

Bulletin



Office Deal Finalized!

On Tuesday March 3, 2015 the TBU Executive accepted the keys and held the executive meeting in the new office shell. OSSTF Properties Inc. closed the deal on March 2. The office is insured by OSSTF/FEESO with the Ontario Teachers' Insurance Plan.

District 20's new office will include:

- 7 offices for the 4 bargaining units
- Council meeting room
- Modern kitchen facilities
- Large storage/utility/copier room
- Meeting/activity room

The TBU Executive has retained G. Griffiths and Associates for design, building permit drawings and project management. Construction is projected to be completed by the end of August.

HDSB Sick Day Use Lowest

The Director stated at a recent meeting of the Halton Union Coalition that the Halton District School Board has the lowest use of sick days by employees in the province.

But not to worry, HDSB Attendance Support staff has been increased from 2 to 10 in recent years in order to deal with the problem....

HDSB 2014 Surplus \$16 M!

According to the Board's Audited Financial Reports it was reported that:

1. The Halton District School Board Annual Surplus in 2014 was **\$16,112,069**.
2. The Halton District School Board Accumulated Surplus climbed to **\$138,507,193** in 2014.

District 20 Teachers All-Member Meeting

Tuesday, March 10, 2015

Refreshments 4:30 to 5:00 p.m.

Meeting Starts at 5:00 p.m.

Keynote Speakers:

Harvey Bischof, Vice-President
Bob Fisher, Provincial Negotiator

UNIFOR Galaxy Club,
475 North Service Rd E.
Oakville, ON

Staffing: Upcoming Key Dates

March 9 Headship Ad #1
(no top-up allowed).

March 11 Preliminary Staff Allocation meeting. Branch Presidents attend with principals. (This is the meeting at which the initial staffing allocation is given to each school and at which potential redundancy is declared, if necessary.)

March 23 Headship Ad #2 (top-up allowed).

March 27 Initial in-school staffing process completed.

March 27/30 Principals notify Teachers who are potentially surplus to school.

Bill 115 Court Challenge

The Provincial Office has reviewed the three recent decisions from the Supreme Court of Canada on the Freedom of Association clause. Also reviewed were the implications of these recent rulings for OSSTF/FEESO's challenge to the *Putting Students First Act, 2012* ("Bill 115").

The Supreme Court of Canada released three decisions on the Freedom of Association in January 2015:

1. *Mounted Police Association of Ontario v. Canada (Attorney General)*, 2015 SCC 1 [*Mounted Police*];
2. *Meredith v. Canada (Attorney General)*, 2015 SCC 2 [*Meredith*]; and
3. *Saskatchewan Federation of Labour v. Saskatchewan (Attorney General)*, 2015 SCC 4.

These decisions reinforce the constitutional right to bargain collectively and for the first time recognize a constitutional right to strike.

However, while generally supportive of the Federation's case, these decisions do not allow us to provide a high degree of clarity on the likelihood of success in the Bill 115 challenge.

In particular, while the Court has come out forcefully in defence not only of the right to bargain collectively and the right to strike, but also the importance of protecting union's bargaining power, the Court found in the *Meredith* case that federal legislation imposing caps on wage increases did not breach the freedom of association.

In this sense, while the decisions generally suggest broader protections for unions and the activities of unions, the Court signalled that legislated wage caps are constitutional, notwithstanding that they have clearly indicated that collective bargaining is the constitutionally preferred way of arriving at a contract.

The issues in these cases, particularly in relation to the wage restraints implemented in *Meredith*, are distinct from the Federation's challenge to Bill 115.

Whereas Bill 115 took away various negotiated benefits including retirement gratuities, and a specific system of sick day indemnification, and imposed wage reductions

in the form of unpaid days, delayed grid progression and zero percent salary increases, the *Expenditure Restraint Act* at issue in *Meredith* merely capped wage increases at 1.5%.

In that sense, in *Meredith*, it was much less drastic legislation that was upheld by the Court. Similarly, the question of whether the particular system of imposing collective agreements under Bill 115 could be coupled with the suspension of a constitutional right to strike has also not yet been determined.

If you have questions contact Pierre Côté, General Secretary.

Retirement Workshop

Walk into Retirement with a Plan

Presented by:



During this workshop, you'll learn about:

- Retiree health insurance benefits
- Retirement gratuities
- RRSPs
- Tax and estate planning
- Investments
- Lifestyle planning

This free workshop is open only to members and spouses. It covers valuable information that will be useful to all those planning to retire within the next five years.

Date: April 1, 2015

Time: 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Location: Holiday Inn Burlington Hotel & Conference Centre
3063 South Service Rd.
Burlington

To Register:

Please email jdeshevy@otip.com –register early as space is limited!

Please note any dietary requirements at time of registration. **A light dinner will be served.**

OSSTF/FEESO District 20 Teachers

Brad Fisher, President

Jim Young, Member Protection Officer

John Watson, Health and Benefits Officer

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