



Halton Teachers at the Oakville Rally, October 2012.

## Supreme Court upholds labour's right to strike

The Supreme Court of Canada has struck down as unconstitutional a Saskatchewan law that declared public-sector employees essential and prohibited them from striking.

Speaking on behalf of the three high court judges who ruled in favour of the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour appeal, Justice Rosalie Abella said that: "the right to strike is not merely derivative of collective bargaining, it is an indispensable component of that right. Where good faith negotiations break down, the ability to engage in the collective withdrawal of services is a necessary component of the process through which workers can continue to participate meaningfully in the pursuit of their collective workplace goals. This crucial role in collective bargaining is why the right to strike is constitutionally protected by section 2 (d)."

CLC president Hassan Yussuff said in a news release: "Today's decision levels the playing field for workers by placing checks on the power of governments, as employers, to legislate unfair essential services arrangements that tip the scales in management's favour."

## Bill 115 court dates

OSSTF and the affiliates are continuing their challenge to the constitutional validity of the *Putting Students First Act* ("PSFA"), various regulations made pursuant to the PSFA and the *Education Act*, and the collective agreements imposed by Order-In-Council on the OSSTF and public school boards pursuant to the PSFA.

The hearing dates have been put back in order that the Court and the parties would have the benefit of the Supreme Court of Canada's decisions in *Mounted Police Association of Ontario v. Ontario*, *Meredith v. Canada*, and *Saskatchewan Federation of Labour v. Saskatchewan*. Each case raises legal issues that are substantially similar to the Charter issues raised in the PSFA Charter Challenge.

In fact, Justice Himel has now established the following timetable:

- June 30, 2015 - Application Record is due
- September 9, 2015 - Applicant's Facta due
- September 23, 2015 - Intervenor (OPSBA) Facta
- October 23, 2015 - Respondent's Facta due
- November 6, 2015 - Applicant's Reply Facta due
- November 6, 2015 - Joint Brief of Authorities due
- November 23 - 27, 2015 - Hearing Dates

### Staffing: Upcoming Key Dates

**February 13** Deadline to request a leave of absence for September, 2015

**February 27** Deadline to

- Request a voluntary transfer/exchange
- Request an extension of a leave of absence
- Request a reduced assignment
- Request an extension of reduced assignment
- Request consideration for an increased assignment
- Confirm intent to return to employment status from a reduced assignment
- Confirm intent to return from a leave of absence

**February 27** Seniority lists received in schools. Teachers have until March 30 to appeal their placement.

The Preliminary Staff Allocation meeting will occur on March 11 this year. Branch Presidents attend with their principal. This is the meeting at which potential redundancy is declared.

## Were You Aware?—

- January 29 was the 97<sup>th</sup> day of the school year. Those teachers who are scheduled to move on the grid should see the move partially reflected on the Feb. 6 pay and fully reflected on the Feb. 20 pay.
- Under the current sick-leave plan, a full-time teacher is entitled to an annual allotment of 11 fully paid sick days and up to 120 sick days paid at 90% of salary.
- In addition, any unused fully paid sick days from the previous year are carried forward and are used to top up sick days from 90% to 100%. These are called STIP Top Up days.
- This year, a full-time teacher is responsible for a maximum of 50 half-period APAs, of which a maximum of 24 may be used for on-calls. For part-time teachers, APAs and on-calls are pro-rated.
- Contract negotiations have begun at the central table and will commence at the local table in the near future.
- If you have questions about the provisions of your current contract, you can call the District Office (905-332-1228) for answers.

## OSSTF P.D. Funding Available

OSSTF/FEESO District 20 Teacher Bargaining Unit is now offering contract teachers support for self-directed Professional Development.

Members may apply for \$100 reimbursement per school year beginning July 1<sup>st</sup> (July 1, 2014-June 30, 2015) for any OTF or OSSTF PD event/conference, or any independent Ontario subject council conference (i.e. STAO, OAGEE, OHASSTA, OAME).

Funds are limited, and will be considered on a first come, first served basis.  
Application form link:

<http://www.osstfd20.ca/PDFs/teachers/Self-directed%20PD%20funds%20application.pdf>

## Maternity/Parenting Workshop

Wednesday February 25, 2015

4:15 PM

OSSTF District 20 Office

3410 South Service Road, Suite G2

Burlington, Ontario

RSVP: to Lorie Wiersma, [wiersmal@osstfd20.ca](mailto:wiersmal@osstfd20.ca)

## OCT to track teachers' PD?

The Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF) warns that a recent Ontario College of Teachers' survey may be linked to a possible move by the College of Teachers to re-establish its oversight of teacher PD.

Although not indicated in the OCT survey document, all members should be aware that a committee of the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) is considering that the OCT become responsible for tracking the ongoing learning of Ontario's licensed teachers. OTF and its Affiliates are opposed to this unnecessary, expensive and counter-productive concept.

The OCT was given the authority under the Mike Harris Conservative Government not only to license and discipline teachers, but in 2001, also to require teachers to earn credits in a mandatory recertification program in order to remain licensed to teach. While offensive to the professionalism of teachers of that time period, it also created an expensive and bureaucratic regime of teacher learning and reduced meaningful learning opportunities for teachers to those which "checked the boxes" toward an arbitrary quota. The profession, through OTF and the Affiliates, lobbied successfully to abolish mandatory recertification in 2004.

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