

OSSTF President Addresses Bill 122

Provincial legislation was introduced on Tuesday, October 22 that will seek to define the collective bargaining process between the Ontario government, school boards and education unions, including OSSTF/FEESO. This new legislation is entitled Bill 122, *School Boards Collective Bargaining Act, 2013*.

The *School Boards Collective Bargaining Act, 2013*, meets a



Paul Elliott, OSSTF President

number of the guiding principles developed by the Future Bargaining Structure Work Group and endorsed by OSSTF/FEESO Provincial Council at its April 25-26, 2013 meeting. Upon initial review, this Bill will create a two-tiered bargaining structure where there will be a central table at the provincial level, while maintaining the local level of bargaining between OSSTF/FEESO bargaining units and their employers, the school boards. In addition, our right to strike is preserved under the *Ontario Labour Relations Act*, along with all other labour rights that are of vital importance to our members.

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Grinch Comes Early! Dec. 20th Unpaid Day!

As a result of the MOU December 20th is an unpaid day. Teachers do not get paid and do not report to work. Go Christmas shopping instead. Teachers should be aware that the deduction for this unpaid day will occur on the December 27th pay. There are 194 days in the 2013-14 school year, so the deduction should equal 1/194th of your current annual salary.

HDSB's Early Retirement Incentive Program

The Board has announced its Early Retirement Incentive Program. Teachers who retire to a pension between November 15 and January 31 will receive a \$5,000 payout. Details are available from the District Office or from the Board (Debbie DeBoer in HR).

Limits on Voluntarily Reduced Assignments

HDSB has imposed new limits on voluntarily reduced teaching assignments. Our contract has always contained a clause allowing the Board to limit the number of consecutive years a teacher can stay on a voluntarily reduced teaching assignment.

Until this year, the Board had not chosen to exercise its prerogative to enforce such a limit. However, in the last round of bargaining, the Board gave notice of its intention to enforce the relevant contract clause (Article 26.05.00.3 in our CA).

Last month, teachers currently on a voluntarily reduced timetable received letters from the Board indicating that a two-year limit would be imposed going forward.

Teachers in the first year of a reduced assignment will be able to extend the reduction for one more year. Teachers in the second year of a reduced assignment, or beyond, will need to be prepared either to return to their full contract entitlement or reduce permanently to part time. These teachers can apply to extend their voluntarily reduced assignment beyond two years, but such requests will no longer receive rubber-stamped approval, as they have in the past.

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We will continue to work with the other affiliates and CUPE to analyze the legislation and, through the legislative process, provide further input to strengthen our rights in the collective bargaining process.

If committee hearings are scheduled, OSSTF/FEESO will be making a presentation and submitting a written brief. We will keep you informed about this Bill through your local leadership, and through the posting of information on our provincial website at www.osstf.on.ca.

VLAP Days Still Available

VLAP days continue to be available for teachers who would like to access them. There is a limit of five days per teacher for the current school year. The application form is available on myHDSB, the OSSTF D 20 website, from your Branch President, or from the District Office.

New Attendance Management Manager Meets with OSSTF

The Union has met with the newly hired manager in charge of the Attendance Management Program. The Board has accepted that changes must be made to the AMP, and the new manager's first task is to determine how the program will be modified.

Among the Union's recommendations are the following: stop counting partial-day absences as full-day absences; either improve the notification process or give teachers credit for absence-free periods when the notification process is slow; remove absences related to pregnancy from the AMP; create a tracking/early warning system so that teachers are aware of their AMP-related absence record before they cross a threshold rather than afterwards.

We expect some of these recommendations to be approved by the Board and implemented later in this school year. In the meantime, teachers who are inducted into the AMP should continue to contact their Branch President and/or the District Office for advice.

Branch Presidents' Workshop Counselling, Legal Issues

The District Office arranged for seminars for the morning and afternoon of Tuesday October 15th. These workshops were open to all Branch Presidents and Executive.

The morning session featured Posaction by Solareh. This service is now available to OSSTF through our LTDI program.

The Posaction® assistance program provides professional resources to the employees and the organization, concrete measures for preventing health problems, techniques for improving attendance and tools for improving the quality of the work environment. Members can call 1-800-688-0193 and provide OTIP plan number 48073902.

The afternoon session featured Bob Fisher, OSSTF Protective Services, and a three hour seminar on legal issues.

Retirement Series 2013-2014

RTO/ERO:

The Retired Teachers of Ontario is offering their retirement seminar on Thursday, November 21st, 4:30 PM at the OSSTF District 20 Office. Dinner will be provided. This session is limited to 30 participants, spouses are welcome to attend.

RTO will focus on Government Health Benefits, assessing your needs, and the RTO/ERO options for retirement benefits plans.

OTIP: Walk into Retirement

The Ontario Teachers Insurance Plan is offering their retirement workshop on Thursday, January 16th, 2014, 4:30 PM at the OSSTF District 20 Office. Dinner will be provided. This session is limited to 30 participants, spouses are welcome to attend. OTIP will address extended health and dental benefits for retiring teachers.

OSSTF:

Please join us for Halton Secondary Teachers' Retirement Workshop on Thursday, February 6th, 2014, 6:30-9:30 PM, in the MM Robinson Theatre. The workshop provides information on the retirement process specific to teachers in Halton, as well as an extensive presentation on retirement planning by a provincial OSSTF pension/retirement expert.

Please RSVP to Lorie Wiersma, 905-332-1228 or via CHATT. **For more workshops information please email Janet Scott, Educational Services Officer, OSSTF District 20, scottj@osstfd20.ca.**