, OSSTF/FEESO President Martha Hradowy discusses bargaining from the basics to beyond! The new Member Mobilization Campaign, *Underfunded and Over It* helps members stay informed, connected, and ready to take action as we prepare for the next round of bargaining. Check out the campaign on our social media pages and visit the website to Act Now at www.underfunded.ca

[Education Forum: The Podcast – Episode 1: Bargaining 101](#)



From the **Provincial Executive**

It is with great sadness that we announce the unexpected passing of OSSTF/FEESO's Associate General Secretary, Joel Duff. This is an unimaginable loss to our Federation, as Joel represented the very best of us.

Joel joined OSSTF/FEESO in August 2023 as a dedicated labour activist committed to protecting public education. Joel spent the entire 21st century in service of the broader labour movement in a wide range of elected and staff roles. These included serving as the Ontario Organizer for the Canadian Federation of Students, Communications Director for the Ontario Federation of Labour, Executive Political Assistant to the President of the Canadian Labour Congress, and the Associate Executive Director of the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations.

Joel came to OSSTF/FEESO with a clear vision: to defend and strengthen public education. He joined a union that had long been at the forefront of change but also stood on the cusp of transformation. With conviction and principle, he set out to strengthen the Federation's organizing and mobilizing strategy for the challenges ahead.

Joel reflected the best qualities of a deeply committed colleague, comrade, and friend. He took the time to understand people and what made them unique, and believed that every person, regardless of their title or role, played a part in building a movement and he made that belief felt. Joel leaves a lasting impact on many across the country, within the labour movement and beyond. He will be remembered with great affection by his neighbours, coworkers, friends, allies, and comrades. OSSTF/FEESO is committed to continuing his work in fighting for a just society for students and workers alike.



Joel Duff

We extend our sincere condolences to his partner, Lauren, their two children, and all his loved ones.

Pension & Benefits Updates

Update on the OSSTF/FEESO ELHT Benefits Plan

The OSSTF/FEESO ELHT has issued an update on the long term sustainability of the benefit plans, and all plan members were sent an email in early February 2026.

Current collective agreements that fund OSSTF/FEESO ELHT benefits expire on August 31, 2026, and funding levels beyond that date are not yet known. Actuarial projections show that, without changes, plan reserves are expected to fall below the minimum level called Claims Fluctuation Reserve's (CFR) required by the Trust during the 2026–27 year. As a result, cost containment measures will be required effective September 1, 2026, which may include administrative efficiencies, changes to member premium contributions, and/or adjustments to benefit plan design. This work is being guided by principles that prioritize member

health outcomes, protect against catastrophic costs, avoid disproportionate impacts, and reflect feedback from the 2025 member benefits survey.

Members will receive advance notice of any approved changes no later than mid-June 2026. More detailed financial information is available in the [OSSTF ELHT Benefits Annual Report with Addendum 2024–2025](#) on the OSSTF/FEESO Benefits website.

All questions should be directed to:
comments@osstfbenefits.ca



CLC International Women's Day 2026 Campaign

The Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) International Women's Day (IWD) 2026 campaign is a continuation of last year's theme, **Rise Up for Gender Justice**, with an objective of showcasing the diversity of challenges and wins related to gender justice achieved by labour activists across Canada.

Below are several CLC campaign resources and digital assets to support your organizing efforts ahead of IWD 2026:

- [Preview of CLC IWD 2026 Statement](#)
- [Fact Sheet for IWD 2026](#)
- [Customizable Social Media Assets via SoSha Toolkit](#)

In addition to these resources, the CLC will be broadcasting their hosted parallel event at the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW) on **March 11th at 8:30 a.m. EDT: *Union Women Rise Up for Gender Justice!***

As part of the Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) Forum, within the context of the 70th Session of the UNCSW, connected to the priority theme of access to justice for women and girls worldwide. This is a unique opportunity for your members to tune in and learn more about how the Canadian trade union delegation at the UNCSW is bringing stories about women's rights and gender justice from our labour movement to the world stage.

Registration to join this event online is now available here



The Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU)

In February, in recognition of Black History Month, Provincial Councillors learned about the [Coalition of Black Trade Unionists \(CBTU\)](#), explored its new education program, and participated in an interactive workshop.



Pink Shirt Day

OSSTF/FEESO Provincial staff in pink on February 25, 2026, in recognition of Pink Shirt Day and our shared commitment to kindness and respect.



The Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) Union Threads: A Craft-In for Women's Power

Register now for the Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) Union Threads: A Craft-In for Women's Power on March 6, 2026.

In celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the OFL Women's Committee, this International Women's Day event brings women together through creativity and conversation. Whether you knit, crochet, cross-stitch, bead, colour, or want to learn, you are welcome to join. As we create, we will also discuss the policies and social issues shaping women's lives today. Participants can attend in person or online via Zoom (link provided after RSVP). **Note:** Participants are responsible for purchasing their own materials.



Register here



School Board Takeovers: Ford Government Power Grab Continues to Target Local Democracy

Over the past year and a half, the Ford government has increasingly relied on extraordinary powers to take control of Ontario's public school boards, sidelining locally elected trustees and centralizing authority at Queen's Park. These interventions go far beyond financial oversight and represent a clear pattern of provincial overreach.

As of this year, five Ontario school boards are under provincial supervision: the Toronto District School Board, Toronto Catholic District School Board, Ottawa-Carleton District School Board, Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board, and Thames Valley District School Board, Peel District School and York Catholic District School Board (on notice). In each case, the Minister of Education has appointed a supervisor with sweeping authority over budgets, staffing, and governance, effectively stripping trustees of their decision making powers.

While the Ford government frames these takeovers as necessary responses to financial challenges, education unions and governance experts have been clear: chronic underfunding is the real issue.

Ontario Funding Increase Still Leaves Ontario's Post Secondary System in Crisis

On February 12, 2026, the Ford government released a funding announcement for colleges and universities which includes a modest increase, but it falls far short of what workers and students need. While a six per cent boost to base funding is welcome after years of cuts, Ontario remains last in Canada for per student funding. Even with this increase, funding will continue to lag thousands of dollars behind the national average.

The government has described this as a "historic" investment, yet it does not repair the damage caused by years of policy choices such as performance based funding, which has driven layoffs, program cancellations, and reduced supports on campuses. Despite studying the crisis through a Blue Ribbon Panel, the province has failed to fully implement its recommendations. Adjusted for inflation and enrolment growth, funding is still roughly \$1.5 billion below 2018 levels.

Instead of addressing funding shortfalls, inflationary pressures, and rising student needs, the government has chosen to blame boards and impose top down control. This approach undermines transparency, silences community voices, and weakens democratic accountability in public education.

For staff and students, the consequences are serious. Provincial supervisors can pause programs, reverse board decisions, and reshape priorities without local consultation. At the same time, the government is moving legislation that would make it even easier to take over school boards for reasons unrelated to finances.

OSSTF/FEESO continues to push back against this power grab. Defending publicly funded education means defending local democracy, adequate funding, and the right of communities to shape their schools. Members' collective action and advocacy remain essential as the Ford government expands its control over Ontario's education system.

At the same time, more costs are being shifted onto students through a two per cent tuition increase and changes to the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) that replace grants with loans. This will leave graduates with higher debt and weaken Ontario's long term economic future.

Workers are also concerned about growing pressure to narrow funding to short term job training at the expense of arts, humanities, and basic sciences. A strong post secondary system — and a strong economy — depends on broad education, stable funding, and decent work.



In a fall media statement regarding Algoma Universities layoffs, Martha Hradowy stated: "This isn't just about Algoma University; the root of the problem lies in Ontario's fundamentally broken post-

secondary funding model. Ontario continues to rank dead last in per-student funding across Canada, forcing institutions to rely heavily on unstable tuition revenue, including from international students.”

Brock University’s recent announcements about laying off workers will cause more devastation. Cost cutting

cannot become a cover for undermining unions, eroding job security, or weakening the quality of education and student supports. Respect for collective bargaining and legally binding agreements must be the starting point for any discussion about change.

OSSTF/FEESO Meets with Ontario New Democratic Party (ONDP) Leadership to Advance Education Priorities

On Tuesday, February 23, 2026, OSSTF/FEESO President Martha Hradowy and members of Senior Staff met with key members of the Ontario New Democratic Party, including the Leader of the Official Opposition, MPP Marit Stiles, Education Critic MPPs Chandra Pasma, and Colleges and Universities Critic MPP Peggy Sattler. The meeting focused on updating the ONDP on the Federation’s current priorities, outlining concerns regarding the Ford government’s education agenda, and identifying opportunities for collaborative advocacy ahead of the next legislative sitting.

During the discussion, OSSTF/FEESO emphasized that its central focus remains improving working conditions for education workers and strengthening publicly funded education. The Federation highlighted four (4) core themes from its 2026 Pre-Budget Submission: greater investment in students and public education; addressing teacher and education worker shortages; expanding academic, social, and emotional supports for students; and ensuring safe, healthy, inclusive learning, and working environments.

To support these goals, OSSTF/FEESO shared several key resources and initiatives with the ONDP, including a proposed draft

Education Sector Regulation under the Occupational Health and Safety Act to address workplace violence, a proposed Private Member’s Bill promoting transparency in school repair needs, a petition calling for an end to the use of the Notwithstanding Clause in labour disputes, and updates from its “Underfunded and Over It” mobilization campaign and Provincial Executive Liaison Report.

The meeting was highly productive, with the ONDP reaffirming its commitment to collaborating with OSSTF/FEESO. Opposition members signaled their focus on public education, health care, and affordability in the upcoming legislative session and expressed appreciation for the Federation’s continued support in community-based outreach efforts across the province.



Member Engagement

Apply Now: 2026–2027 Provincial Standing Committees and Councils

Applications are now open for 2026-2027 Provincial Standing Committees and Councils on the OSSTF/FEESO website. This is your opportunity to share your ideas, support members, and help shape our Federation’s work.

The deadline for on-time term applications is March 1, 2026. On-time co-option applications are due May 1, 2026. Late applications will only be considered if needed.

Before you apply, review the Standing Committee and Councils Application Information document on the website.

[You can also view the full list of Provincial Standing Committees and Councils here.](#)



Online Nomination Form



Member Engagement

30 Years of Retired OSSTF/FEESO Members Making a Difference

Congratulations to the Active Retired Members (ARM) Council on 30 years of leadership and dedication! For three decades, you have brought retired members together, strengthened our union, and supported OSSTF/FEESO's goals, especially in political action and election readiness.



Together is Greater! Congratulations to Our 2026 Student Achievement Award Winners

OSSTF/FEESO proudly hosted the **2026 Student Achievement Awards** competition, and what an inspiring year it has been. Students from across Ontario submitted powerful and creative projects based on this year's theme, "2Gether is >1 (Together is Greater Than One)."



We received a wide range of entries that highlighted teamwork, kindness, and the strength of community. In December, OSSTF/FEESO Districts selected their local winners. Those entries then moved on to a regional and provincial judging process.

[Click to see the full list of winners](#)



Please join us in celebrating these outstanding students and continue promoting this important award program in your Districts.

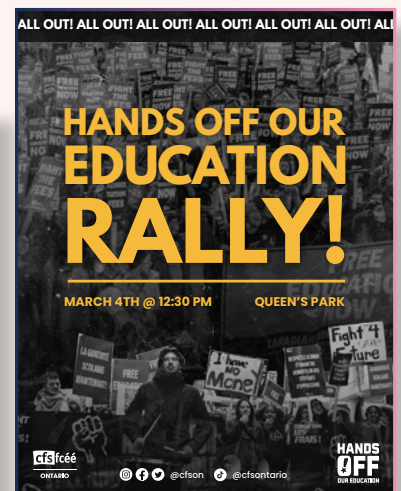
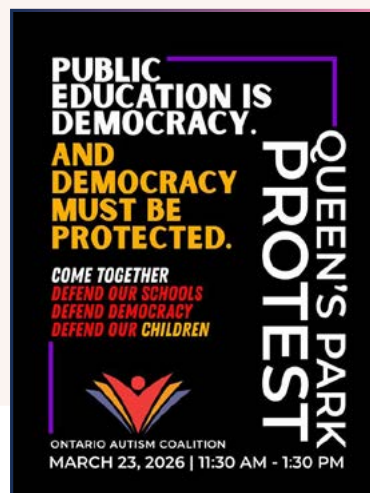
Highlights

Annual Meeting of the Provincial Assembly (AMPA)
Friday, March 13 to Monday, March 16, 2026

**Equity, Anti-Racism, and Anti-Oppression Officer
Regions 3 & 5 Training**
Friday, March 27 to Saturday, March 28, 2026

**Protective Services Committee Regionals
(1, 2, 3, 4, & 5)**
Thursday, April 16 to Friday, April 17, 2026

Protective Services Committee Conference
Thursday, April 30 to Friday, May 1, 2026



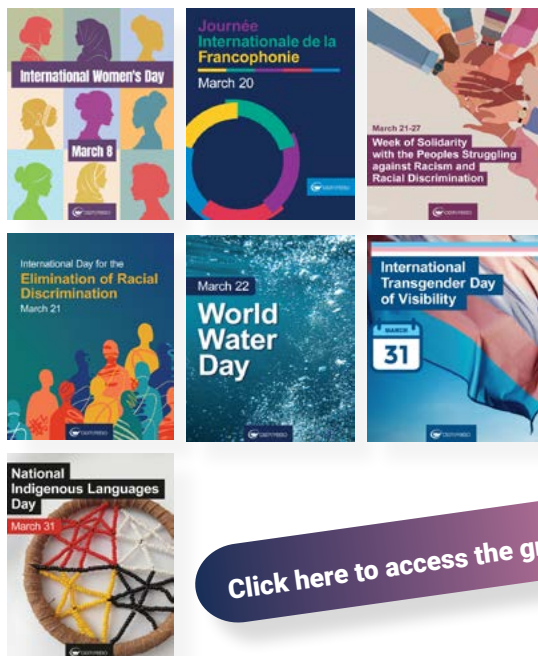
D/BU Memos Issued in February

*Sign in within the members' section of the website to access President and Local Executive targeted D/BU Memos. [Access the All-Member D/BU Memos for February here.](#)

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| 102 | OTF/FEO Special Recognition Award | 109 | Appointment of Interim Associate General Secretary in the Professional Services Division |
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| 105 | Tentative Deal reached by Nipissing University Faculty Association (NUFA) | 112 | CLC Triennial Convention 2026 |
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Dates of Significance in March

OSSTF/FEESO Provincial social media graphics can be accessed using the hyperlinks below.



- March 8** *International Women's Day*
- March 20** *Journée Internationale de la Francophonie*
- March 21-27** *Week of Solidarity with the Peoples Struggling against Racism and Racial Discrimination*
- March 21** *International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination*
- March 22** *World Water Day*
- March 31** *International Transgender Day of Visibility*
- March 31** *National Indigenous Languages Day*

Click here to access the graphics.