



OCTU D21 NEWS

OCTU District 21 Newsletter

January 2018

A letter from our President

Welcome to 2018 and did it ever start with a chill!

I hope many of you were able to take advantage of some quiet time over the last few weeks to relax and rejuvenate. It is always nice to be able to take some "me time" when possible.

The cold weather is upon us, but that doesn't mean we are slowing down. In fact, we are preparing for several important meetings and events for our members.

Your local Collective Bargaining Committee will be attending important negotiating training this month to prepare for our next round of bargaining. We will also be hosting a couple of opportunities for members to meet with our Provincial OSSTF Vice President, Cindy Dubue, and provide input on what is important to you as a member for the next round of bargaining. We want to listen and focus on what is important to the members. We will advertise these opportunities once confirmed so members will be able to attend one that works best for them.

We also have a great Retirement Workshop planned for Monday, January 22nd open to all members who are interested in receiving helpful tips and advice for retirement. You will find further details in this newsletter.

Of course, we need a way to help beat the winter blues, so we've booked a couple of OCTU Socials for the month of February. Keep reading for details on each of these events, registration will open shortly for each.

We've been putting plenty of work in behind the scenes for another fantastic Professional Development Day for all members coming up on Friday, March 2, 2018. Read further for more details and watch your e-mail in the month of January for even more communication on this event. Be sure to register!

Once again, we are always looking for members who may be interested in becoming more involved. If you would like to attend a Council meeting to observe, you may do so any time. Please contact myself or your branch rep if you are interested in learning more.

Have a great month and stay warm!

Samantha

Key Dates

- **Jan 1**
New Year's Day
- **Jan 8**
End of Winter Holidays
- **Jan 15**
Sign up for Ignite Your Divine Spark Event
- **Jan 22** Retirement Workshop
- **Jan 31** Ignite Your Divine Spark



OCTU PD Day – March 2, 2018

OCTU PD Day is fast approaching with some informative and interesting workshops and speakers. An information package will be advertised to members later in January—please keep an eye out.

This year our location has changed and will be at the Marquis Gardens in Ancaster, which is directly accessible on a bus route.

As mentioned previously, it is a Full Day Event and Open to All Members—permanent and casual members are invited and encouraged to participate. Casual members will be paid 3.5 hours if attending.

Attendance at this year's PD Day is greatly supported by Human Resources and Executive Council. Communication is being shared with Managers and Administrators to promote attendance by OCTU Members. As we hold PD Day on a PD Day when students are not in school, all members of school offices are able and encouraged to attend.

Inclement Weather Days

With the Winter weather upon us, we would like to remind members about inclement weather days.

If an absence (medical/vacation/etc) is entered in SFX and it turns out to be an inclement weather day, the day is lost. You will continue to be deducted for the medical/vacation day.

If you were scheduled to work and the school board declares an inclement weather day (snow day) you will be paid for the day.

Please keep this in mind when entering an absence in SFX - it is best to see the weather report first, when possible.

Please remember to check for updates on inclement weather through local news and radio stations, check HWDSB on Twitter or the HWDSB website.

Member Events

Have you or an immediate family member recently celebrated a milestone? A marriage? the birth of a child? Or have you suffered a loss or illness?

Please let a branch rep know if you or any OCTU member you know of is experiencing a major life event. We are here to support our members and would like to send acknowledgments in support of our members during their happiest or hardest times.

Listening to Members Across the Province

Provincial Executive visiting schools and worksites in most Districts during the winter

Members of the Provincial Executive, along with Provincial Office staff, have begun to fan out across the province to visit schools and worksites in most OSSTF/FEESO Districts. The focus of these site visits, which will continue through the winter, is to ask members what they see as priorities in the next round of bargaining, which could begin as early as June 2019. Contracts for members covered by the *School Boards Collective Bargaining Act* expire on August 31, 2019.

The worksite visits to discuss bargaining goals are among the priorities that have been set for 2017/2018 by the Provincial Executive. While it will be impossible for the seven elected officers to visit every one of the more than 2,000 individual schools and worksites where the Federation's 60,000 members work across the province, the Provincial Executive does want to see as many members as possible over a relatively short period of time. These visits will focus on members who are employed by school boards and covered by the *School Boards Collective Bargaining Act*.

In his address to delegates at OSSTF/FEESO's annual Leadership Conference in August, President Harvey Bischof described the planned site visits as a way "to ensure that we gain a detailed picture of what our members hope for out of the next round of bargaining—not only what issues and priorities they feel need to be addressed, but also how far they are willing to go in support of those issues."

"Our hope," said Bischof, "is to gain a deeper understanding than we can achieve through surveys alone—a more detailed and more nuanced appreciation of what's working and what isn't working for our members in their workplaces."

The visits, which are being coordinated with local District and Bargaining Unit leaders, began in early November and will continue through to the end of February. Most visits will occur before the workday, during a common lunch period or after work.

For members who are not able to speak to Provincial Executive members during this tour, OSSTF/FEESO plans to launch local and provincial level bargaining surveys in the coming year to acquire additional feedback from the membership in preparation for the next round of bargaining. Members can also send feedback through their worksite or branch representatives to their local Bargaining Unit executive, who can ensure that it reaches their Provincial Executive liaison.

OSSTF/FEESO by the numbers

- Over 60,000—Estimated number of members that are active and dues paying at any one time
- 2155—Total number of schools + worksites where OSSTF/FEESO members work in Ontario
- 230—Approximate number of OSSTF/FEESO job classes in public education from kindergarten to post-secondary
- 151—Total number of bargaining units in OSSTF/FEESO
- 37—Total number of districts in OSSTF/FEESO
- 7—Total number of elected Provincial Executive members.

****District 21 will be hosting Cindy Dubue, Provincial Vice-President—Details to be announced soon— All OCTU members are encouraged to attend****

Quick Fact:

Unions can make the workplace a more harmonious place to work. A union contract allows the company and workers to sit down as partners and discuss problems as they come up. Without a union, workers' lives are often in more turmoil because they have to deal with more favouritism and less economic security

Source: ibew353.org

Pharmacare Changes in Ontario

As of January 1, 2018 children and youth in Ontario will be covered by OHIP for prescription medications. If the prescription required is not covered by OHIP the Province has set up an Exceptional Access Program (EAP) that families may apply for to receive coverage. Alternatively, if access is denied through OHIP and the EAP process, private insurance may cover the costs.

There is NO co-payment required between OHIP and private insurance (OTIP). If you have a dependent 24 years or younger, OHIP covers all costs for prescription medication. This means OTIP does not need to be accessed to cover any costs for prescriptions for anyone 24 years or younger.

However, the new health program does not cover costs for hospital stays, dental or additional benefits such as glasses, orthodontist, physiotherapy, speech therapy etc. for youth. In this regard, you will need to continue coverage with OTIP for your dependents who are 24 years and younger.

For a complete list of medications covered under the new Ontario Pharmacare program, please visit their website: <http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/drugs/ohipplus/#insurance>

Bill 148 Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act

Bill 148 is an important amendment for Ontario as it strives to update employment and labour legislation for the Province of Ontario. You may have heard bits and pieces about it through the news over the past few months. This bill has received third reading and passed in the legislature. It is waiting for Royal Assent to become law. It is a much needed amendment for workers in Ontario but it will not become law until after the 2018 Ontario Election given that the current governing body continues to hold its seat in Parliament.

The updates this legislation will bring are welcomed by labour movements and are wide spread in the improvements they bring to the Employment Standards Act. However, collective agreements supersede the ESA. Collective agreements strive to negotiate through the collective bargaining process to give members fair and equal benefits to the ESA. Many times, they negotiate better and greater improvements above the ESA standard for members. With some of the purposed changes and updates that could be coming to Ontario though, it has been revealed that some collective agreements in OSSTF could be left lagging behind the ESA. It is also legislation that collective agreements can not offer employees standards and working conditions lower than what the ESA provides and protects. This will be an important issue moving forward for OSSTF and OCTU in the coming months and heading into our own bargaining process.

In the coming weeks and months, OSSTF will be looking at our collective agreements provincially to compare what has been negotiated in our collective agreements against the purposed changes to Ontario employment law. Our Provincial Leadership will be working to amend any discrepancies and to ensure our members are represented fairly and in line with any changes to the ESA and labour legislation. As we receive information on this issue, we will keep OCTU members informed.

February Social Events

2018 Ignite Your Divine Spark!

Paula Stableford will teach how to access and utilize your own intuition and do what she does so brilliantly. Learn how to clear your own energy and create a positive flow of energy in your workspace/home. Discover what your intuition is guiding you towards for a more peaceful, joyful and abundant life. Paula will then demonstrate the techniques by providing guidance and connection to energy. Come with an open heart, open mind and any questions!! Finally, we will spend the last half of the evening connecting to lost loved ones..if you wish to stay.

Date: Wed Jan 31

Time: Dinner at 430pm, event starts promptly at 5:45pm

Place: OSSTF District 21 Office

Cost: \$5

This event is open to OCTU members only. Dinner will be provided. Seats are limited for this event.

Registration opens Mon Jan 15 at 2pm, Please email Brandie at district21@osstf21.ca

Join us for an evening of Axe Throwing!

Date: Tues February 27th

Time: 6pm

Place: BATL Hamilton

80 James St N, 2nd Floor

Cost: \$20/member & \$30/non-member

Members are invited to join us for a fun night of Axe throwing! Members are able to bring guests and food will be provided at the venue. If you are planning on attending please let us know how many guests you are bringing.

The location is near Jackson Square and may require paid parking which will not be covered by OCTU. Members are encouraged to carpool and can leave their vehicles at the OSSTF office if preferred, to meet up with others attending.

Details will be released soon with sign up instructions

Join Us!

We have openings for Branch Reps!

The time commitment for Branch Reps is 1 meeting per month 5pm to 7pm from Sept to June.

We offer training and support along the way, so you are never on your own to deal with a situation.

This year we are planning activities, new ways to communicate with members and ways to be involved in our community.

If you are interested in joining, you are welcome to come out to one of our meetings OR contact a branch rep for more details.

Meeting dates are posted on our website www.osstf21.ca

Contact Us

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Visit us on the web at:

<http://www.osstf21.ca/>

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OSSTF at the Ed Centre!

We have a brand new bulletin board installed for OSSTF information at the Ed Centre. It is located on the main floor near the elevators. We are working on getting it prepared with information for members. OCTU will be constantly posting information on this board so be sure to check it out!



OSSTF established since Dec 30, 1919