



OSSTF DISTRICT 26 MEMBERSHIP INFO-LETTER



AMPA 2008 News

Eleven D26 delegates/alternates attended AMPA 2008. Also in attendance from our District were John McAllister (Provincial Councillor - OT President's Council) and Jim Neill (Reporter - AMPA 2008 News).

Marc Keilburger addressed AMPA delegates expressing his views on the fight against child labour around the world. Marc is co-founder of "Leaders Today", an organization that helps young people through education by providing inspiration and tools to affect positive social change. He spoke to us of his work with the "Free the Children" organization, now the world's largest network of children helping children through education. The Provincial Executive matched a challenge to the house for Districts to donate to this worthy cause. As a result, two new schools can be funded.

Minister of Education, Kathleen Wynne, also addressed the delegation. The Minister called for a continuation of the current "peace" between the partners in education. She announced that a new gender studies course would be forthcoming. She thanked OSSTF for being part of the provincial discussions and emphasized that these do not take the place of local bargaining. Information gathering around the funding formula is on going but the government does not plan to enter into changes until the pre-set date of 2010. In her talk, Minister Wynne frequently referenced the importance of having PSSP staff in our schools.

Elaine MacDonald from our District was presented with the Larry French Award. This is a provincial award given in recognition of outstanding leadership in political action through support of, and work with, local unions and labour councils. Congratulations.

PD Funding

Currently all PD funding from the Secondary Professional Development Fund has been allocated. Members are still encouraged to apply for supportive funding if they are going to a conference, workshop, etc. Money sometimes becomes available at the end of the school year resulting from teachers who do not attend their planned activities.

Nelson Mandela's Children's Fund

The Nelson Mandela Children's Fund (Canada) invites all schools across Ontario to celebrate Nelson Mandela's 90th Birthday through the curriculum-based Spirit of Mandela program from April 21-25, 2008. Spirit of Mandela week captures the indomitable spirit of one of the greatest leaders of our time. Using the age appropriate resource packages, schools will teach their students about concepts of forgiveness, equity, freedom, social justice, apartheid, leadership, democracy, and Nelson Mandela's life. The Toonie Drive will culminate the event. Canadian children will donate a Toonie to support the children and youth in South Africa affected by disabilities, poverty, HIV and AIDS, and those in need of educational and skills development opportunities. In order to participate in this go to www.spiritofmandela.ca.

ERRONEOUS NEWS REPORT – Pension Update

Erroneous news reports on Wednesday, April 2, 2008 claim that the Minister of Education put the 85-factor on the table in dealing with the preliminary shortfall in the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan Annual Report. The Minister's office has been in touch with the OTF President to reassure teachers that the story is incorrect.

The facts are these:

- 1.The Minister did not say changing the 85-factor would be part of dealing with the valuation.
- 2.The 85-factor is not under discussion in the valuation of the Plan.
- 3.The member survey conducted last spring gave a clear message that teachers want the 85-factor to continue as the qualifying threshold for retirement.
- 4.The partners—OTF and the Government—have until September to file the 2008 valuation.
- 5.Only *Communiqué – Pension Update* from OTF contains information on what is happening with the talks. Any thing else is rumour or speculation.

OSSTF Federation Family Bursaries

There are ten \$1,500 OSSTF Federation Family Bursaries available. The bursary program is designed to assist financially the children or wards of OSSTF members to enter college or university programs, including apprenticeship programs with a college component.

Services Review Committee – Call for Applicants

The District President is soliciting from the membership at large those interested in serving on this District Committee. Members are asked to read/complete the application form at www.osstf26.com, "What's New" menu. Applications are due by May 8, 2008.

April 28, 2008 - National Day of Mourning

For some years Canadian unions have been observing an annual day of remembrance for workers killed and injured on the job. On average, one Canadian worker out of 16 is injured at work. This translates into one injury every 9 seconds. More than 800,000 injuries are reported annually in Canada of which more than 750 are fatal. OSSTF members are not exempt from risks and injuries. Many of our members are injured while dealing with student aggression and with the advent of technology; repetitive strain injuries are prevalent amongst our members. Pro-active health and safety remain our only chance to prevent injuries.

The theme for the 2008 CLC National Day of Mourning will be "**Mourn for the dead. Fight for the living, now more than ever!**" Local labour councils have ceremonies and events to mark the Day of Mourning. You may wish contact your local labour council for details or visit the Canadian Labour Congress website www.clc-ctc.ca

2008 Spring Staffing Process - Teachers

The Joint Secondary Staffing Review Committee, comprised of OSSTF and Board personnel have agreed on dates regarding procedures that will occur during staffing.

All members are encouraged to read the staffing related information on the district website. In an era of declining enrolment, we foresee reductions in the level of FTE teachers required for 2008-09.

Teachers are urged to stay informed by visiting www.osstf26.com, "Spring Staffing Process" link in the "Contract Teachers" menu.

Your OSSTF District website ... WWW.OSSTF26.COM ... information is one click away!

PAR Leader Duties – Midterm Semester 2 Report Cards

OSSTF would like to reiterate that, in accordance with Article 19.02; PAR leaders **should not** “assess teachers’ comments made on students’ formal reports”. This means reviewing such comments (grammar, syntax, format, etc.), making a determination as to the appropriateness of the comment, making such corrections or advising the teacher or administration that such a comment is either acceptable or not acceptable. If PAR leaders are directed by their administration to do so, we ask that they comply and inform the local Branch Steward. PAR Leaders must refrain from volunteering to “assess teachers’ comments made on students’ formal reports”.

However, OSSTF has no objection to...

- PAR leaders, in their respective program area meetings, informing members regarding the administration’s expectations of report card comments (grammar, syntax, format, curriculum links, appropriateness etc)
- PAR leaders mentoring teachers who request aid in developing report card comments
- PAR leaders reviewing the spread of marks for classes in their program area

District 26 Annual General Meeting – May 8, 2008

All members of OSSTF District 26 are invited to attend the Annual General Meeting.

Both District and Provincial Awards are presented at the AGM. Nominations for the District awards are due no later than **April 21, 2008**.

Elected Bargaining Unit Executive, District Executive and Officer positions are open to any interested member. All nominations are due no later than **April 29, 2008, 4:00 pm**.

Details of the AGM, awards, application & nomination forms are available at www.osstf26.com “What’s New” menu - “D26 Annual General Meeting” link

CLASS SIZES SEMESTER 2

Teachers are reminded that **class caps are in effect every day**. Also, as of March 1st the total number of students that you have **cannot exceed** the sum of the applicable “maximums” + 3.

CLC Women’s Economic Equality Campaign

On March 8, International Women's Day, the Canadian Labour Congress launched **Equality! Once and For All!** During this yearlong campaign, the CLC will work with its affiliates and women’s organizations to bring attention to issues of women’s economic inequality and what must be done to close the gap. The campaign launch on March 8 featured over 25 teach-ins and actions organized by the CLC and its allies in communities across the country. Many coincided with International Women’s Day activities. The campaign will also be highlighted at the CLC Convention at the end of May, as well as through other events in the works for later in the year. Where possible, actions will be developed in conjunction with groups already organizing on these issues, such as Ontario’s Equal Pay Coalition and Coalition for Better Child Care. A research paper, pamphlet and series of colourful and user-friendly fact sheets have been produced specifically for the campaign, covering topics such as pay equity, pensions, EI, and childcare. There is also a specific fact sheet tied to the situation facing young women as they enter the workforce. Copies of this material can be downloaded in both English and French from the CLC campaign website at onceandforall.ca. Please note that the website will be updated regularly during the campaign with information on upcoming actions and additional resources.

OTIP Retirement Workshops

OTIP is hosting a free Retirement Planning workshop on **April 9, 4:30 pm** at the District Office. If interested, contact the District Office. OTIP also offers many workshops across the region. For more information on the workshops below (location, registration, etc.) go to otip.com - “Workshops for You” tab.

Mar 29 (Ottawa) – Retirement Planning workshop (\$25)

May 31 (Ottawa) – Retirement planning workshop (\$25)

Awards, Scholarships, & Bursaries Deadlines

Norm Snyder Award (April 11)
Federation Family Bursary (April 30)
Provincial Executive Award (May 1)
Canada Post Literacy Awards (May 26)
OFL Labour Honour Roll Scholarship (May 31)
Lincoln Alexander Award (June 2)
OTIP Student Bursary (June 15)
Workers H&S Center Scholarship (June 23)

Visit www.osstf26.com, “Awards & Bursaries” link for details

As a member of OSSTF, you are a member of **Edvantage**, a rewards program offered exclusively to Ontario’s Education Community! Get exciting savings and discounts with **Bell Mobility, GoodLife, OTIP, The Brick, Electronics for Less, Edvantage Mosaik MasterCard ...And more!**

For more information visit www.osstf26.com and click.



Calendar of Events

April

10th - PSSP Executive Meeting
15th - TBU Executive and Wellness Committee Meeting
17th - CBC Meeting and SPDF Committee Meeting
24th - District Executive Meeting
28th - Workers' Day of Mourning
30th - Support Staff Appreciation Day

May

28th – 2nd - Education Week
8th - D26 Annual General Meeting
29th - TBU Council meeting



*OSSTF District 26 represents approximately 1000 Teachers, Occasional Teachers and PSSP members
OSSTF serves approximately 60,000 members in 140 Bargaining Units across Ontario*

