

Important Notice - Official end of First Semester

Members are advised that Tuesday February 2, 2010 is the official end of the first semester. The PA Day on Wednesday, February 3, 2010 is the first day of the second semester. Members assigned positions limited only to the first semester, have no contractual obligation to attend the PA day on February 3.

2010 Spring Staffing Process - Teachers

The Spring Staffing Process will soon begin. The Joint Secondary Staffing Review Committee, comprised of OSSTF and Board personnel, monitor this process from beginning to end. Teachers are staffed for the 2010-2011 school year through this process.

March 1, 2010 ...

SENIORITY LISTS will be posted on *Insite*. Ensure your seniority date is correct. Report errors to Human Resources. Your seniority is important in the staffing process.

More information and details on the Staffing Process will be forthcoming

Attention OSSTF Reps on School/Parent Council

"People for Education" is presently conducting a survey that may have an impact on education policy, on research and on supports for Ontario's schools. OSSTF would like to remind members of school councils or Parent Associations to participate in this important survey. The online deadline is January 31. The results from the survey will provide valuable data to track how well Ontario's parent involvement strategies are working. Topics in the survey include fundraising and communication with parents. Every school will receive a summary of the results which will be published in the fall of 2010. The survey can be accessed on the People for Education website at <http://www.peopleforeducation.com>. Follow the link at the top of the home page.

Ontario Teachers Federation (OTF) Conference

OTF is hosting **The Critical Thinking - Teaching and Learning in the 21st Century conference** on Feb 12-13 at the Courtyard by Marriott Hotel, Toronto. Registration is limited to 100 teacher participants (http://www.otffeo.on.ca/english/pro_critical.php). Also read OTF breaking news at: http://www.otffeo.on.ca/english/breaking_details.php?id=51.

OSSTF Scholarships

OSSTF offers scholarships and awards opportunities to assist members undertaking research projects, masters or doctoral programs, undergraduate degrees or diplomas, or travel plans. The deadline date for such scholarships and awards is January 31, 2010. Application forms and the criteria are available <http://www.osstf.on.ca/Default.aspx?DN=d74bc03e-a51d-43cf-86e2-93fcb7bed54d>

Provincial Standing Committees and Councils

The OSSTF Provincial Council Nominations Committee invites members who are interested in contributing to the work of the Federation by serving on a Provincial Committee or Council to consider making an application. An online application form is available this year. Those opting to complete a paper application form must ensure it is forwarded to Rick Zeilstra at the District Office at least 1 week prior to the March 1 deadline to allow time for the Provincial Councillor's Report to be attached. The link below will provide further information as well as an application form. <http://www.osstf.on.ca/provincialcouncil>

Teacher Self-financed Leave Plan (x/y)

Teachers interested in applying for a self-financed leave, with deductions to begin next year, must submit their written application by March 1. Applications are available on *Insite*, *Human Resources Department*. Please copy all applications to the OSSTF District 26 Office, fax 1-800-513-8574.

Temporary EI Benefit Enhancements

The Government of Canada is temporarily providing additional Employment Insurance (EI) regular benefits to unemployed long-tenured workers. If you have contributed to the EI program (paid at least 30 percent of the annual maximum EI premiums) for at least 7 out of 10 calendar years and have received regular EI benefits for no more than 35 weeks in the last 5 years you may be eligible for additional coverage if you make a claim between January 4, 2009 and September 11, 2010. Note: This does not apply to benefits paid during a Pregnancy or Parental leave.

Maintenance of Current Collective Agreements

Maintenance of collective agreement terms is always a concern within OSSTF given that school administrators, for example, have approached employees individually, or collectively, to had them agree to working conditions that are outside the parameters of the collective agreement. Some principals of schools have even solicited a staff vote to agree on changes to working conditions that would violate a current contract.

Members are cautioned that any proposed changes to terms and conditions presented by administration should be reported to their district office to determine their impact on the collective agreement or on other members. Charges of unfair labour practices can and will be considered.

A collective agreement is only effective if the terms and conditions agreed upon by the parties are strictly adhered to for the duration of the agreement. Diligence on the part of the work site representative to report any breach and on the bargaining unit and district officers to challenge and grieve, if necessary, violations of the collective agreement are an essential part of contract maintenance.

Took Courses to Upgrade your Category (Group)?

Members who have recently completed courses to upgrade their category (group) must ensure they apply to OSSTF Certification Dept. for a new Rating Statement and advise the Board they have done so. Detailed information at <http://www.osstf26.com/>, then link to *Certification, Experience, & Pay* link in the Teacher's menu.

OSSTF Pension/Retirement Workshops

OSSTF offers **workshops on pension planning and retirement**, discovering common sense financial strategies and retirement planning ideas. Members can ask questions and speak privately with the Pensions Officer and/or presenter. For more information and to register, please contact the District Office.

Apr 6 – Best Western Hotel – Cornwall @ 4:30

Apr 7 – Smiths Falls DCI Library @ 4:30

OTIP Retirement Workshops

OTIP hosts a number of **“Walk into Retirement” workshops**, at a nominal fee. See the OTIP website for registration information and location <http://www.otip.com/workshops/workshops.aspx>

Mar 27 – Kingston (in English); Cornwall (in French)

Apr 17 – Ottawa (in French)

May 29 – Ottawa (in English)

PAR Leader Duties – Final Semester 1 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 or reviewing the spread of marks for classes in their program area

~ Win a \$25 Chapters Gift Card ~

All D26 OSSTF members are invited enter a draw for a \$25 gift card from Chapters. Simply email the answer to the question below to office@osstf26.com with the words “Info Letter Draw” in the subject line. A draw will be made from those who submitted the correct answer. Deadline for entries is 3 PM on Jan 21st.

The Question: What is the OSSTF contract number with Sunlife?

Congratulations to Geoff Williamson of Seaway DHS for winning the December draw

Safe Schools Conference

The **13th Annual Safe Schools Conference** on Feb. 18, 2010 (Toronto Congress Centre by Airport) is open for registration. Learn new & practical ways to make a school safe. Obtain essential, up-to-date information and training on safe schools issues, procedures and policies. Hear experts on various Safe Schools Issues. 30 different workshops to choose from!

Cost: \$279/person (before Jan 22) or \$299 thereafter. Details and registration available at <http://www.canadiansafeschools.com/>

Premier’s Awards for Teaching Excellence

The Ontario Government has launched its fourth year of the Premier’s Awards for Teaching Excellence to recognize outstanding teachers and education support staff who motivate, support and inspire Ontario’s students across the province. Award categories include: Teacher of the Year, New Teacher of the Year, Excellent Support Staff, Excellence in Leadership, Lifetime Achievement, and Team of the Year. Since the awards were launched in 2006-07, more than 3,000 nominations have been received and over 50 educators and support staff have been recognized—many of whom have been OSSTF/FEESO members. The deadline for applications is February 1, 2010. Nomination information can be downloaded from the Ministry website at: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/teachingawards/howtonominate.html>

PD Available – APPLY NOW!

Members making applications to the PD fund are asked to ensure that their applications are complete and they have attached the required documents. Several applications have met with processing delays. Once you have attended your event, please submit the Expense Claim form promptly. Approved claims are reimbursed on your regular pay advice as “expenses”. The fund is currently under-expended, providing good opportunity for members to attend events in second semester.

Calendar of Events

	January
1-3	Holidays
28	TBU Council meeting
27-29	Exam Days
	February
1-2	Exam Days
3	PA Day
9	Services Review Committee meeting
11	TBU & PSSP Exec
15	Flag Day, Holiday (family Day)
16	Status of Women / Human Rights Committee meeting
17	Educational Services Committee meeting
18	District Executive
28	Repetitive Strain Injury Awareness Day



OSSTF present several awards each year. Read about them and email us if you know of a deserving colleague. [details at osstf26.com, “Awards & Bursaries” Quick Links]

**Status of Women Award, John McNeil Award, Educational Enhancement Scholarships, James Forster Human Rights Award, Ontario Premier Award for Teaching Excellence, Lamp of Learning Award (Jan 29)
OTIP Teaching Awards (March 15)
Bob Brooks Award (April 2)
Norm Snyder Award (April 9)
Federation Family Bursary (April 30)
Provincial Executive Award (April 30)**

