

The Ottawa-Carleton

The official newsletter of OSSTF D25 Teachers

October, 2014



A (late) Welcome to the 2014-2015 School Year!

Here we go again – another school year! Teachers know that every day is a long day, filled with countless interactions with a wide variety of personalities, that can leave us feeling drained and exhausted. But hopefully what is more common is a deep feeling of contentment and accomplishment. A feeling you get when you reflect on the day and remember only the students who are eager to learn, the administrators who understand and support our work, the parents who are allies in our calling as educators, and colleagues who are true friends.

Teachers have never had it easy. Anything worth doing is difficult, and education is definitely not an easy profession. Our work takes a huge amount of time and energy to get it right. And even then, most of the time we can always think of a way we could have done things better. So we keep trying new things, we keep searching out for new and more effective ways to engage our students, and we struggle to do so despite the many obstacles put in our way.

These obstacles come from many directions, but they can always be overcome. Your colleagues, and of course, your union, are here to help. And don't forget to ask for help when you need it! It is a sign of strength, not weakness, to reach out and ask for assistance with a problem. We are surrounded by those who care about us: our family, our friends, and our union—just call the OSSTF District 25 office at 613-729-7211, and Evelyn will help you find what you need.

But every day is a new day! So may this year be full of days where you know you made an impact in the classroom. May you get along with your colleagues and grow closer to them as people, not just co-workers. May your administrators support your work when you need it most, and may all your students enjoy safe and healthy environments at home that all children deserve. Above all, enjoy the new school year—because it'll be over sooner than you think.

Andy Wilson, OSSTF D25 TBU Communications Officer.



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The Value of Teaching

I started working in the summer of 1976, a 16 year old, (student) labourer for the Canadian Pacific Railway. That same year I secured a part time job at the Ottawa Civic Hospital as a Porter. Both of these jobs were unionized employment and both were relatively high paying jobs for the times. I continued each summer with the railroad until 1980 and at the hospital throughout college. I started working for the Department of Communications during the summer of 1980 and continued there until 1983. The circumstances of this employment were slightly different. I began as a government employee in a summer program and was hired permanently by a contractor on a personal services contract with the government subsequently working on the same project. Again, both of these were well paid positions.

As workers, we don't often ask ourselves the question of how we value our work. As a young man working with no experience and doing fairly menial tasks, I was happy to see small accomplishments and large pay cheques. The purpose of my work was simply to save enough for further education on a path to even better employment opportunities and ultimately those which would provide security, personal satisfaction and a level of prosperity that would sustain a middle class or upper middle class lifestyle.

Life unfortunately has a funny way of helping us re-define expectations. In 1983 my contract terminated as a result of funding cuts to our research program. I was educated and unemployed with only two years of experience in a field which was highly speculative. I tried to fall back on my education for a more traditional role in Broadcasting, only to find that the economy wasn't supporting jobs in that area and the competition was extremely aggressive. So I adapted, change my plans and lowered my expectations.

The next 10 years saw considerable growth and diversity in my career plans and options. I trained and acquired my RIBO general Insurance license and my life insurance, licenses selling home and auto insurance. Following that, I worked as a Client Services Officer selling RRSP's, GIC's, mutual funds and other related financial products. I then had the opportunity to rejoin colleagues from my time at the Communications Research Centre in a consulting venture. I left there to join a Hewlett-Packard dealer and sold computer systems and network solutions to the education sector, government and business. Then finally began teaching in 1991.

All of these occupations came with very different ways of valuing the work. Personal satisfaction and job satisfaction often came to me as a financial reward. This is a very easy and tangible means of placing value on work. Achieving technical goals while contributing to a team at the forefront of communications research was extremely rewarding. Building wing walls for bridge entrances on the railroad was satisfying because you could see a finished product. Insurance sales were somewhat more difficult, however, one could take some comfort in knowing that your service was respected, knowledgeable and reassuring to the client.

Teaching however, comes with a deep and enduring sense of satisfaction. We often feel this at a graduation ceremony or when a parent says to you that your class was the reason my kid stayed in school or

at a shopping mall or grocery store when you run into a former student (who I have difficulty remembering a name) tells me how much he enjoyed my class and how it inspired them to go on to their current occupation. As they say in the Mastercard commercial, "priceless".

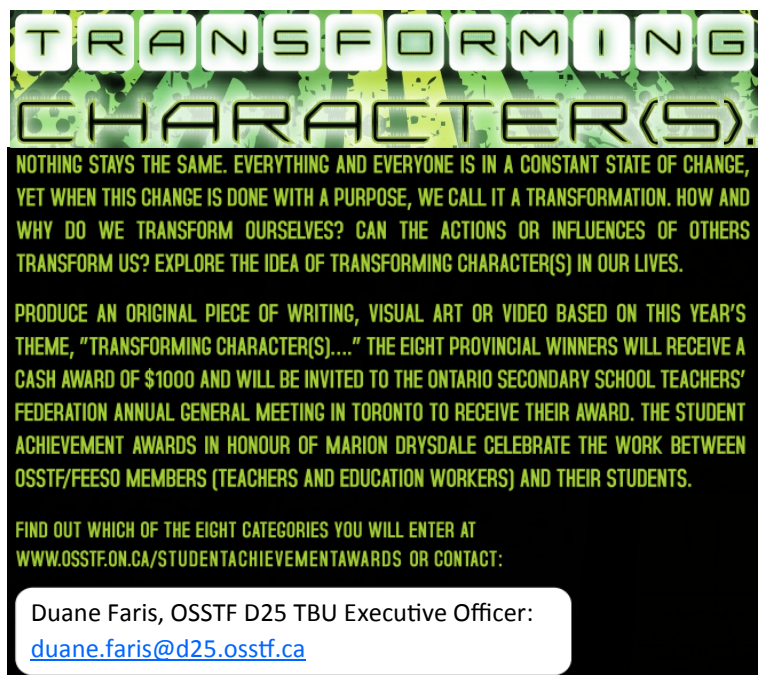
Our society needs to determine what value we put on Education and ask "how should those who work in education be fairly compensated for this contribution"? I without a doubt am biased and would say that public education is by far the greatest investment society can make. The yield from this investment will determine the future of our country and province. Diminishing our professional contributions does little more than devalue public education overall. The ramifications of which are easily identifiable by simply looking south of the border.

The devastation of the American public education system is the direct result of attitudinal and behavioural reforms based solely on misperception and media miss-information. We all know the media hacks who daily make it their business to diminish our work in an attempt to alter public perception of how vitally important it is.

As we enter our next round of negotiations I would encourage all of you to speak positively and glowingly of those rewards you have reaped as a result of teaching. "Blow your own horn" and be proud that you make such an important and vital difference. My father told me long ago that "if it was worth doing, it was worth getting paid for". Being paid well for something that is physically, emotionally and intellectually demanding is not a sin, in spite of what some local media hacks may suggest.

Keep up the good work.

Dan Maxwell, OSSTF D25 TBU President

A poster for the 'Transforming Character(s)' award. The title 'TRANSFORMING CHARACTER(S)' is at the top in large, blocky, green letters with a black outline. Below the title is a black box with white text. The text reads: 'NOTHING STAYS THE SAME. EVERYTHING AND EVERYONE IS IN A CONSTANT STATE OF CHANGE, YET WHEN THIS CHANGE IS DONE WITH A PURPOSE, WE CALL IT A TRANSFORMATION. HOW AND WHY DO WE TRANSFORM OURSELVES? CAN THE ACTIONS OR INFLUENCES OF OTHERS TRANSFORM US? EXPLORE THE IDEA OF TRANSFORMING CHARACTER(S) IN OUR LIVES.' Below this is another section of white text on a black background: 'PRODUCE AN ORIGINAL PIECE OF WRITING, VISUAL ART OR VIDEO BASED ON THIS YEAR'S THEME, "TRANSFORMING CHARACTER(S)...." THE EIGHT PROVINCIAL WINNERS WILL RECEIVE A CASH AWARD OF \$1000 AND WILL BE INVITED TO THE ONTARIO SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' FEDERATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING IN TORONTO TO RECEIVE THEIR AWARD. THE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS IN HONOUR OF MARION DRYSDALE CELEBRATE THE WORK BETWEEN OSSTF/FEESO MEMBERS (TEACHERS AND EDUCATION WORKERS) AND THEIR STUDENTS.' At the bottom, it says 'FIND OUT WHICH OF THE EIGHT CATEGORIES YOU WILL ENTER AT WWW.OSSTF.ON.CA/STUDENTACHIEVEMENTAWARDS OR CONTACT: Duane Faris, OSSTF D25 TBU Executive Officer: duane.faris@d25.osstf.ca'.

TRANSFORMING CHARACTER(S)

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Negotiations Update

Members representing librarians, department heads, co-op teachers, and home instruction teachers provided submissions/presentations to your local negotiating team (Chris Goodsir, Evan Cooper, Greg Fraser, Alison Lane-Beveridge, John Ross).

Our Provincial Executive has moved the decision of what will be central table issues to the Ontario Labour Relations Board (OLRB) as no agreement was possible during the four days of discussions that took place in August and September.

Once the local and central table issues have been determined, your local negotiating team along with the Collective Bargaining Committee will finalize our local negotiating brief. Shortly after local and central negotiations should commence.

Regrettably, the Ontario Liberal Provincial Government and School Boards continue to impose the grid delay, and will not approve any VLAPs this school year. There are strong indications that both the provincial government and school boards will be looking for even more strips in our contract.

Our Provincial President Paul Elliott emphasized that, "We are going to stand together and fight back against an austerity agenda because enough is enough." He pointed out that the provincial government has already stripped away more than \$2 billion dollars from education workers in the last 2 years! He made it very clear that OSSTF members are looking for improvements in this round of free collective bargaining.

We would like to thank teachers for voting, as 94% of you took the time to vote. We have voted 89% in favour of a local strike. This overwhelming endorsement of a strike mandate from our teacher members sends a clear message that we are serious about reaching a fair and reasonable agreement. We are hopeful that this result will encourage our school board to engage in meaningful negotiations.

Thank you for your support!

In solidarity,

Chris Goodsir, OSSTF D25 TBU Chief Negotiator



Getting to Know Your Collective Agreement

Supervision Facts:

- Full-time teachers (FTE) may be assigned up to 50 half-period blocks (37.5 minutes) duties per school year and 40 blocks for department heads.
- Full-time teachers may be assigned up to a maximum of 22 half-period on-calls per school year.
- On-calls are included in the up to 50 maximum supervision blocks per school year.
- A monthly summary of on-calls should be posted monthly.
- This works out to **less than 3 half-period duties every 2 weeks.**
- **Every teacher will perform duties** (all teachers should be on the supervision schedule).
- For Teacher-librarians, guidance teachers, and special education resource teachers, assigned supervisions may be assigned in their subject area.
- **Assignment of supervisions shall be equitable.**
- Duties should be spread out **evenly throughout** the school year.
- Supervisions **cannot** be administrative tasks.
- **On-call duties are to replace a teacher.**
- Part time teachers will have their duties pro-rated according to their FTE status.
- **Extra-curricular activities shall not be assigned to any teacher.**

Lunch and Prep Facts:

- Every full time teacher's timetable should include a **lunch period and a prep period**, as well as instructional periods or equivalent (e.g. Guidance)
- **Unless assigned a supervision duty the preparation period shall be available to each teacher for preparation and marking.**
- **Every effort shall be made to limit the number of class preps for each teacher.**
- The lunch break shall be a minimum of **40 consecutive minutes every day.**
- The lunch break shall be free of any assigned duties.
- The lunch break must start after 10:00am and must either be concurrent with a student lunch period, or in the period immediately preceding or immediately following the student lunch period.

Getting to Know GEM—Part 1: Keeping Private Information Private

As we all know, the OCDSB has made the transition to the newly minted “GEM” Email system. While this change has been a welcome upgrade over the old BEAM system, it hasn’t been without its share of growing pains. This will be the first in a series of articles designed to help members with the transition to GEM. In today’s article, I’ll give a basic overview of privacy in the new GEM system and how to sign in properly using your “@ocdsb” address.

A Public Mail System

Google is a massive and comprehensive system of apps, which has some terrific benefits. All members, however, need to remember that it is a system administered by the OCDSB. All emails, documents, calendars, bookmarks and settings are accessible by the board and should be treated as public. Any confidential, personal, or sensitive information should be kept out of this service, including OSSTF communication. This is similar to the BEAM system, which was administered by the OCDSB as well.

Signing In

To use Google Apps, you must sign in. To do this, visit google.com and click “sign in” in the upper right corner. Once you’re signed in, your email will appear to let you know which account you’ve signed in with.

You’ll see your email in the upper right hand corner when you’re signed in to Google. While signed in, you can access Google Apps by clicking the number pad symbol beside your email.

Another option is to sign in to the Chrome Browser with your GEM account. This is done by clicking the menu, which appears as 3 bars beside the star in the search box. In the menu, click “sign in” and enter your Gmail account.

A Serious Privacy Note

When signed in, your history is logged as part of your profile. This includes browsing history and search history. If you want to keep your personal browsing private, **be very careful to log out of your GEM account and avoid logging in to Chrome Browser on a personal computer.** You can check any time by clicking on the menu- if it reads “signed in as” with your GEM account, be sure to click it and click “disconnect your Google Account”.

For an extra layer of privacy, you can do your browsing in an Incognito Window. You can do this by clicking the 3 line menu and selecting “New Incognito Window” or by hitting Ctrl+Shift+N. An Incognito Window will keep your browsing and search history off your Profile.

Coming Soon: Information about Gmail, Google Drive, Google Groups and more. Questions or suggestions for topics please feel free to email me at david.belcher@ocdsb.ca.

Dave Belcher, teacher, West Carleton Secondary School.

Contract Bargaining Off to a Rocky Start

Who would have thought that before September was out, OSSTF would be forced to go to the Labour Board to resolve a disagreement with the Ontario government and the school boards’ association?

We started working in September under an expired “contract.” Worse, the government of Ontario imposed further arbitrary cuts to compensation for newer education workers—the government has refused to fund salary grid movement for the first half of the school year, in clear contravention of the government’s own promises in OSSTF’s MOU.

Under the new bargaining structure mandated by Bill 122, OSSTF finds itself across the table to a formidable united front consisting of both the Government of Ontario, and the Ontario Public School Boards’ Association (OPSBA). A disagreement over the division between central and local items to be bargained means the dispute will be settled by the Labour Board, and only then will OSSTF begin to bargain.

There is a lot at stake in this round. We just finished working under an imposed contract for two years. Our salaries were cut and our benefits were stolen. Education workers lost over \$2 billion in lost salary and benefits since the imposition of contracts in 2012. Incidentally, the cost of the expanded all-day kindergarten is about \$2 billion. In other words, teachers’ compensation cuts paid for all day kindergarten. At a time when OSSTF expects real improvements to our contracts, the government has committed to be intransigent and

refuse to bargain in good faith. They have been emboldened by a new majority election win and ongoing anti-union sentiment in the population.

Only this government would believe that good faith bargaining means mandating a net-zero deal. Education workers in Ontario have basically been told that they can pay for their own salary increases if they want them, and that the government will continue to cut funding to education by refusing to account for cost of living increases in Ontario.

Inflation in Ontario, at last check, is running at 3%. That means that the education budget should be increased by at least 3% just to maintain services. Instead, education workers are being told that their salaries must be frozen, and that if we want increases we can pay for them ourselves by finding “savings” elsewhere in our compensation package. This is the treatment we can expect from our government even after a two-year salary cut imposed through legislation.

So get ready, fellow union comrades. You’re dealing with a government that has said you will get less than zero. If you want any more, we’ll have to fight for it. One piece of advice: update your winter wardrobe before picketing season kicks in. Winter is coming.

Greg Fraser, OSSTF D25 Negotiating Team & Andy Wilson, OSSTF D25 TBU Communication Officer.

OSSTF D25 Holds All-Member Meeting—Updates Membership on Bargaining Strategy

You may have heard it first from OSSTF President Paul Elliot himself, in the form of a robo-call sent out from OSSTF provincial office early in the new school year. Hopefully you braved the rain and the Gem/Rock show crowd to attend the all-member meeting at the Nepean Sportsplex on Sunday, September 21st. If you didn't, please talk to a fellow OSSTF member who did and get yourself up to speed.

As was reiterated at the meeting, our bargaining strategy is private and shouldn't be discussed in public forums, but we can say that there is a marked difference from the strategy used during our last round of negotiations in 2012. Our strategy then seemed to consist of asking for nothing, getting less, and being ok about it. No more.

Paul Elliot has repeatedly said that he expects "real improvements" in contract negotiations for OSSTF members. This rejection of Kathleen Wynne's austerity agenda when it comes to education collective bargaining is of great import to members. The Ontario Liberals have pledged to freeze education spending, refusing to reinvest in a system where education workers have already given up nearly \$2 billion in lost compensation and benefits. OSSTF members need to stand together during this round of negotiations and resist Wynne's plan to balance the Ontario budget on the backs of education workers.

Stephen Hoogenraad, teacher, Nepean High School



District 25 members attending the strike meeting on Sunday, September 27 collected \$1854.20 to support British Columbia Teachers who were on strike for five weeks (without strike pay), standing up for public education and workers rights. The District will match this amount and sending a cheque to BCTF.

School Board Trustee Elections—October 27th

School Board elections always matter. The people we elect as trustees will make important decisions affecting publicly funded education for the next four years. They will be responsible for budgeting, board policy and implementing provincial initiatives. Trustees will set negotiating priorities for the OCDSB and will ultimately ratify the new collective agreement as our ultimate employers.

This year however, the election has particular significance. Half the current OCDSB trustees, including several who were most vocal in opposition to Bill 115, are not running for election this year. The new board of trustees will have many different faces than the current board.



October 27, 2014 Election Day



Please visit <http://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/your-city-government/2014-elections> to find links to candidate websites, zone maps, information about voter eligibility and poll locations. You will also find information about municipal elections for mayor and councilors. Advance Polls are open on October 18. Election Day is October 27 from 10am to 8pm. Please vote. Encourage family and friends to do the same.

Trustee Candidates' Quotes

The OSSTF D25 Political Action Committee put together a questionnaire and sent it to public school board trustees. Here is some of what trustee candidates are saying in response to OSSTF's questionnaire:

Zone 11 Endorsed Trustee candidate Shirley Seward

"I believe the collective bargaining process should be respectful, and should be based on a less confrontational, mutual gains process. The last round of collective bargaining, which featured Bill 115, is process that should never be repeated. If both sides bargain in good faith, the need for a strike should be mitigated."

Zone 12 Endorsed Trustee candidate Michael Urminsky

"The province and the Board are good at issuing new policies and directives to teachers, but how much do they really consult with teachers on these policies and directives, and are the resources there to back up the teachers as they implement new objectives[?]"

Zone 6 Endorsed Trustee Candidate Chris Ellis

As a trustee my singular influence is limited and I hesitate to list specifics. Although as trustee I'm technically management, my personal concern is for students, parents and communities.

Many other unions are being faced with challenges to provisions for sick leave, family leave, severance pay, and performance management. In the next round of bargaining it would be important to not lose any benefits that are in the current collective agreement.

Zone 4 Candidate Calvin Palen

When fair bargaining runs out and all avenues have been explored, then education workers should have the right to strike. However, teachers' strikes could be on a rotation basis (two or three schools one day, another two or three another, and so on so as to not shut down the system completely and disrupt the students' learning progress.

Zone 7 Candidate Jennifer Jennekens

Give back the power of reasonable disciplinary action for the teacher to hand out when students, for example, bring cell phones in the classroom, or for students not handing in assignments on time. Respecting the front line workers judgement in the classroom promotes stronger academic results and gives teachers a sense of control and job satisfaction.

OCDSB Trustee Candidates 2014

Incumbent	Registered candidates
ZONE 1 <i>Lynn Scott</i>	Sue Grant, Andrea Ingham, Todd Johnson, Lynn Scott
ZONE 2 <i>Christine Boothby</i>	Christine Boothby
ZONE 3 <i>Donna Blackburn</i>	*<u>Donna Blackburn</u> , Kimberly Bouffard, Ashok Kumar Kalra, Chi Siu
ZONE 4 <i>Theresa Kavanagh</i>	*<u>Theresa Kavanagh</u> , Clavin Palen
ZONE 5 <i>Pam FitzGerald</i>	David Flotin, Anita Olsen Harper, Jeremy Wittet
ZONE 6 <i>Bronwyn Funicello</i>	Talis-Ilmars Brauns, *<u>Chris Ellis</u>
ZONE 7 <i>Mark Fisher</i>	Curtis Bulatovic, Lori Daneliak, Jerrett DeFazio, Mark Fisher, Jennifer Jennekens
ZONE 8 <i>John Shea</i>	*<u>Keith Penny</u> , Virginia Quinn, Pat Ready
ZONE 9 <i>Rob Campbell</i>	Shawn Menard
ZONE 10 <i>Jennifer McKenzie</i>	Idris Ben-Tahir, Erica Braunovan, Guy Hughes, Colin Leger, Daniel Nugent
ZONE 11 <i>Shirley Seward</i>	Sylvia Martin, Jeff Scullion, *<u>Shirley Seward</u>
ZONE 12 <i>Katie Hotzhauer</i>	Peter Heyck, Sandra Schwartz, *<u>Michael Urminsky</u>

*** OSSTF endorsed candidates**

The OC provides a forum for discussion and exchanging information on educational issues, but does not necessarily reflect the opinions or views of District 25 or OSSTF. Submissions from members including articles, letters, photographs, or drawings are always welcome. Submission from non-members will be considered. The OC Editorial Board reserves the right to publish and edit submissions.

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