

Update



PPM 159 to change the way initiatives are implemented

During last year's central talks with the government, OSSTF/FEESO demanded action on the ever-increasing workload faced by education workers due to their bombardment by various Ministry of Education initiatives. Through intense negotiations, our Federation brought about three important changes:

- A moratorium on new initiatives would be put in place for one year,
- OSSTF/FEESO would participate in a joint workgroup to consult with the Ministry on the development of future initiatives, and
- OSSTF/FEESO would consult on the draft of a Policy & Program Memorandum regarding Ministry and School Board initiatives.

That Policy & Program Memorandum, PPM 159: Collaborative Professionalism, guarantees unprecedented involvement and participation by education workers in the implementation of new and existing initiatives at all levels of the education system.

"PPM 159 marks an extraordinary change in the way initiatives impacting education are to be implemented in our schools," said Paul Elliott, president of OSSTF/FEESO. "District school boards have been directed to cooperate with education workers as professionals on Ministry of Education initiatives."

At the provincial level, the Provincial Committee on Ministry Initiatives has been struck and will include representation from education unions, principal associations and school board leadership. This committee will meet quarterly to discuss proposed and existing initiatives, as well as implications for training, resources and timing.

PPM 159 also states that district school boards are to establish a mechanism to "foster consultation, collaboration and communication" with Federation leaders for the implementation of new and existing initiatives.

School boards are expected to honour the commitments set out in collective agreements

and related memoranda dealing with collaborative professionalism. It also comes with the understanding that collaborative professionalism will not increase workload.

"An important aspect of collaborative professionalism is that it will include all education workers," said Elliott. "That means teachers, support staff and all educational professionals who work for school boards will be included in this new process."

"This direction for all administrators clearly outlines their responsibility to provide a collaborative work environment."

President Paul Elliott also noted that the implementation of PPM 159 will be a priority for OSSTF/FEESO this year, and that local leaders will soon be surveyed to determine if collaborative discussions on ministry initiatives have begun in all Districts. 

La N P/P 159 modifiera la mise en œuvre des initiatives

L'an dernier lors des pourparlers centraux avec le gouvernement, OSSTF/FEESO a réclamé des mesures quant à la charge de travail toujours croissante des travailleuses et travailleurs en éducation parce qu'ils sont bombardés par les diverses initiatives du ministère de l'Éducation. Après des négociations intenses, notre Fédération a provoqué trois modifications importantes :

- Un moratoire sur les nouvelles initiatives se-

what is a PPM?

The acronym PPM stands for Policy/Program Memoranda. A PPM is a directive to school boards and school authorities that outlines the expectation of the Ministry of Education regarding the implementation of ministry policies and programs. It is important to note that PPMs are directives and not merely suggestions or advice.

PPMs are issued on an as-need basis and they are numbered in the order that they are issued. To view the most recent list of PPMs, visit www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/ppm.html.

qu'entend-on par N P/P?

L'acronyme N P/P correspond à Note Politique/Programmes. Une N P/P est une directive transmise aux conseils scolaires et aux administrations scolaires exposant les attentes du ministère de l'Éducation pour ce qui est de la mise en œuvre de politiques et de programmes ministériels. Il est important de noter que les N P/P sont des directives et non de simples suggestions ou conseils.

Les N P/P sont diffusées au besoin et elles sont numérotées en fonction de leur ordre de publication. Pour consulter la liste des N P/P les plus récentes, visitez : www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/fre/ppm/ppmf.html.

La N P/P

rait mis en place pour un an

- OSSTF/FEESO participerait à un groupe de travail conjoint de consultation avec le Ministère sur l'élaboration des futures initiatives et
- OSSTF/FEESO sera consulté sur l'ébauche d'une Note Politique/Programmes concernant les initiatives du Ministère et des conseils scolaires.

Cette Note Politique/Programmes, N P/P 159, *La collaboration professionnelle*, garantit un engagement et une participation sans précédent des travailleurs en éducation dans la mise en œuvre des initiatives existantes et nouvelles à tous les niveaux du système d'éducation.

« La N P/P 159 marque un changement spectaculaire dans la manière dont les initiatives ayant des implications sur l'éducation seront mises en œuvre dans nos écoles, » a déclaré Paul Elliott, président d'OSSTF/FEESO. « Les conseils scolaires de district ont reçu l'ordre de collaborer aux initiatives du ministère de l'Éducation avec les travailleurs en éducation en tant que professionnels. »

À l'échelle provinciale, le Comité provincial sur les initiatives ministérielles a été créé et il sera composé de représentantes et représentants de syndicats en éducation, d'associations de directions d'école et de dirigeants des conseils scolaires. Ce comité se réunira chaque trimestre

pour discuter des initiatives proposées et en cours, y compris les implications en matière de formation, de ressources et de délais.

La N P/P 159 indique également que les conseils scolaires devront créer un mécanisme « afin de favoriser la consultation, la collaboration et la communication » avec les dirigeants des fédérations dans le cadre de la mise en œuvre des initiatives existantes et nouvelles.

On s'attend à ce que les conseils scolaires respectent les engagements figurant dans les conventions collectives et les notes connexes à la collaboration professionnelle. Il est également entendu que la collaboration professionnelle ne visera pas à augmenter la charge de travail.

« Un aspect important de la collaboration professionnelle est qu'elle inclura tous les travailleurs en éducation, » a indiqué Paul Elliott. « Cela signifie que le personnel enseignant, le personnel de soutien, tous les professionnels de l'éducation qui travaillent pour des conseils scolaires seront inclus dans ce nouveau processus. »

« Cette directive à tous les gestionnaires définit clairement leur responsabilité de fournir un environnement de travail collaboratif.

Paul Elliott, président, a également fait remarquer que la N P/P 159 constituera une priorité pour OSSTF/FEESO cette année et que les dirigeants locaux devront bientôt participer à un sondage dans le but de déterminer si des discussions collaboratives sur les initiatives du Ministère ont été entamées dans tous les districts. ☺

will be at 15 years when the 2018 general election comes around. It is becoming more difficult to envision how a party currently beset by such poor approval numbers for its Leader and Premier, Kathleen Wynne, can rebound enough over the next 18 months to capture a fifth consecutive mandate. The enthusiasm for Kathleen Wynne, who was widely accepted as a fresh face for the Liberals in 2014, has waned significantly, especially in the Greater Toronto Area and other urban centres. And serious troubles in a number of policy areas—particularly the hydro file with the unpopular proposed sale of 60 per cent of the utility to private interests and the politically-devastating increases in electricity prices—severely imperil the Liberals' electoral prospects. Add to that the recent humiliating by-election loss in the safe Liberal seat of Scarborough—Rouge River and it seems ever more possible that the Liberal government will not survive past 2018.

With the Liberals in apparent decline, most Ontarians will look to the opposition parties as an alternative. In this regard, Ontario's Progressive Conservatives are usually considered first by a plurality of voters. But with a rookie Leader in Patrick Brown—who is still regarded as a neophyte by many voters, including PC supporters—the Tories have much work to do if they want to gain the confidence of the electorate. And with many still unsure of Brown's policy direction, especially given his recent head-spinning convulsions regarding the physical and sexual health curriculum, it may be difficult to convince Ontarians to see him as a potential premier. It is noteworthy that some of Ontario's more electorally successful Premiers, including Mike Harris and Dalton McGuinty, did not win on their first attempt.

The electoral predicaments in which the Liberals and PCs find themselves might offer Andrea Horwath and the NDP a rare opportunity to leap from third-party status straight to the government benches. Horwath has been conducting extensive outreach to shore up support among unions and other progressive organizations, and her strong support of the \$15 minimum wage coupled with her unwavering resistance to the Liberals' partial sell-off of Hydro One are growing evidence of her determination to forge a new path for her electoral ambitions. If she and her party continue down this path, they may well have the same electoral success as the third parties achieved in the 1990 provincial election and the 2015 federal election. ☺

Queen's Park notes

Ontario NDP prospects improve for 2018 election

With many Ontario supporters of the New Democratic Party still despondent over two successive general election losses—one at the provincial level in 2014 and the other at the federal level in 2015—it may be difficult for some New Democrats to imagine a brighter electoral future for their party any time soon. But faint signs of a NDP rebirth, especially at the provincial level, are slowly becoming more evident.

The long reign of the Ontario Liberal Party

Update

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Le Comité des services en langue française recherche vos mises en candidature pour un de nos membres qui se démarque et s'implique dans l'épanouissement et la promotion de la langue française au sein d'OSSTF/FEESO et dans son lieu de travail.

Veuillez envoyer vos mises en candidature avant le 31 janvier 2017.

Visitez www.osstf.on.ca/prix-du-cslf pour de plus amples renseignements.

Because of Her



Trailblazers. Innovators. Pioneers. Vanguard.

During the month of October, we celebrate Women's History Month. And we have many stories to tell. Recognizing the achievements of the remarkable women who have shaped our nation is as important to Canada as the history they've changed. Brave and bold, these women transformed the landscape for women of their time, and for the sisters who have followed.

In 1867, Emily Stowe became the first woman to practice medicine in Canada. According to the Canadian Medical Association, of the 80,000 doctors who practice medicine in Canada today, 40 per cent are women and 65 per cent of those women are under 35 years of age.

Clara Brett Martin was admitted to the bar as the first female lawyer in Canada in 1897. According to Catalyst.org, more than 22,000 women were practicing law in Canada in 2010.

In 1903, Emma Baker became the first woman in Canada to obtain her Ph.D. She earned her psychology degree from the University of Toronto. Universities Canada states that 58 per cent of university graduates are women. In 2010, there were over 990 thousand university students enrolled in full-time studies and a further 330 thousand in part-time studies.

Without the Emmas, Emilys and Claras of our world—the trailblazers—where would women be? Where would you be?

This month, use social media to celebrate and reflect on the journey that you've taken #Becauseofher.

Whether you are where you are today because of a woman in our past or because you are the trailblazer leaving your mark for a woman in your life, tell the world. Women owe their lives, their liberties and their position in life to those brave and bold women who came before us. Now it's our turn to be the brave and to be bold in the changes that we make for our daughters and granddaughters and nieces and sisters.

What have you done #Becauseofher? 



Members across Ontario took part in the recognition of Orange Shirt Day on September 30, 2016.

Orange Shirt Day is a legacy of the St. Joseph Mission residential school commemoration event held in Williams Lake, BC, Canada.

The initial commemoration was in the spring of 2013, and grew out of an account by a First Nations residential school student who had her orange shirt taken away from her on her first day of school at the Mission.

That first commemoration has evolved into a nation-wide opportunity to keep the discussion on all aspects of residential schools going on an annual basis.

The end of September was selected as the date of recognition because it represents the time of year when First Nations, Métis and Inuit children were taken from their homes to be placed in residential schools.

Members of OSSTF/FEESO know the importance of commemoration, and of educating current and future generations about the residential school system and how we can all work together in the spirit of reconciliation. 



Community involvement

OSSTF/FEESO continues its tradition of community involvement through charities and coalitions.

Each year our Federation chooses a worthy charity to support and makes donations and contributions toward a number of organizations working to improve the lives of Canadians.

This year, OSSTF/FEESO has once again chosen KIDS HELP PHONE as our designated charity. During its twenty-six year history, Kids Help Phone has greatly expanded its outreach as a bilingual national organization serving children and teens in need of counselling, advice and intervention. Kids Help Phone now provides direct phone and online support to over 2.2 million requests for help each year, including young people living in rural and remote communities across Canada where supports are not readily available. The Kids Help Phone website also provides access to resources on a wide variety of issues including sexuality, harassment and bullying, drugs and alcohol, dating, and family relationships. Youth awareness materials are provided to schools free of charge to help build awareness of Kids Help Phone services and how to access them.

Kids Help Phone is also one of four organizations working together in partnership to provide Good2Talk, a free, confidential, and anonymous helpline providing professional counselling and information and referrals for mental health, addictions, and well-being to post-secondary students aged 17–25 in Ontario.

In addition, the Federation allocates resources to support labour-based and community organizations that advocate on behalf of many issues aligned with our policies. We are members, for example, of coalitions working to protect healthcare and childcare in Ontario. We sit on equal pay coalitions and work to defend the rights of women; parents, teens and those affected by racism, poverty and mental illness. Pride celebrations and the campaigns initiated by Egale Canada are supported by donations and our attendance at fundraising events. This year, we have even supported the work of a students' group educating against impaired driving. We also set aside annual donations for striking workers at Christmas time so that family members can receive gifts and groceries.

Dozens of requests are received each month and members can rest assured that each one of them receives thorough consideration. 



Student well-being... EQAO's newest frontier?

During the tumultuous years of the Harris government, when then Minister of Education John Snobelen created his infamous “crisis in education,” the general public was led to believe that there was an urgent need to measure how Ontario students were doing province-wide. In 1996, the Ontario government created an arm’s-length agency called the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO). Since that time, EQAO has administered standardized tests in math and literacy to students across the province’s publicly-funded education system.

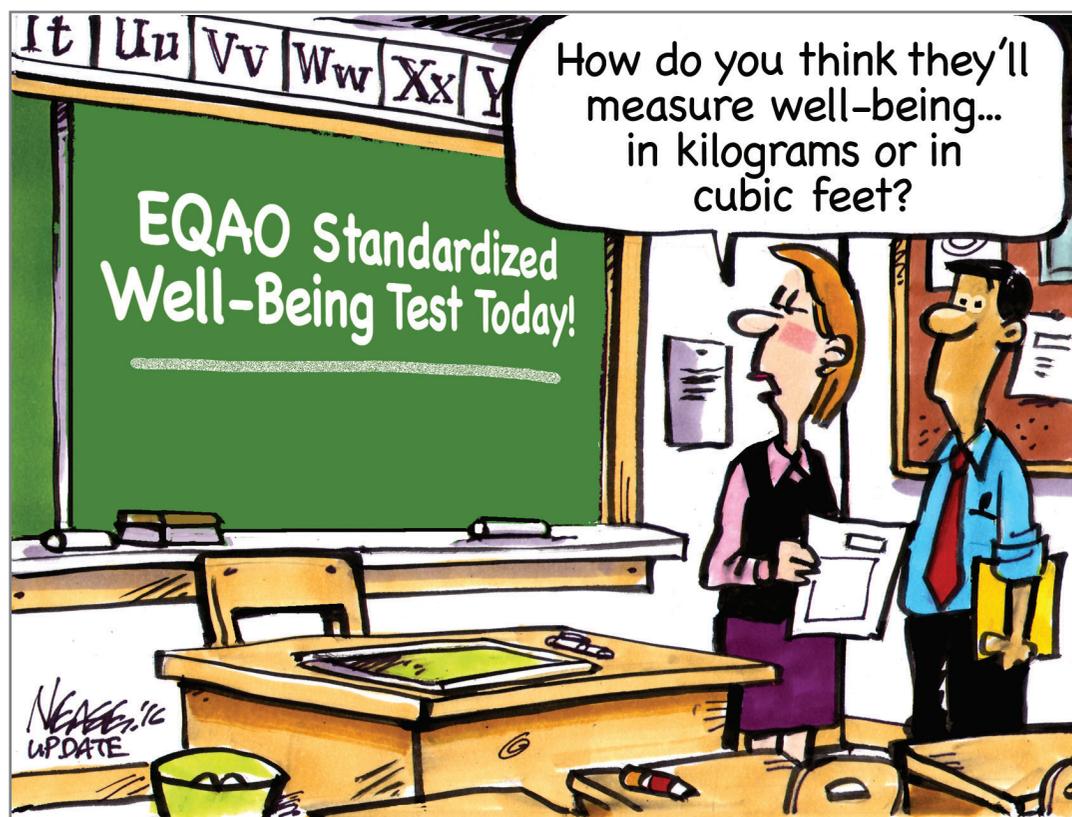
Now, every year, the front pages of newspapers often include school-by-school results from these standardized tests, administered starting at the Grade 3 level and continuing into Grades 9 and 10. As a result, EQAO standardized testing continues to be a political tool for governments and the private sector to divide communities along class lines, and to launch attacks against publicly-funded education.

OSSTF/FEESO policy is that these tests should not be used “to compare schools and/or district school boards.” Unfortunately, the public appetite for the inevitable media frenzy that ensues when EQAO results are released makes it difficult to fight for an end to EQAO testing. In the recent Discussion Document on Ontario’s Well-Being Strategy for Education, the government planted the seed for what is on the horizon: “We can work together to develop ways to measure our progress in promoting well-being, from the early years through to Grade 12.”

OSSTF/FEESO understands and supports the need to promote well-being. In fact, in 2014, our union provided a proposal to partner with the Ministry of Education on the subject of well-being, committing to the development and delivery of a resource and workshop on Building Resilience. We hope that our proposal will still be considered as the government moves forward on its commitment to student well-being.

OSSTF/FEESO also welcomed the additional goal of promoting student well-being as outlined in *Achieving Excellence: A Renewed Vision for Education in Ontario*. It is essential that the resources and supports created as the Well-Being Strategy is implemented and advanced, are directed primarily towards that goal.

The Ministry has made a bold commit-



ment to promoting the well-being of students. OSSTF/FEESO believes that any move towards the development of a measurement to be reported in the same fashion as EQAO literacy and numeracy scores will serve not to promote, but to undermine the well-being of students and staff—particularly in areas of the province that

are affected by significant factors such as poverty and violence—that are known to impact learning. OSSTF/FEESO renews its ongoing commitment to the mental health and well-being of staff and students, and calls on the government to do the same. Future investments should be in support of well-being; nothing more, nothing less. ☺

Murdered and missing indigenous women and girls—Canada’s crisis

When a mother receives the news that her daughter is missing, she is, of course, overcome with worry and alarm. And when she receives the devastating news that her daughter has been found murdered, the pain is almost unbearable. Each year, on October 4, vigils are held around the country to remember and demand justice for more than 582 women and girls who, according to the Native Women’s Association of Canada, are either missing or murdered. The majority of the cases in the database happened from 2000–2010, but we know that missing and murdered indigenous women and girls have been reported since 1944. The RCMP’s

own report states that there are more than 1200 indigenous women and girls who have been murdered or are missing in Canada. Over half of these cases remain unsolved. This is a crisis in Canada.

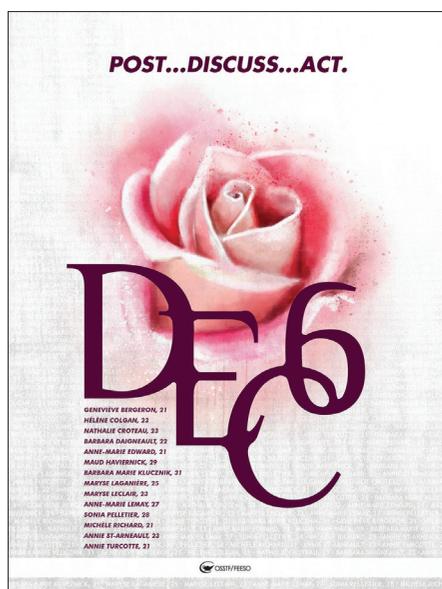
The Canadian government has finally launched an inquiry into the systemic causes behind the violence that indigenous women and girls experience and their greater vulnerability to that violence. Dr. Linda Many Guns, Native studies professor at the University of Lethbridge, says that, “the focus needs to be on developing a system that’s going to stop the murders rather than just identify people who are missing.”

Regrettably, the violence doesn’t only affect the women who are missing or killed. This violence is intergenerational. Most of the missing and murdered women had children, and of the missing and murdered women who are in the Canadian database, half are under 31 years of age. Aboriginal women and girls are three and a half times more likely to be killed by a stranger than non-Aboriginal women. The inquiry will hopefully explain this enormous difference.

These women and girls have been largely forgotten by our society. Only through years of vigils and outrage expressed through demonstrations has the government finally felt compelled to answer the demand for a proper inquiry. We must never forget these women and girls, and we must never stop fighting to end this violence. ☺

Dec 6 materials

This year OSSTF/FEESO is continuing its great work with the White Ribbon Campaign, the YWCA and the London Abused Women's Centre (LAWC). We are making available a number of materials that we hope you can use at your worksites to 'POST...DISCUSS...ACT.'



Some of the activities that you can organize in your worksites are:

- Encourage the use and display of materials in classrooms.
- Encourage discussion on the importance of gender equality and sexual consent.
- Create bulletin board displays to commemorate the Montreal Massacre and raise awareness of violence against women in our society. Displays should include the names of the 14 murdered women, red roses, OSSTF/FEESO December 6 poster, White Ribbon signing poster, statistics on violence, relevant newspaper articles, student-created posters etc.
- Collect money and donate to a local women's shelter.
- Organize a school candlelight vigil.
- Distribute white ribbons to all male students and staff in homerooms.
- Announce on the school-wide PA the events that occurred on December 6, read the names of the women who were murdered simply because they were women, and encourage students to work to end violence, in all its forms, within their school and their community. Then, have a moment of silence.
- Extend the conversation by using the back of this year's OSSTF/FEESO December 6 poster to educate about street harassment

and its pervasiveness in our workplaces and lives.

- Change your twitter and Facebook profile pic to the December 6 rose by going here: www.osstf.on.ca/en-CA/news/mn-nov-25-2015.aspx.

You can order the December 6 materials, which include the OSSTF/FEESO rose poster (with rose on one side and YWCA street harassment infographics on the opposite side), Purple Lapel Violence Against Women Awareness Pins (with proceeds going to LAWC) and the White Ribbon Campaign signing posters through your District office.

If you have any questions or need materials, please contact tracey.marshall@osstf.ca.

Articles commémoratifs du 6 décembre

Cette année, OSSTF/FEESO poursuit son excellent travail de collaboration avec la Campagne du ruban blanc, le YWCA et le *London Abused Women's Centre* (LAWC).

Nous avons de nombreux articles disponibles afin que vous vous en serviez sur vos lieux de travail pour «AFFICHER...DISCUTER...AGIR».

Voici quelques-unes des activités que vous pouvez organiser à vos lieux de travail :

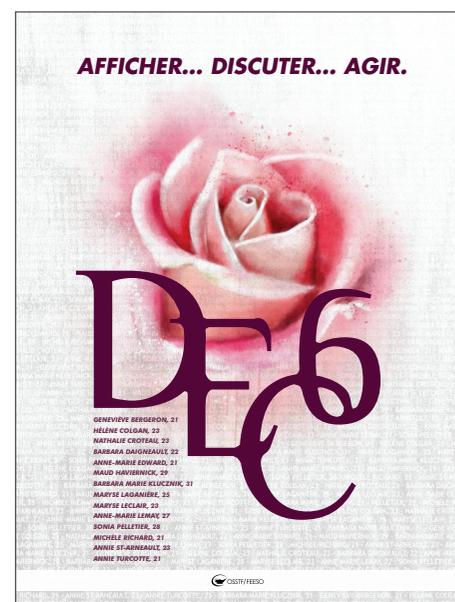
- Encouragez l'utilisation et la présentation d'articles commémoratifs dans vos salles de classe
- Encouragez la discussion sur l'importance de l'égalité des sexes et du consentement sexuel
- Créez des panneaux d'affichage en mémoire du Massacre de Montréal et pour susciter une prise de conscience sur la violence faite aux femmes au sein de notre société. Parmi les éléments en exposition, il est important d'inclure le nom des 14 femmes assassinées, des roses rouges, l'affiche du 6 décembre d'OSSTF/FEESO, l'affiche à signer de la Campagne du ruban blanc, des statistiques sur la violence, des articles de journaux pertinents, des affiches créées par les élèves, etc.
- Recueillez de l'argent et faites-en don à un refuge pour femmes de votre quartier
- Organisez une veille aux chandelles à l'école
- Distribuez des rubans blancs à tous les élèves et à tous les membres du personnel de sexe masculin des classes-foyers
- Communiquez par l'intermédiaire du sys-

tème de haut-parleur de l'école ce qui s'est produit le 6 décembre, dites le nom des femmes qui ont été assassinées pour l'unique raison qu'elles étaient des femmes et encouragez les élèves à collaborer pour mettre fin à la violence, sous toutes ses formes, au sein de leur école et de leur collectivité, puis observez une minute de silence

- Élargissez la conversation en vous servant du verso de l'affiche du 6 décembre d'OSSTF/FEESO de cette année pour sensibiliser les personnes autour de vous sur ce qu'est le harcèlement de rue et son omniprésence dans nos milieux de travail et dans nos vies
- Remplacez votre photo de profil sur Twitter et Facebook par la rose du 6 décembre en vous rendant ici : <http://www.osstf.on.ca/en-CA/news/mn-nov-25-2015.aspx>

Vous pouvez commander, auprès de votre bureau de district, des articles commémoratifs du 6 décembre, dont l'affiche à la rose d'OSSTF/FEESO (avec la rose au verso et l'infographie du YWCA sur le harcèlement de rue au recto), des épinglettes mauves de sensibilisation à la violence faite aux femmes (dont les profits seront versés au LAWC) et les affiches à signer de la Campagne du ruban blanc.

Pour toute question supplémentaire, ou si vous avez besoin de matériel, communiquez avec tracey.marshall@osstf.ca.



Speak Up and Keep Kids Safe
During October, OACAS and Children's Aid Societies collaborate with community partners to raise awareness about how to identify and help prevent child abuse.



UNE Vive? Can Ecuador's national teachers union survive the latest attack?

At 5 a.m. on Monday August 29, representatives of the Ecuador's Ministry of Education, accompanied by national police in riot gear, stormed the national headquarters of the National Teachers' Union (UNE) in Quito. Breaking locks and pushing through lines of union activists, police removed computers and other Union archives as part of a "liquidation process" initiated by the government in July.



National Police confront UNE supporters defending the union's national headquarters in Quito.
(Photo Credit: Ecuador LibreRed)

Just four days before the raid, UNE members marched through the streets of cities and towns throughout Ecuador as part of a national day of action against the government of Rafael Correa. Indigenous organizations and national trade union affiliates gathered together, in part, to protest a self-declared "21st Century Socialist" government that seems determined to destroy one of the oldest and largest worker organizations in the country.

On July 20, 2016 the Vice Minister of Education had issued an order declaring that the 72-year-old union had failed to fulfill its institutional mandate. The Minister of Education later alleged that the union had failed to formally register its executive officers with the government. Despite the fact that since 2014 UNE had repeatedly attempted to register its elected executive with the Ministry, the government refused to do so until the union provided the personal information of every single person who voted in the election. When UNE refused, the "liquidation" order was issued.

The storming of the union's headquarters was really the culmination of an eight-year campaign against UNE by the Ecuadorean government.

When Correa put teacher evaluations and a system of merit-based pay at the centre of his attempt to reform the education sector, this initiated a series of teacher actions in opposition to these policies. But with a majority in the National Assembly, Correa was able to pass his reform package, punctuating his victory with a declaration that UNE had been "overwhelmingly defeated."

UNE, however, continued to offer a strong Left critique of many of Correa's initiatives, and allied itself with other workers' organizations and indigenous student groups that also took issue with government policies. In response, the government became increasingly vindictive. Correa abolished automatic dues check-off for UNE members, ended leave for union work or for teachers to attend UNE meetings, and banned union meetings at schools. Eventually the government seized control of the \$400 million unemployment fund that UNE had independently created and managed.

There may still be hope for UNE's survival. Correa will not run again in the upcoming elections, and the candidate most likely to replace him was a key player in negotiating a brief rapprochement between UNE and the government in 2009. In the short term, UNE has filed an appeal to the dissolution order and continues to support and organize members.

UNE continues to have the support of both national and international unions and social movement organizations (OSSTF/FEESO is among the hundreds of organizations that have petitioned the Correa government to reinstate UNE's legal status). There is no doubt that UNE members will continue to fight not only for their right to freely associate, but also for a critically conscious and vibrant public education system for their students. While still very fluid, UNE's situation is a grim reminder that even the most progressive governments are all too easily tempted by neo-liberal tactics when it comes to the education sector.

James Campbell is a member of OSSTF/FEESO District 34—Independent Educational Programs, currently on leave in Ecuador.

[This is an abridged and condensed version of a more detailed report, which is available on education-forum.ca]

Something to watch for

We proudly continue to provide the latest news affecting OSSTF/FEESO members through *Update*. We also however, issue an educational magazine three times a year called *Education Forum*.

Providing a progressive lens on public education, *Education Forum* (education-forum.ca) includes articles and features that merit a longer shelf life. Its stories provide useful information and insights that can pertain to both your work and personal lives.

An *Education Forum*-branded display case has been created to keep those copies easily accessible and will be popping up in worksites with larger member counts, this fall.

Watch for it!



Education pays off.

Want to get ahead?

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Educators
FINANCIAL GROUP



Member recognition

Seven members of OSSTF/FEESO were presented with prestigious awards at Provincial Council in June. They were recognized for their work and dedication on behalf of the Federation in a variety of capacities.



Linda Brisson (District 33—District de l'Est) was presented the Comité des services en langue française Award of Merit for her contributions to promoting French language activities that have an impact

on the education system. Linda has been recognized as an active leader within her District and bargaining unit, and has been a strong advocate for French language services in her school community.

Lynne Montpellier

(District 3—Rainbow) was recognized as the winner of the Communications Award, which acknowledges an individual, bargaining unit or District



for their effective efforts in communicating with their local members. Lynne successfully took on the challenge of keeping her members informed and motivated through local publications before and during their local strike in the spring of 2015.



Daniel Peat (District 22—Niagara) was presented the Political Action Award in honour of Larry French and Wendell Fulton for his leadership in political action within the Federation and through his work with other unions and

labour councils. Daniel is well known for his many years of dedication to progressive political action and activism, both in his District and at the provincial level.

Diane Akitt (District 7—Bluewater) was the winner of the James Forster Human Rights Award for her dedication to supporting social justice issues and promotion of human rights locally. Diane has become known in her school community for organizing a gay-straight alliance in her school, and she has been an active member of her local OSSTF/FEESO Human Rights/Status of Women Committee.



Gerry Culhane (District 1—Ontario North East) was presented with the prestigious Provincial Executive Award, which is given to a member who, in the opinion of the Provincial Executive, has rendered meritorious and outstanding services to OSSTF/FEESO at both the provincial and local level. Gerry has been a District and bargaining unit president, and served as the chair of the Provincial Educational Services Committee from 2001–2003.

District 29—Hastings—Prince Edward received the Bob Brooks Award recognizing the work of the District to foster positive relations between OSSTF/FEESO and the school community. District 29 initiated the Kevin Manion Memorial Lecture Series in memory of a former member who died in a tragic accident in 1998. The lectures focus on social justice issues, and have included Linwood Barclay, Stephen Lewis, Maude Barlow and Wab Kinew as speakers. Doug Ferguson accepted the Award on behalf of District 29.

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Ian Cotter (District 24—Waterloo) was the winner of the Norm Snyder Award, which recognizes the outstanding contributions by a member of a District or Bargaining Unit committee or branch executive. Ian was recognized for his



work as a member of the Teachers/Occasional Teachers Bargaining Unit Executive and was acknowledged for his dedication for serving on a number of committees in his District.

If you think a member from your District or Bargaining Unit is deserving of recognition, check out the list of provincial awards for members on the OSSTF/FEESO website under the Services section.



Employee recognition

Years of service awards were bestowed upon 11 OSSTF/FEESO Provincial Office employees for their length of service and loyalty to the Federation. On September 13, the following were honoured for reaching these meritable milestones: Ronda Allan, Domenic Bellissimo and Thérèse Matteau—20 years; Grace Hyman, Lisa Rogers, Karyn Purdy, Kimberly Thériault, James Spray, Randi Macdonald and Josephine Spencer—25 years; and Wendy Ozyer—30 years.

Congratulations and thank you to all!



20 Years of Service Award: (l-r) Ronda Allan, Thérèse Matteau and Domenic Bellissimo



25 Years of Service Award: (l-r) Randi Macdonald, James Spray, Josephine Spencer, Lisa Rogers, Grace Hyman and Karyn Purdy. * (far right) 30 Years of Service Award: Wendy Ozyer

* (Absent: 25 Years of Service recipient Kimberly Thériault)

Thousands rally for decent work

On October 1, more than five thousand workers and their families from over 45 Ontario communities rallied at

Queen's Park to demand meaningful changes to Ontario's employment laws. The Rally for Decent Work kicked off the OFL's Week for Decent Work, October 1–7, encouraging workers to demand positive change by connecting with their MPPs and sharing information about what is needed to create fairer employment laws in the province.

"We're here because we believe that it is possible to create an economy built on decent jobs," said OFL President Chris Buckley at the rally. "We know we can do better—we can build the Ontario we want."

A number of speakers addressed the crowd about the kinds of changes to the *Employment Standards Act* and the *Labour Relations Act* that are needed to improve their working conditions:

UFCW's Tim Hum endured a 22-month strike at Wings Food Processing. He said the government needs to provide arbitration assistance so that workers and employers can get to an agreement.

Deb Henry, a grocery-store clerk with Unifor Local 414, said that her colleagues, many of who are single parents, need employers to provide schedules two weeks in advance.

Paid sick days for all workers are needed so that workers don't lose their jobs or their pay for being sick, said Laura Kaminker from CUPE Local 1989.

OPSEU's Marilou Martin discussed the need for decent hours, a higher minimum wage and the effect of precarious work on the Kitchener-Waterloo area.

Security guard Jana Papuckoski, with United Steelworkers Local 5296, called on the government to end contract flipping.

Suliman Bacharat, from Unite Here Local 75, spoke about employer intimidation and the need for card-check certification. He said that what kept him going was the poor treatment of the Trump hotel cleaning staff.

"This rally shows that Ontarians know that they need to tell the government to make it fair. It's long past the time where Ontario should have created conditions for good jobs across this province, and that's what we're calling on them to do right now through the Changing Workplaces Review," said Buckley.

The Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) and its partner campaign, "The Fight for \$15 and Fairness", brought together thousands of workers and their families from communities across Ontario to carry the message that fair employment laws are needed in the province.

The OFL's Make It Fair campaign takes on issues of inequality in the workforce, and coincides with the province's "Changing Workplaces Review." The campaign gives voice to unions' demands for across-the-board changes to the *Employment Standards Act* and the *Labour Relations Act* that would improve standards for every worker and make it easier for them to join a union. 



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