

Update



Serious concerns about the "Protecting Students" Act

Despite a number of suggestions and objections raised by OSSTF/FEESO, the Liberal government passed Bill 37, the *Protecting Students Act*, on November 15.

There is a long history behind the evolution of this legislation. In 2011, a *Toronto Star* investigation of the Ontario College of Teachers' (OCT) discipline process alleged that Ontario students were not being adequately protected from professional misconduct by teachers. The *Toronto Star's* allegations resulted in an inquiry, led by retired Justice Patrick LeSage, into the OCT's discipline processes. LeSage's report was made public in 2012 and recommended a number of steps that culminated in the introduction of provincial legislation to address this perceived problem. After two previous attempts to introduce legislation died on the legislative order paper—the first as a result of the 2014 Ontario general election and the second due to the prorogation of the Legislature in the summer of 2016—the Liberal government introduced Bill 37, the *Protecting Students Act*, in October.

Although the legislation was first contemplated a number of years ago, the latest incarnation of the bill has been fast-tracked by the governing Liberals, with committee hearings happening within three weeks of the bill's introduction. Despite this, OSSTF/FEESO submitted both a written and verbal brief to the committee, in which a number of concerns regarding the proposed legislation were raised.

First, OSSTF/FEESO is concerned with the publication of a member's involvement in criminal proceedings. Specifically, the most problematic aspect of the legislation is the extremely broad scope of its language. The legislation requires the posting of "current or previous criminal proceedings," which may include historical criminal charges for which there was no conviction, as well as current, unproven charges that have yet

to be resolved. The prejudicial consequences of such postings for innocent members is incalculable. Furthermore, it is possible that non-relevant criminal convictions will be included, needlessly harming excellent and long-serving teachers. This practice is counter to Justice LeSage's suggestion that the OCT should follow the model of the Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario, wherein a much narrower summary of any existing court-imposed restriction on a member's right to practice is published.

OSSTF/FEESO is also concerned with the current practice when a case is referred to the Discipline Committee. First, a "Notice of Hearing" is published and linked to the Member's information on the public register. In addition to the allegation that the Member has committed professional misconduct, particulars of the alleged incidents are published.


OSSTF/FEESO has handled multiple cases where a Notice of Hearing is placed on the OCT website prior to a hearing that then takes up to four years to schedule, only to have the OCT withdraw all or part of the allegations within 14 days of the scheduled hearing date. This is extremely prejudicial to members who are accused of misconduct and then publicly associated with the precise details of the allegations for years before the member has the opportunity to respond to those specific allegations in the hearing stage.

OSSTF/FEESO believes there are several solutions to this issue, many of which arise from the LeSage Report itself. OSSTF/FEESO submits that the College should be required to complete "Prosecutorial Viability Assessments" at the Investigation Committee stage. This would allow the OCT to screen out false or unviable allegations before publishing the Notice of Hearing. Justice LeSage explicitly recommended that the College introduce prosecutorial viability assessments. OSSTF/FEESO believes that a prosecutorial viability assessment prior to a referral to the Disci-

pline Committee is the fairest and most transparent method to ensure that innocent members of the College are not prejudiced by specific and unfounded public allegations from the College.

Another issue that OSSTF/FEESO raised was the redaction of particulars. Justice LeSage expressed concern about the content of Notice of Hearings. He stated "the Notice of Hearing must contain a concise statement of the material facts and allegations, but not the evidence. The evidence is to be presented in a public forum where it will be heard and weighed by a trier of fact." OSSTF/FEESO submits that the College's publications of highly specific particulars prejudices members and should be restricted. If a member is accused of a criminal offence, such precise details are not available because they may yet be unfounded.

OSSTF/FEESO also expressed concerns regarding the timelines of the Notice of Hearing. Specifically, OSSTF/FEESO submits that our concerns could be addressed by restricting the time period when a Notice of Hearing is available. It is OSSTF/FEESO's experience that discipline cases take two to four years to proceed to a disciplinary hearing. OSSTF/FEESO submits that given these issues the College should only publish the Notice of Hearing once a formal disciplinary hearing date has been set and College Counsel has determined whether any allegations will be withdrawn. Given the last-minute nature of previously withdraw allegations, OSSTF/FEESO proposed a time limit for publication of the Notice of Hearing. OSSTF/FEESO suggested that a Notice of Hearing should be published 15 working days prior to a hearing on the merits of a case at the Discipline Committee.

Despite OSSTF/FEESO's suggestions, the Liberal government proceeded to pass the Legislation without any changes that reflected the concerns expressed. The PCs and NDP also supported the bill at the final reading. 

Join the conversation

Education in Ontario is divided into four distinct systems; English Public, English Catholic, French Public, and French Catholic. We are all very proud of the high quality education students receive in the province. As overall enrolment has declined however, pressures associated with maintaining these parallel systems has increased. This has led to a costly competition between these different school boards to attract a dwindling number of students. It has also resulted in school closings in every part of the province.

The fact that two of these publicly-funded systems are meant for just one religious denomination has prompted even the United Nations Human Rights committee to point out that this situation is “discriminatory.”

There is a movement gaining momentum across the province. A campaign has started to encourage the politicians in Ontario to consider an alternative to the current, outdated model of four parallel school systems.

The proposal is to move to one secular school system offered in each official language—English and French.

Ontario has an opportunity to engage in a conversation about the future of a publicly-funded education system that best represents our diver-

sity, promotes inclusivity, and is accessible to all of our children. It is time to talk about ending the administrative duplication between school systems and the wasteful competition between those systems to attract students. The financial resources eaten up by that duplication and competition would be far better utilized providing our students with the supports they need. After all, it is 2016.

You are invited to join the conversation. You can send a message asking the decision-makers in the Ontario government to be bold and have

the courage to create one public school system in each official language—a system that’s modern, progressive and fair. Other provinces have made the change and seen the benefits. Now it’s Ontario’s turn.

Find out more about the Charter for Public Education and consider signing on to register your voice to start a conversation about modernizing education in Ontario.

You can learn more at onepublicsystem.ca.



Queen's Park notes

Two provincial liberals charged with Elections Act offences

Almost two years after the Sudbury byelection that saw former Federal NDP MP Glenn Thibeault win a seat in the Ontario Legislature as a Liberal, Ontario Provincial Police laid *Elections Act* charges against two prominent Ontario Liberals.

Former Deputy Chief of Staff to the Premier and Chief Executive Officer of the Ontario Liberal Party, Patricia Sorbara, face two charges relating to bribery. Those charges stem from an attempt to convince former 2014 general election Liberal candidate, Andrew Olivier, to withdraw from seeking the Liberal nomination for the byelection. After the charges were announced, Sorbara resigned her position as CEO of the Ontario Liberal Party.

Facing one charge of violating the *Elections Act* is prominent Sudbury Liberal fundraiser and organizer Gerry Lougheed.

The stunning charges against Sorbara and

These charges could lead to fines of up to \$25,000 and a maximum jail time of two years less a day.

Lougheed left Premier Kathleen Wynne and her caucus reeling from opposition attacks in Question Period. Both the Progressive Conservative and the New Democratic Party seized on the charges to expand their narrative that the Liberals are a tired, corrupt government that needs to be replaced at the next election. As well, the opposition parties are demanding that Thibeault, who was recently appointed Minister of Energy, resign from Cabinet. The opposition parties allege that Thibeault was promised a Cabinet position to entice him to leave federal politics and run for the provincial Liberals.

The OPP was initially considering laying criminal charges in this case, but has since decided to seek provincial offences charges under the *Elections Act*. These charges could lead to fines of up to \$25,000 and a maximum jail time of two years less a day.

Sorbara and Lougheed will make their first appearance in court on November 21. It is unclear how long the proceedings will take. Whatever the result, the charges and ensuing court case will continue to remind voters of Ontario Liberal Party indiscretions leading up to the June 7, 2018 general election.

Update

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Liberals maintain Ottawa–Vanier byelection

Despite reeling from a devastating summer byelection loss in the traditionally safe Liberal riding of Scarborough–Rouge River and the fallout from politically unpopular hydro-electrical price increases, Premier Kathleen Wynne's Liberals were able to hold on to the riding of Ottawa–Vanier in November's byelection contests.

The Ottawa–Vanier byelection was called as a result of the resignation of Attorney General Madeleine Meilleur. She had held the Ottawa–Vanier riding since her election in 2003. And prior to that, the Liberals had held the riding at both the provincial and federal levels since 1971. In fact, Meilleur had last won the riding in 2014 by a margin of greater than 30 per cent. To replace Meilleur, the Liberal candidate was Nathalie Des Rosiers, the Dean of Common Law at the University of Ottawa. Des Rosiers was also the former General Counsel at the Canadian Civil Liberties Association. With the help of Des Rosiers' impressive resume, the Liberal margin was only modestly reduced by Progressive Conservative candidate and former Ontario Ombudsman, André Marin. Many prominent Liberals, including provincial and federal Cabinet Ministers, canvassed for Des Rosiers. Des Rosiers also had an endorsement from former Liberal Prime Minister Jean Chrétien.

With so many high-profile supporters and the potential political stakes being so high, the victory was a great relief for the governing Liberals. Had they lost this riding, the future electoral prospects for the party would have been even more greatly

imperiled. At the very least, it is certain that many calls would have been heard for a significant change in the direction of the party. Whether that would have resulted in dramatic changes such as an abandonment of the partial sell-off of Hydro, or even Premier Kathleen Wynne's reflection on her political future, is uncertain.

At the same time, the Ottawa–Vanier victory does not mean that the Liberals' political difficulties are behind them. The reduction in their vote total in Ottawa–Vanier, coupled with a similar vote reduction in the other byelection, in Niagara West–Glanbrook, continues to cause concern for the Liberals' political prospects heading into the 2018

general election.

While the Liberals appear in decline, the political fortunes of Patrick Brown's Progressive Conservatives were buoyed by the results in both byelections. In addition to the Ottawa–Vanier vote increase, local 19-year-old PC candidate Sam Oosterhoff was able to retain Niagara West–Glanbrook for his party. Despite the controversy around Oosterhoff's socially conservative views, including his opposition to abortion and the fact that he defeated Brown's preferred candidate for the party's nomination, the PCs still comfortably won the riding of recently departed MPP and former party leader Tim Hudak. 🇨🇦

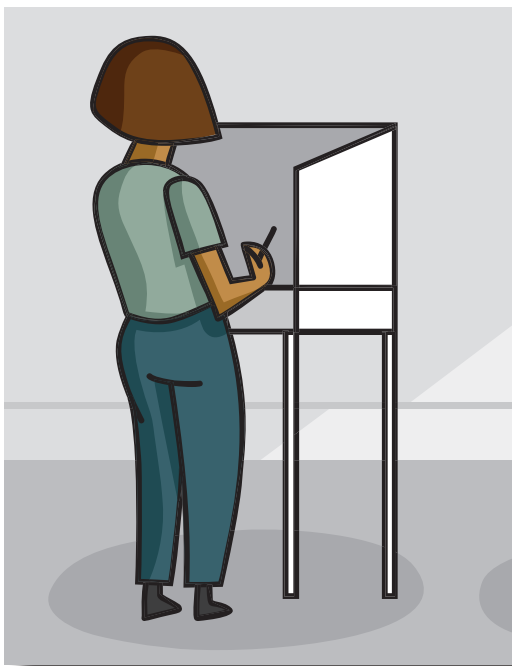
TAKE THE TRADE QUIZ!

QUESTIONS:

1. Which developed country has been sued the most times under international trade agreements?
2. Which country has never lost a legal battle to a foreign investor when sued under a trade agreement investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) mechanism?
3. Which international trade agreement signed by Canada originally contained the words "climate change" that were later removed in the negotiation process?
4. Why is the American company Lone Pine Resources Inc. suing the Canadian government for \$118.9 million (USD)?
5. Which US presidential Republican and Democratic candidates do not support ratifying the TPP?
6. What medical product is CEN Biotech suing Canada to provide after being rejected by Health Canada?
7. A Swedish company (Vattenfall) sued Germany under the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT) to keep what running?
8. In 2002 Mel Hurtig wrote "The Vanishing Country: Is it too late to save Canada?" How many Canadian companies did he find had been taken over by foreigners since NAFTA's ratification in 1987?
9. How many jobs is Canada projected to gain as a result of the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement?
10. Which Canadian company is suing the US government for \$15 billion under NAFTA?

ANSWERS:

- Score out of 10**
1. Canada. Canada has been sued 38 times under NAFTA (according to the Canadian government website), making it the most sued developed country in the world.
 2. United States. Under the 50 trade agreements signed by the US which include ISDS, there have been 17 cases against the US and none have succeeded.
 3. Trans-Pacific Partnership.
 4. The Quebec government revoked their license to explore shale gas deposits under the St. Lawrence River under its moratorium on tracking.
 5. Hillary Clinton, Bernie Sanders and Donald Trump.
 6. Medical Marijuana.
 7. Nuclear power stations (when Germany decided to phase out nuclear energy).
 8. Over 10,000.
 9. None. There will be a net loss of 58,000 Canadian jobs according to a study by Tufts University Global Development and Environment Institute.
 10. TransCanada. Following the rejection of Keystone XL by President Obama, the Canadian company has taken legal action under the NAFTA and also initiated Constitutional litigation against the U.S. Administration.



For more information about our TPP—Ask Why? campaign, please visit peoplesclimatemovement.ca



EQAO gets another failing grade

For more than a year, OSSTF/FEESO had been expressing serious concerns about The Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) plans to move the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) online. Many of those concerns were validated on October 20, when the launch of the online OSSLT came to a crashing halt due to what EQAO called “widespread technical issues.”

OSSTF/FEESO has always had concerns about the value of the OSSLT, but had expressed a number of specific concerns about moving the test online during consultations with the EQAO Advisory Group in 2014, and again after pilot testing in 2015 revealed a number of issues. Those issues included accessibility, security and adequate access to computers.

The concerns expressed by OSSTF/FEESO were over the ability of the system to confirm that the student being tested was indeed the student indicated by the student number in the system, the possibility that test results could be hacked or tampered with, and the fact that tests would be subject to computer analysis rather than being scored by qualified teachers.

After the October 20 test was halted by EQAO, OSSTF/FEESO President Paul Elliott issued a statement to the media. “This high-stakes testing already places an enormous stress on students, and the addition of a system-wide failure to that experience serves only to elevate that stress to an entirely unacceptable level,” said Elliott. “The learning opportunities that have been lost to students in order to prepare for this electronic test, combined with today’s abject failure of the system, should be more than enough to force the Ministry of Education to completely reassess this current testing regime.”

OSSTF/FEESO Educational Services Department staff continue to have concerns about EQAO’s pursuit of a computer-based testing model for its standardized tests. Those concerns include questions about insufficient computers for students’ use, issues of equity and fairness between students using differing technologies (e.g. older computers, iPads, smartphones), reliable and consistent connectivity during the assessment, the availability of IT staff for troubleshooting at every school site, the opportunity to re-write the test if problems are experienced, and the mental health and well-being of students who find an online version of the OSSLT particularly stressful. 🌐

December 6

December 6, 1989, is etched in Canada’s collective memory. For educators, a school shooting is our worst nightmare. I remember coming home that day and turning on the TV to watch the news. Reports of the shooting flashed on the screen. A gunman had entered a classroom at École Polytechnique in Montreal, ordered all the males to leave and then shot the female students. For the next 20 minutes, he roamed the halls targeting only women, shooting 28 and killing 14. My sister was a university student in Montreal at the time. I vividly remember the fear I felt as I called to make sure she was safe at home, and my relief when she answered. So many others lost a daughter, a mother, a wife or a friend to gender-based violence that day.

Every year now, December 6 is a day to remember and commemorate the lives of the 14 young women who were killed simply because they were women. We pledge to take action to encourage the elimination of gender-based violence in our schools and our communities. We pledge to promote gender equality to our students and encourage an awareness of important women’s issues in our classrooms and commu-



nities. We commemorate these 14 young women with displays in our workplaces, and invite male staff and students to sign the White Ribbon Campaign poster, signifying their commitment to end violence against women.

In spite of all our efforts, sexism remain deeply entrenched in our culture. Just to the south of us, a blatant misogynist has been elected president. We must continue to speak out against rape culture and the culture of silence that discourages victims of violence from speaking out and making official complaints. We must all take the pledge to do what we can to end violence against women.

/Teresa Marrello is a retired teacher from District 27, Limestone and sat on the Status of Women Committee. 🌐

Le 6 décembre

Le 6 décembre 1989 est inscrit dans la mémoire collective du Canada. Pour le personnel en éducation, une fusillade en milieu scolaire est notre pire cauchemar. Je me souviens d’être revenue à la maison ce jour-là et d’avoir allumé le téléviseur pour écouter les nouvelles. Les reportages de la fusillade apparaissaient à l’écran. Un homme armé était entré dans une salle de classe à l’École polytechnique de Montréal, avait ordonné à tous les hommes de quitter puis a abattu les étudiantes. Pendant les 20 minutes qui ont suivi, il a erré dans les couloirs ciblant seulement les femmes; il en a tiré 28 et tué 14. Ma sœur étudiait à l’université à Montréal à l’époque. Je me rappelle comme si c’était hier de l’angoisse que j’ai ressentie en l’appelant pour m’assurer qu’elle était en sûreté à la maison et de mon soulagement lorsqu’elle a répondu. Ce jour-là, nombreux autres ont perdu une fille, une mère, une femme ou une amie en raison de la violence liée au genre.

Chaque année maintenant, le 6 décembre est un jour pour nous souvenir et commémorer la vie

de 14 jeunes femmes qui ont été abattues sous le seul prétexte qu’elles étaient des femmes. Nous nous engageons à prendre les mesures visant à favoriser l’élimination de la violence liée au genre dans nos écoles et nos communautés. Nous nous engageons à promouvoir l’égalité entre les sexes auprès de nos élèves et à encourager une prise de conscience des enjeux importants touchant les femmes dans nos salles de classe et dans nos communautés. Nous commémorons ces 14 jeunes femmes avec des expositions dans nos milieux de travail et invitons le personnel et les élèves de sexe masculin à signer l’affiche de la Campagne du ruban blanc, témoignage de leur engagement à mettre fin à la violence faite aux femmes.

Malgré tous nos efforts, le sexisme reste profondément ancré dans notre culture. Au sud de nous, un misogynne affiché a été élu président. Nous devons continuer à nous élever contre la culture du viol et celle du silence qui dissuadent les victimes de violence de dénoncer et de déposer des plaintes officielles. Nous devons tous nous engager à faire ce que nous pouvons pour mettre fin à la violence contre les femmes.

/Teresa Marrello est enseignante retraitée du District 27, Limestone et a siégé au Comité du statut de la femme. 🌐



The Communications/Political Action Committee (CPAC) hosted its biennial conference on November 4 and 5 in Toronto. This year's theme was *Hear We Go*, which was designed to get local CPA Officers and local leaders to think about the importance of improving our skills in reaching and engaging members, and then inciting them to action.

The conference was attended by about 170 delegates from across the province, who participated in plenary sessions and training workshops to improve their skills in communications and political action. Erika Shaker, from the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, opened the conference with a retrospective look at the effects of precarious work on young adults and the broader community, especially in the education sector.



During her presentation, entitled "Feeling the Burn of the 'Job Churn,'" Erika provided a number of statistics showing that Canada has an ever-growing problem with child poverty and a lack of stable work for Canada's youth, and the overall negative impact these issues have on our communities.

At the conclusion of her presentation, Erika noted that the issue of precarious work is, "neither new nor inevitable: devaluing workers, undermining those supports that provide people with the opportunities to collectively demand better, and attacking public institutions as old fashioned or outmoded is hardly an innovative strategy."

Delegates also attended a panel discussion



where they received advice and ideas from three former MPPs on what makes for effective lobbying. Rosario Marchese (Trinity—Spadina), Garfield Dunlop (Simcoe North) and Carol Mitchell (Huron—Bruce) all provided insights into best practices for engaging and influencing members of the legislature.



Nine workshop options were made available to delegates in the areas of communications and political action. They included both basic and advanced practices in communications to better reach local members, as well as how to get members out to support community events. In addition, training was offered in lobbying skills, how to get involved in local labour councils, and the basics of how the provincial level of government works.

Next year, CPAC will host regional training sessions for local officers and leaders.



Live the change

CLC Rise Up 2016

I am grateful to OSSTF/FEESO for all the experiences I was able to take in at the *Rise Up! Live the change*, 2016 conference. I was able to gather new and different perspectives surrounding marginalized communities, and I felt empowered by the various speakers, all of whom emphasized that we must strive for inclusiveness and acceptance of all people. And I heard straightforward and thoughtful concerns about the demographics of various unions, and about who does and does not get high paying jobs, and why.

Thanks to this conference, I have been able to inform my own teaching practices and bring discussion about the importance of accessibility into the classroom. I am able to challenge students with material they normally don't experience in a safe way, and I am planning to present some of the workshop materials to different school clubs and union meetings in Kitchener-Waterloo.

One of the workshops I participated in was called "An Intergenerational Talk." We had a discussion around the stories told by individuals who were new to their union, and about how the union had helped them. Through this opportunity to participate in a diverse gathering of people with differing and sometimes unique opinions about the purpose of unions, I have become better informed about the essential work unions do for their members and in defence of human rights. As a new member of OSSTF/FEESO, I feel very welcome and appreciated after attending this conference.

/Travis Smalley is a member of District 24, Waterloo.



It's

Your Job

Prevention Starts Here



2016–17 Student Video Contest—For the third year the WSIB has partnered with the Ontario Ministry of Labour to support and promote the importance of workplace health and safety training through the "It's Your Job" student video contest.

To enter, students are encouraged to develop an original and creative video, up to two minutes, to illustrate the importance of working safely on the job. Prizes will be awarded for the top three submissions. Entries will be accepted until March 3, 2017.

For all the contest details, visit www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/contest/index.php

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Building young workers' power

CLC Youth Summit

The CLC Youth Summit took place from October 23–25 at the Shaw Centre in Ottawa. This passionate event, with over 400 young workers from across Canada, began with a panel of young worker leaders. I was inspired by the composition of the panel, which included Sandra Hudson from Black Lives Matter and Pablo Godoy from UFCW (United Food and Commercial Workers). The discussion emphasized that young workers are not only the future, but the NOW. It was recommended that young workers run for leadership positions in our union and challenge any current structures that might limit their participation.

I attended “Aging Out,” “Master of Toast,” “If not you, then who” workshops. Much of the information was presented to engage and inspire new activists to acquire skills and become more effective young leaders. The workshop that was most useful to me personally was “Master of Toast,” where I was able to brush up on my public speaking skills in front of a crowd.

As I am sure most Canadians have heard, Trudeau’s controversial visit to the Summit was met with both interest and protest. What I found interesting about this was the divide in the room which, in my opinion, reflected a divide in the activism generally. There were those young workers who believed we should use the space to ask key questions to Trudeau, and there were those who were tired of his responses and who wanted to exert more pressure through a peaceful demonstration. Regardless of where everyone stood, the message I take back is the importance of solidarity between those two tactics, and the need for both to be employed in different contexts.

Overall, the networking was perhaps the best part of this summit. Because of my own personal experience with community leadership, I found the workshops useful, however I gained a lot from the amazing opportunities to learn from others and further learn about the Labour movement. This Summit has invigorated and inspired me to get more involved within the boarder labour movement, and I look forward to building on the relationships and solidarity that I started in Ottawa.

/Derik Chica is a member of District 12, Toronto, and member of the provincial Human Rights Committee.

Recognizing member contributions

One of the amazing ways that OSSTF/FEESO recognizes the volunteer contributions of its members in their District offices, in their communities and of course in their worksites, is the OSSTF/FEESO awards for members. Often, the volunteer commitments of our members exceed 10 hours per week. When you’re balancing family, work and leisure obligations, that’s a huge commitment of time given selflessly to our union. While awards criteria are publicised and available on our website, we often do not get many nominations which are unfortunate because we know that there are many members who give their all, day after day to the union and its members.

The nomination process is outlined at www.osstf.on.ca/en-CA/services/awards-scholarships-grants-and-bursaries/osstf-feeso-awards-of-recognition-for-members. Many of the award applications must be endorsed by your District or Bargaining unit and there are various deadlines that you should be aware of. As well, there are application forms online, but some awards, such as the Communication Award, must be accompanied by examples of the communication to be evaluated. Here is a list of the member awards and a summary of criteria:

André Lécuyer Award—Nominated by a member. Endorsed by the District. Deadline January 31 for outstanding contributions in the area of professional development. Presented at AMPA.

Award of Merit—Nominated by the District. Conferred by Provincial Executive. Deadline yearly for outstanding service at District and Bargaining Unit level as well as provincial level. Awarded at District function.

Bob Brooks Award—For a member, school staff or federation group, endorsed by the District for excellence in community relations. Deadline April 1. Awarded at June Provincial Council.

Comité des services en langue française Award—Open to any member, endorsed by CSLF committee for distinguished involvement in the growth and promotion of French language in OSSTF/FEESO. Deadline January 31. Awarded at AMPA.

Communication Award—For Districts, Bargaining Units or individuals to recognise and celebrate efforts in communications. Endorsed by the CPA committee. Deadline January 31. Awarded at AMPA. Must include communications material to be evaluated.

Environmental Award—For a member,

Districts or Bargaining Units to celebrate the dedication to environmental activism. Deadline April 15. Awarded at June Provincial Council.

Honorary Membership—Awarded on request from the District or Bargaining Unit to retiring members. Conferred by the Provincial Executive.

James Forster Human Rights Award—For member nominated by the District or Bargaining Unit for exemplary dedication and promotion of human rights locally, provincially or internationally. Deadline January 31. Awarded by the Human Rights Committee at AMPA.

Jennifer MacLean Health and Safety Award—For certified health and safety activist on Joint Health and Safety Committees. Endorsed by District or Bargaining Unit. Deadline January 31. Awarded at AMPA.

John McNeil Award—For any member for outstanding achievement in the area of collective bargaining. Endorsed by District or Bargaining Unit and awarded at Collective Bargaining Conference by the CBC committee. Deadline January 31.

Kelly Ann McKenzie Award—For a member making substantive contributions to the professional growth and development of education worker members over an extended period of time. Awarded at a biennial ESC conference or ESO conference by the ES Committee. Deadline January 31.

Nancy Warrener Award—For a member who demonstrates a high level of energy, positive outlook, commitment to the professional development needs of members, assistance to new members and involvement at both District and provincial levels. Deadline January 31. Endorsed by District or Bargaining Unit. Awarded at ES Conference.

Norm Snyder Award—Presented to a volunteer on a District or Bargaining Unit committee or executive for outstanding service both provincially and locally. Endorsed by the District or Bargaining Unit. Deadline January 31. Awarded at June Provincial Council.

Political Action Award in honour of Wendell Fulton and Larry French—For a member showing outstanding leadership in political action with the federation or with political parties, other unions or labour councils. Endorsed by the District or Bargaining Unit. Deadline January 31. Awarded at AMPA.

Provincial Executive Award—For exceptional members, rendering meritorious and outstanding services to OSSTF/FEESO at the provincial and local level, upon their retirement. Endorsed by the Provincial Executive. Deadline May 1. Awarded at June Provincial Council.

Liz Barkley Status of Women Award—For a member recognizing activism and leadership by an OSSTF/FEESO member in advocating and building awareness on women’s economic and equality issues. Deadline January 31. Awarded at AMPA by the SW Committee.

Changing the landscape of domestic and sexual violence

From November 25, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, until December 10, we acknowledge and remember victims of violence. This is also the time to take concrete action to end violence against women and girls around the world.

The senseless and horrifying murder of 14 women taken from us far too early, in Montreal on December 6, 1989, has fostered an awareness and desire to end gender-based violence in Canada and around the world. The United Nations states that one of the major challenges in eliminating violence against women and girls is a substantial funding shortfall. We see that funding shortfall in the lack of resources and protections aimed at ending violence against indigenous women and girls, or to ease the stress of lost income for families facing domestic and sexual violence. For a difference to be made, there must be appropriate, sustainable funding along with legislation to bring

tangible and meaningful changes in the lives of women and girls.

Currently, in Ontario, a new bill has been proposed to try to address the income shortcomings that affect women and children in domestic and sexual violence situations. The new Bill 26, formerly Bill 177, will create some protections in the workforce to reduce some of the financial strain that women and families endure when they are faced with domestic violence. The new bill will provide a leave of a "reasonable duration" to employees who have experienced, or who have children that have experienced, domestic or sexual violence.

The paid leave, which is proposed to be up to 10 days, can be used to obtain legal services, medical attention, or to relocate, either temporarily or permanently. The bill further provides a requirement for employers to accommodate employees' circumstances if they or their children have experienced domestic or sexual violence. Lastly, the bill will require employers to provide information and instruction to every supervisor/manager and worker regarding domestic and sexual violence. The measures proposed by this bill will not only affect the *Employment Standards Act* but will also be enacted under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.

One of the main reasons that women do not leave domestic violence situations is the fear of financial hardship. This legislation, if enacted, would be a step in the right direction for women and children affected by this type of violence. ☺



Time is money! Get the salary you deserve!

The OSSTF/FEESO Certification Department evaluates teacher academic/technical credentials and issues Certification Rating Statements for salary placement purposes.

Only it can give authoritative advice on the certification process.

Upgrading courses for use in salary placement must be approved by the department.

Don't wait! Re-evaluate!

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