

## Provincial Executive Liaison Report

To: District 10, District Council

From: Colin Matthew, Executive Officer

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### Contents

1. Equity Mentorship Program Report to AMPA 2022.....	1
2. OSSTF/FEESO Self-Identification Survey .....	3
3. Ontario Universities & Colleges Coalition Meeting - November 17, 2021 .....	3
4. Meeting with Education Finance Affiliate Work Group .....	4
5. 2022-2023 Education Funding Consultation Meeting with the Ministry of Education .....	5
6. Financial Accountability Office Monitor 2021-2022: Q2 Summary .....	6
7. OSSTF/FEESO Submission on Bill 43 - Build Ontario Act.....	8
8. Annual Designated Charity – 2021-2022 .....	13
9. Extension of Here for Students Campaign .....	13
10. Update: OSSTF/FEESO Union Training Academy .....	15
11. 2021 CESBA Conference (Ontario Association of Adult and Continuing Education School Board Administrators) .....	15
12. DBU Memos Issued Since the Last Report.....	16

### 1. Equity Mentorship Program Report to AMPA 2022

#### Background

AMPA 2016 approved the development of a formal, intensive mentorship program for members from equity-seeking groups. The pilot program, in place 2017-2021 was then reviewed by the MAC 202-20 Ad Hoc Work Group, consisting of mentors and mentees. This review was submitted to AMPA 2021 as a report with recommendations. The key suggestions within that report were in the following areas: relationship-building time, clear expectations, increased flexibility/responsiveness and, timing of mentee and mentor selection. The final recommendation was for a permanent 2-year structured program.

#### 2021-2022

As the recommendations flowing from the above-mentioned AMPA 2021 report did not make it to the floor of AMPA 2021, the Provincial Executive called upon Committees, Councils and Advisory Work Groups to continue support - through both financial and human (in the form of mentors) resources - the continuation of this work. The Equity Mentorship Engagement, while limited to the 2021-2022 year only, is currently providing a much-needed opportunity for connections between mentors from various provincial bodies and mentees.

#### Proposal for 2022 and beyond

The MAC 202-20 Ad Hoc Work Group met again in the fall of 2021 to consult with the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator and to prepare this report to AMPA 2022. The most significant change to the recommendations (from AMPA 2021 to AMPA 2022) is the necessity for 1-1 mentoring. The work group recommends that the Equity Mentorship

Program be installed as a permanent program – with a two-year structure - that addresses expressed needs of mentees and supports desired growth of mentees, mentors and the organization as a whole. Ideally, funding for this program would be allocated for 10 mentors and 10 mentees.

### Timelines & Budget 2022

1. Advertising and Promotion (mentees) – **mid-spring**
2. Selection of mentees – **mid-spring**
3. Pathway/Direction setting meetings with mentees (and staff) – **June**
4. Advertising and promotion (mentors) – **September**
5. Selection of mentors – **early fall**

### Year 0 (For Spring 2022 ONLY)

Mentee Direction Setting Meetings	1 Day	10 X \$635	\$6,350 (from Contingency?)
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### Year 1 (2022-2023)

Mentor Orientation	1 Day	10 X \$635	\$6,350
Mentor/Mentee Group Sessions	3 Full Days (spaced out in year; last day including assessment & year 2 plans)	20 X \$635 X 3	\$38,100
Mentor/Mentee Pair Experiences	3 Days (as needed)	20 X \$635 X 3	\$38,100
Additional Expenses/ Trainings		20 X \$500	\$10,000
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$92,550</b>

### Year 2 (2023-2024)

Mentor/Mentee Group Sessions	3 Full Days (spaced out in year)	20 X \$635 X 3	\$38,100
Mentor/Mentee Pair Experiences	3 Days (as needed)	20 X \$635 X 3	\$38,100
Additional Expenses/ Training		20 X \$500	\$10,000
Evaluation Day	1 Day (in spring)	20 X \$635	\$12,700
Mentee Direction Setting Meetings	1 Day	10 X \$635	\$6,350
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$105,250</b>

The following motions will be submitted to AMPA 2022:

1. **BIRT AMPA 2022** endorse the Equity Mentorship Program Report.  
Rationale: refer to report
2. **BIRT AMPA 2022** create a new budget line entitled Equity Mentorship Program with a 2022-2023 allocation of \$92,550.  
Rationale: refer to report

## 2. OSSTF/FEESO Self-Identification Survey

The OSSTF/FEESO Self-Identification Survey was issued to members in the December annual mailing. Members will have two options for submitting their survey responses:

- (i) mailing their response using a postage-paid return envelope that is provided with the survey, or
- (ii) completing the survey online using the link and unique survey access code provided in the paper version of the survey.

This survey will take less than five minutes to complete. All active members are encouraged to complete this survey.

By responding to the survey and telling us who we are, you will:

- assist OSSTF/FEESO to gain an improved understanding of the composition of the membership;
- strengthen our ability to represent and support members;
- provide context for bargaining and pay equity
- help the Federation understand how members are affected by changes in legislation that have an impact on particular demographic groups or job classes
- better position provincial and local leaders to implement various strategies that will improve policies, procedures, and structures in a manner that will further democratize our union;
- improve institutional and political practices;
- prepare the Federation to be more responsive to the future needs of members.

As part of completing the survey, five random survey respondents will be chosen and awarded a prize of \$100.00 if they completed and mailed the paper version of the survey, or a prize of \$200.00 if they completed the survey online.

All results will be aggregated so that individuals cannot be identified, and their anonymity is preserved. Participation in the survey is voluntary, and members may skip any questions they choose.

More information about the survey is available now on the Provincial OSSTF/FEESO website. Please visit [www.osstf.on.ca/telluswhoware](http://www.osstf.on.ca/telluswhoware) for more detailed information on the survey.

## 3. Ontario Universities & Colleges Coalition Meeting - November 17, 2021

Representatives from CUPE, CFS, OCUFA, OFL, OPSEU, OSSTF/FEESO and PSAC attended virtually and discussed the following:

### H&S/Winter 2022 on campus

OSSTF/FEESO mentioned the newest update from the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) regarding masking and the recognition of aerosol transmission of COVID-19. Ventilation, masking and physical distancing, along with vaccination remain the top measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19. CUPE indicated that MacMaster is transitioning to a full return to in person in January 2022 and that they are pushing for risk re-assessments to be done on campus. OPSEU indicated there has been plenty of discussion at their various college campuses about in person return and that most colleges

are pushing for “business as usual” in January 2022. PSAC raised a concern that the employer is using some type of app that is tracking people on campus at Western, further details to follow. CUPE indicated a similar system is in place at Waterloo and the employer is not informing people of the surveillance. OCUFA indicated that administrators are actively surveilling teaching assistants to ensure they are actively in the classes they are assigned.

### **Bargaining Updates**

USW 1998 achieved a tentative ratified agreement (November 16, 2021) for their casual unit. They did get their two (2) paid sick days and some other items they were after. OPSEU college faculty is in a tough round of negotiations and the employer is not budging on anything. Management wants to put a moratorium on full time positions. Conciliation began on November 18, 2021. They also indicated that the Mediator assigned, Brian Kellar, has been extremely unhelpful to the process and recommended we all be wary of using him going forward. UOIT Faculty Association is in bargaining with workload issues being the number one challenge, see [www.uoitfa.ca/take-action](http://www.uoitfa.ca/take-action). Mediation started November 18, 2021. CUPE mentioned we should all be collectively thinking about how we will proceed with bargaining outside of the Bill 124 moderation period that is fast approaching.

### **Election 2022**

OCUFA met with the NDP recently and discussed the urgent need to address mental health and sexual violence on campuses. OSSTF/FEESO also met with the NDP and reviewed our entire election platform with the party. CFS met with the NDP, focused on mental health, sexual violence, and pushing the party to make financial commitments to post-secondary education.

OFL reminded the group that the OFL Action Plan calls for an activist strategy session, sometime in March 2022, to discuss further actions we can take to further protect public education in the post-secondary sector. CFS and OCUFA are pushing Elections Ontario for on-campus polling stations.

### **Next Meeting**

Meeting to be scheduled in January 2022.

## **4. Meeting with Education Finance Affiliate Work Group**

On November 23, 2021, representatives from each of the affiliates met to continue dialogue on issues related to education finance. We were joined, at the request of ETFO, by a representative from OTF.

The group reaffirmed that they wanted to work more closely, particularly in the area of sharing education finance numbers and methodologies to ensure that, where possible, all affiliates are using similar figures in their communications.

The work group discussed the upcoming Ministry of Education Funding Consultations and the government’s release of the Fall Economic Outlook and Fiscal Update. The affiliates share OSSTF/FEESO’s concern about the chronic underfunding and underspending in education. An analysis of GSN expenses since 2018-19 was shared with the affiliates, illustrating how funding – given the removal of the \$0.5 billion in the Fiscal Update – has grown by only 2.1%, while enrolment has increased by 0.8% and inflation has climbed to 7.5% for that period.

CPI and inflation calculations were discussed, with a consensus that the preferred method of calculation of annual inflation was to use the average monthly CPI percentage change for the preceding twelve months, as was used above. The CPI value used is the All-Items Consumer Price Index, not seasonally adjusted. OSSTF/FEESO will share these calculation methods and samples with the other affiliates.

The role of each representative as Education Finance leads for their organization was also discussed. Both ETFO and OECTA have an economist/researcher on staff and so their representatives are not involved as deeply in education finance submissions as the OSSTF/FEESO and AEFO representatives.

The calculation of differentiated funding for online learning (30:1 for 2 mandatory credits) in the Pupil Foundation Grant was discussed. The AEFO member will share his calculation of the 0.08125 credit load per pupil that the ministry has used in the calculation, as it is unclear how the Ministry of Education is determining this value.

The OSSTF/FEESO representative raised the issue of de-streaming, recognizing that the issue does not affect ETFO members. The AEFO and OECTA representatives expressed little concern about the staffing impact of de-streaming and the elimination of the applied courses at the Grade 9 levels. They did share concerns, similar to OSSTF/FEESO's, about the implementation of de-streaming. The OECTA representative shared that class size caps are not as common in OECTA local collective agreements as they are for OSSTF/FEESO.

#### **5. 2022-2023 Education Funding Consultation Meeting with the Ministry of Education**

On November 24, 2021, Dave Barrowclough and John Wells met with Ministry of Education staff to discuss OSSTF/FEESO's submission on Education Funding for 2022-23. Participating for the ministry were, Doreen Lamarche - Executive Director of the Education Labour and Finance Division, Paul Duffy - Director of the Education Modelling and Forecasting Branch, and Romina Di Pasquale - Director of the Enrolment, Funding and Labour Policy Branch. Assistant Deputy Director Andrew Davis was unable to attend the meeting.

During the meeting, OSSTF/FEESO discussed its submission to the 2022-23 Education Funding Consultations. We discussed the following issues:

- de-streaming
- mental health supports
- underfunding of public education
- urban and priority high schools and at-risk students
- violence in classrooms
- online learning differentiated funding in the Pupil Foundation Grant
- potential savings and efficiencies
- school board accountability and reporting
- online learning

Following the discussion, OSSTF/FEESO requested data from previous years about Grade 9 and 10 class sizes that would be needed to assess the impact of de-streaming. Ms. Lamarche indicated she would bring the requests to Mr. Davis to see what the proper

protocol for providing this information is and would provide a response back to OSSTF/FEESO.

As well, clarification was requested surrounding the credit load per pupil for the online learning portion of the classroom staffing component of the Pupil Foundation Grant. This is the area that reflects the reduced funding for the 30:1 class size of online learning/e-learning. Ms. Lamarche also commented that the ministry was continuing to monitor this to make sure the funding reflects the intent of the differentiated funding.

After this meeting, the ministry contacted us to confirm that data on Grade 9 and 10 class sizes would be shared with OSSTF/FEESO within a few weeks.

## **6. Financial Accountability Office Monitor 2021-2022: Q2 Summary**

On November 29, 2021, the Financial Accountability Office of Ontario (FAO) released its Expenditure Monitor for the first half of 2021-22. This report provides information on unaudited spending by the province through the end of the half quarter of the present fiscal year (April 1, 2021 to September 30, 2021). Included in their report are: A) changes to its spending plan; B) a comparison of total planned spending and actual first half spending; and C) a comparison of 2021-22 first half spending to 2020-21 first half spending.

The complete report, briefing deck, and press release are available at [https://www.fao-on.org/en/Blog/Publications/2021-22-expenditure-monitor-q2](https://www.fao.on.org/en/Blog/Publications/2021-22-expenditure-monitor-q2).

### **A. Changes to the 2021-22 Spending Plan**

In the 2021-22 spring budget, the province tabled a spending plan of \$178.3 billion. In the first half of 2021-22, the government added \$692 million in internal program budget reallocations. Most of the new planned program spending went to the 'other programs' sector. The following are the key changes to the spending plan since the spring budget:

- Education – increase of \$6 million (no change from Q1)
- Postsecondary Education – no change
- Health – net increase of \$20 million (+\$15 million from Q2)
- Justice – increase of \$11 million (+\$1 million from Q1)
- Children and Social Services – increase of \$1 million
- Other Programs – net increase of \$654 million (+\$209 million from Q1)

In contrast, in the 2021 Ontario Economic Outlook and Fiscal Review released on November 4, 2021, the government reported a net spending plan increase of \$3.0 billion. This FAO report does not reflect these spending plan changes, as they were not included in the government's financial accounts as of September 30.

The increased spending of \$692 million was offset by a drawdown of \$709 million on the Contingency Fund. Overall, as of the end of the first half, the government's 2021-22 spending plan has decreased by \$16 million. The government has referenced a new unallocated Time-Limited COVID-19 Fund of \$2.2 billion in the first quarter with a further top-up of \$0.5 billion in the Fall Economic Outlook and Fiscal Update, but this fund has not yet appeared in the government's financial accounts.

Of note, the government made no transfers to Education or Postsecondary Education from the Contingency Fund or the new Time-Limited COVID-19 Fund. The largest drawdown on

unallocated funds were \$202 million for the extension of the Ontario COVID-19 Worker Income Protection Benefit, \$135 million for the COVID-19 Response – Business Property Tax Rebate Grant, and \$100 for COVID-19 Response – Energy Rebate Grant, which reflect the government's priorities.

### **B. Second Quarter Spending**

Every Ministry makes monthly spending projections for the entire fiscal year. Quarterly spending reports are not reliable, in themselves, for determining trends in government spending, as they provide only a snapshot of a three-month window in the annual spending plan.

During the second quarter, the government made internal program budget reallocations of \$226 million. No adjustments were made to planned spending for Education or Postsecondary Education.

Through the first half of 2021-22, the government has spent \$4.3 billion (5.3%) less than planned. This has grown from \$2.6 billion in underspending as reported in the first quarter. As compared to the previous two fiscal years, this is the most the government has underspent on programs in the first half of the fiscal year.

Most sectors spent less than planned over the first half of the year. Given this government's record, this pattern of underspending may continue into the second half of 2021-22 and lead to a significant material improvement to the projected budget deficit of \$21.5 billion.

In the Education sector, \$688 million (5.8%) less was spent than planned, with \$148 million below plan in Child Care and Early Years and \$535 million below plan in Support for Elementary and Secondary Education (Capital). Of the \$535 million unspent, the School Board Capital Grants program was the largest component.

In the Postsecondary sector, \$251 million (7.5%) less was spent, with \$89 million less spent in Support for Postsecondary Education (Capital) and \$160 million less spent in Colleges, Universities and Student Support, which provides operating grants for colleges and universities, and financial aid for students.

Given the \$2.2 billion that was unspent in Education in 2020-21, the FAO's projection that Education was already being underfunded by \$200 million for 2021-22 and the removal of \$467 million from Education in the Fall Economic Statement and Fiscal Update, this signals a clear intent by the government to continue to cut education spending through a combination of underfunding and underspending. It also seems that the government intends to cut Postsecondary Education funding in a similar way.

### **C. 2021-22 Spending as Compared to 2020-21 Spending**

In the first half of 2021-22, the province spent a net of \$2.6 billion less than planned, as compared to the first half of 2020-21, up from \$1.1 billion less reported for the first quarter.

From this, its budgeting and spending patterns, it is clear that public services and rebuilding Ontario are not important to this government. This continued underspending is very concerning. Combined with intentional underfunding, it is clear that the government does not want to invest in publicly funded education in Ontario.

## 7. OSSTF/FEESO Submission on Bill 43 - Build Ontario Act

On November 29, 2021, OSSTF/FEESO presented its submission to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs at a hearing on Bill 43. The following written submission was subsequently submitted on November 30, 2021:

The Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation was founded in 1919. OSSTF/FEESO represents over 60,000 public high school teachers, occasional teachers, educational assistants, instructors, psychologists, secretaries, speech-language pathologists, social workers, plant support personnel, and many other educational workers employed in full-day kindergarten to university.

OSSTF/FEESO is pleased to make a submission on Bill 43, with respect to its impact on the public education and university and college sectors.

The government continues to short-change education. Last year \$2.2 billion in education funding went unspent; \$2.2 billion that could have been used to improve student outcomes and make schools safer. In its May review of education spending, the Financial Accountability Office of Ontario (FAO) identified a \$200 million funding gap for this year. On top of this, the government's Fall Economic Statement, as captured by Bill 43, revealed the removal of another \$500 million from education funding. Consequently, school boards are experiencing financial pressure as enrolment continues to increase and inflation balloons to 4.7%. Since 2018-19, Grants for Student Needs spending has increased by only 2%; however, after accounting for inflation and enrolment growth, real spending per student has dropped by 6.7%.

Education is the cornerstone of economic growth. In its 2019 report, *The Economic Case for Investing in Education*, the Conference Board of Canada found that for each \$1.00 increase in public education spending, \$1.30 is generated in positive economic impacts for the province. And so too does the removal of \$1 in funding cause \$1.30 in negative economic impacts. Investment in education provides returns – this makes economic sense.

Instead of providing learning and classroom supports for students during the pandemic that would provide real returns to Ontario, the government squandered over \$1.7 billion on direct payments to parents and removed \$2.2 billion from the 2020-21 planned education spending. Most recently, the FAO estimates that education has been underspent by \$688 million through the first two quarters of 2021-22. The government should stop short-changing education and instead invest in education. In postsecondary education, the FAO has noted over \$250 million in underspending.

Bill 43 only continues the underfunding of public education and lack of investment in Ontario's future. The following are some of the areas that require immediate action by the government.

### **De-streaming, equity and inclusion, and access to services:**

The government must address systemic inequities in education. The pandemic has highlighted the crucial role education plays in maintaining a strong and vibrant society. For example, remote and hybrid learning are failing students, educators, families and communities. For clarification, hybrid learning is where there is a teacher in a classroom with students but also students following along at home and the result is a distracted and

fractured learning model. In-person learning diminishes the inequities faced by equity-seeking and sovereignty-seeking students. Hybrid learning is not working. The government must take a leadership role and direct school boards to end the hybrid learning model and to provide more robust supports for students, such as dedicated virtual schools where teachers and educational supports can be optimized for online learning.

Students should have opportunities for learning and growth within their diverse communities. More school-based services should be made available, including mental health and speech and language services. School boards should be provided with increased funding for services by board-employed practitioners.

The last time de-streaming was attempted it failed our students because it was underfunded. Class sizes were too large, resources were non-existent, and training was thin at best. OSSTF/FEESO supports a fully-funded de-streamed academic program; however, without assurances that adequate resources will be provided to support all students in de-streamed classes, we have significant concerns. It will require investment if it is to lead to a reduction in barriers to marginalized students, not another austerity budget.

De-streaming initiatives need to be implemented alongside educator training, the development and delivery of high-quality curriculum, a re-evaluation of school culture, open communication of all stakeholders involved, additional resources and time for educators and students to complete curriculum, and continuous monitoring of student outcomes. In order to foster and maximize equality of opportunity for all students, de-streaming initiatives should be viewed as an ongoing process, adjusting to the needs of students, teachers and education workers on a continuous basis.

The current funding formula ignores the inherent differences between urban, suburban, and rural areas. Adjustments must be made to the basic funding formula so there is adequate funding for boards to address inequalities that occur as a result of income levels, gender, race, special education identification, and newcomer and Indigenous status.

For example, the Urban and Priority High Schools Allocation only provides \$10 million for the students most at-risk in the identified list of 34 high schools. Other schools in other locations may have at-risk students in similar circumstances, but because they are not the most at-risk, no funding is provided. Any increase in the eligibility for this allocation only decreases the amount available to at-risk students in identified schools.

Special education funding is allocated similarly, with total funding being capped overall and then divided among school boards based on complicated statistical projections that do not acknowledge the individual needs of students. The Learning Opportunities Grant uses a system based on outdated census data that results in a system that inequitably attempts to anticipate the level of student need based on arbitrary labels.

There are also inequities in the funding of adult and continuing education, occasional teachers, education support staff, class size, at-risk student programs, programs for students whose first language is neither English nor French, programs for newcomers to Canada, student transportation, as well as in many other areas.

OSSTF/FEESO is committed to equity and believes that investments in education funding must be made so there is adequate funding for boards to address inequalities and student needs that occur as a result of income levels, gender, race, special education identification, new immigrant, and Indigenous status.

### **Student mental health and well-being:**

Supporting student well-being and positive mental health is essential to student success. Providing permanent, predictable, and meaningful funding for specialized programming and supports for all students strengthens learner outcomes and translates into higher graduation rates, more opportunities, and increased success. Having more staff in buildings creates safer schools and campuses, promotes student and worker mental health, and supports healthy communities. Mental health services must be available in every school and worksite. Tier 1 and Tier 2 services, which should be available in all schools (promotion, prevention and support services) need to be properly funded. Tier 3 supports are more specialized and intensive and are offered outside of the schools, but are essential for a small group of students.

Supporting the overall well-being of children and youth is a role our schools have filled for many years, and we continue to learn about the importance of this support to enable children and youth to reach their full potential as adults. Professionals such as Social Workers and Child and Youth Counsellors who are embedded in schools can support the delivery of Mental Health Literacy Programs, Bullying Prevention Programs, and other (Tier 1 – good for all) initiatives that encourage prosocial development. They are also able to deliver more targeted early intervention programming (Tier 2 – necessary for some), which encourages skill-building in students who may face challenges related to anxiety, social skills, and other developing needs. School-based staff are also well placed to identify students who require more intensive supports (Tier 3 – essential for a few) and to assist families in accessing community treatment programs.

OSSTF/FEESO believes that there is a need for comprehensive Tier 1 and Tier 2 mental health services within schools supplemented by access to Tier 3 services within the community, as appropriate. Students who require Tier 3 services often face barriers to access, significant wait times or a lack of available services in their communities. Intensive mental health services should be available by referral from schools, be timely, and be fully funded by the appropriate ministry so that there can be seamless and equitable access in every community in Ontario.

Tier 1 and Tier 2 services should be provided by board-employed professional student services personnel and paraprofessionals. Any gaps in service should first be addressed by hiring additional board-employed staff to enhance the services available to students in schools. If it is not possible to provide a service internally through board-employed staff, when considering external partnerships school boards must avoid duplication of services provided by existing board-employed staff and ensure a partnership protocol is in place.

Funding for mental health and well-being supports for all students must be permanent, predictable, and meaningful. These supports strengthen learner outcomes and translate into increased graduation rates, student opportunity, and success. School boards must be accountable for ensuring that all funding provided for mental health and well-being is used effectively to provide the intended supports to students. A school-based team of

professionals who have experience and an existing connection to schools is in the best position to support the needs of students. Any funding should maximize the amount of front-line services and be used to hire additional dedicated board staff to deliver service directly to students in schools as part of the school team of trained, experienced, and dedicated professionals.

### **Violence in schools:**

Violence in schools remains a major concern. The government must establish an education sector Health and Safety Regulation that will end violence against education workers. Mandatory enhanced training must be implemented to prevent, appropriately respond to, and report incidents of violence. An increase in the number of trained adults in our schools is needed to maintain the physical and mental health of staff and students.

A growing number of OSSTF/FEESO members have reported incidents involving biting, punching, kicking, spitting, and other forms of assaults by students year after year. These members, primarily educational assistants, but also teachers, work with high-needs students in special education classrooms. This issue has reached a crisis level, with severe physical and psychological impacts on education workers. This crisis also comes with increased costs in lost time, sick leave benefits, WSIB, and administrative time and resources.

Earlier this month, the University of Ottawa released a report called “In Harm’s Way: The Epidemic of Violence Against Education Sector Workers in Ontario.” The report identified that the rates of violence against education workers are amongst the highest of any occupation. The increasing rates of violence are attributed to increases in aggression coupled with decreasing staffing levels.

Violence against education workers is becoming normalized and minimized; this normalization operates in conjunction with widespread minimization or denial of the extent of violence and its impacts. The harmful impacts are profound and lasting, including diminished physical and mental health and job performance. Workplace violence impacts everyone in the school community, including students’ anxiety levels and the development of social phobias as a result of their witnessing of frequent and increasingly normalized violence against predominantly women education workers.

OSSTF/FEESO’s program End the Silence → Stop the Violence has highlighted this issue and brought it to the attention of the government. In response, the Ministry of Labour released a document in March of 2018 titled, Workplace Violence in School Boards: A Guide to the Law. School boards must be compelled to utilize the best practices in this guide to ensure compliance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act. Providing proactive health and safety training, during PD days or other paid time, to all school board employees, is an important step toward reducing the incidents of workplace violence. Increased funding must be provided to school boards to create programs that protect those who work with high-needs students. More education assistants, specialists, and professional student support workers must be hired to support high-needs students and reduce injuries to educational workers.

**Ontario's school repair backlog:**

Students and education workers need safer, healthier, and accessible schools. The government must fix the more than \$16.8 billion repair backlog and establish stable funding that is necessary to increase board-employed staff to maintain schools prevent further disrepair. This backlog continues to grow due to the chronic underfunding of school maintenance annually, which was then projected to be at about only 10% of what is necessary to ensure Ontario's schools are maintained in a good state of repair.

The disrepair of schools is not only dangerous for staff and students, but it also impacts the learning environment and student success, including their mental health and well-being. The funding pledged by the government will not keep pace with the need for repairs. The government must address the repair backlog with additional funding by increasing the out-of-date benchmarks for pupil accommodation. The School Operations Grant must be funded to a level that will maintain the good repair of buildings so that Ontario's backlog stops growing.

As well, further funding is necessary to enhance the accessibility of schools to meet the 2025 deadline of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

**Postsecondary education:**

In postsecondary education, nominal funding increases do not keep up with inflation, nor do those increases address the growing need for more spaces in schools for educated professionals and skilled workers to fuel Ontario's economic growth. The government's implementation of performance-based funding does nothing to enrich student outcomes. Research and experience from the United States show that performance-based funding for post-secondary institutions will do little to increase accountability, or, more importantly, student outcomes. Further investments are needed, including lowering tuition fees and increasing mental health supports for postsecondary students, to allow postsecondary campuses to thrive.

**Other considerations:**

The foundation of economic growth begins with families and communities. The government must invest in public services to fuel economic growth. Services such as affordable child care, universal basic income, and improving access to supports will help build stronger, healthier communities.

Ontario needs a well-educated and skilled workforce. Lower tuition fees will reduce the financial burden on students and families and improve access to post-secondary education.

Greater investments in community training and education for newcomers to Ontario and skill retraining opportunities for people transitioning back into the workforce are needed. Permanent paid sick days for workers will keep workers and communities healthy, reducing the spread of illness and providing financial security for families.

Our plan, Strengthen Public Education—Rebuild Ontario, protects and builds up one of the province's most valuable assets: Ontario's world-class publicly-funded education system.

The global pandemic has revealed the deep levels of inequities in society and highlighted the crucial role education plays in maintaining a strong and vibrant community. Now is the time to invest in and enhance Ontario's publicly-funded education system and to rebuild the province and the people living in it.

OSSTF/FEESO calls on the government to invest in our future—the many diverse students in Ontario's public schools and postsecondary institutions.

**OSSTF/FEESO recommends:**

1. That the government put back the \$0.5 billion removed from education for 2021-22;
2. That the government fund education and postsecondary education properly to ensure services are not eroded by inflation and enrolment growth – for public education, this means immediately adding \$200 million to the Grants for Student Needs to close the funding gap that was identified by the FAO; and
3. That the government make further investments in education and post-secondary education:
  - to make our schools and communities healthy and safe, by adequately addressing violence in schools and the school repair backlog,
  - to increase access to services for all students across Ontario so that students can receive the services they need in their schools and communities,
  - to provide classroom supports for at-risk students and the implementation of de-streaming,
  - to increase access to and services within higher education, and
  - to ensure that all students receive the supports needed to overcome the inequities they face in order to succeed.

**8. Annual Designated Charity – 2021-2022**

Kids Help Phone continues to be OSSTF/FEESO's designated charity for the next year and a donation of \$20,000 will be made.

Kids Help Phone remains a significant and unique organization in its outreach to teenagers and children. In addition to the online and print information it provides, KHP offers both online and direct phone support in response to millions of requests each year. These services are especially valuable for those in rural and remote areas where there is limited access to other options. OSSTF/FEESO members have also indicated their commitment to KHP, in particular through local donations and participation in various fundraisers held in communities across Canada each year.

**9. Extension of Here for Students Campaign**

Sussex Strategy has delivered two proposals OSSTF/FEESO regarding the continuation of the Here For Students campaign as we move toward the provincial and municipal elections, as well as into the next round of bargaining.

The first proposal is to extend our current contract for six months. Our current contract expires at the end of December. The extension would take us up to the end of June. At that time, we can review the campaign and determine next steps. This extension would continue

to cover campaign management, strategic advice related to Here For Students, and creative support. More specifically, it covers:

- Ongoing monitoring of daily social, media, and government news;
- Ongoing development and management of Advocacy and Activation programs;
- Daily management of Here For Students social channels;
- Development and delivery of supporter newsletters promoting new information and new advocacy / engagement opportunities;
- Digital creative and website management;
- Weekly strategy and status calls with staff;
- Strategic advice and counsel based on evolving priorities.

The Here For Students campaign website is shifting focus to our education platform. The revised site became active in mid-December, and will be followed up with supporter newsletters and paid digital ads on social media promoting elements of our education platform. This will give us an opportunity to learn about which of our platform messages resonate strongly with our supporter base and the public.

The second proposal offered modular services that we can purchase to enhance the Here For Students campaign and our overall election and bargaining strategy. Sussex offered a number of proposals, which were reviewed by staff. Among the proposals that were approved are as follows:

#### **Educator Interview Videos**

- Interview six members on issues related to the platform and the future of public education
- Similar idea to what we did with the Here For Students member videos during the last round of bargaining, which were very popular and resulted in a high level of supporter acquisition

#### **Rapid Response Videos**

- As significant issues arise over the next six months, a rapid response video can be developed using stock footage and text animations
- These were used at various times in the last round of bargaining
- Costing would be “per video” as needed

#### **Daily Brief 2.0**

- Twitter recently integrated an editorial newsletter subscription service that allows accounts to publish newsletters and build up a database of subscribers
- Ability to share this newsletter through the Here For Students Twitter account, acquire subscribers, and build up our supporter base

#### **Find My Candidates Social Tool**

- Develop a Find My Candidates landing page that allows a user to input their postal code and populate a page that has candidate names, party affiliation and photos
- Continuous updating of the page as candidates are declared
- Send issues-based organic Tweets to candidates related to our platform
- \*\*The targeting of Tweets at candidates may require a legal opinion to determine if the cost of this particular service would fall under Bill 307 as third-party advertising before proceeding.

### Updated Education Timeline

- Shows various actions or inactions by the Ford government on education issues during his tenure
- Highlight news articles and other publications
- Update the time line as events unfold as we approach the election

In addition to the above services, Sussex proposed a range of digital media spending proposals. The digital spend would target specific ridings and specific target demographics on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. We will work with Sussex to determine our priority ridings and concentrate the bulk of our media spending in those areas where the Progressive Conservative incumbent is vulnerable.

The digital spend will also support the building up of our supporter base so that we can engage them in further advocacy down the road, including during bargaining.

### 10. Update: OSSTF/FEESO Union Training Academy

The following is an update regarding training sessions provided to local leaders as part of the OSSTF/FEESO Training Academy.

The following workshops are planned for January to June 2022:

Workplace Safety Insurance Board (WSIB) Basics	January 19	5 – 7 pm
Cultivating Resilience	January 19	4 – 6 pm
Local Media Relations	January 20	5 – 7 pm
Records Management	February 1	6 – 8 pm
Records Management (French)	February 15	5 – 7 pm
Pay Equity	March 28	6 – 8 pm
Pay Equity (French)	March 28	6 – 8 pm
Duty of Fair Representation	April 5	5 – 7 pm
Minutes, Motions, and Meetings: AGM edition	April 14	3 – 5 pm
How to Chair an Effective Meeting: AGM edition	April 19	3 – 5 pm
Labour and Community Allies	April 21	5 – 7 pm
Records Management	April 21	5 – 7 pm
Workplace Safety Insurance Board (WSIB) Basics	June 7	5 – 7 pm
Duty to Accommodate/Return to Work	June 14	5 – 7 pm

Staff avoided scheduling training workshops around certain dates in the calendar, including pre-AMPA preparations, AMPA, March Break, Easter Break, and the month of May when most local annual general meetings occur.

### 11. 2021 CESBA Conference (Ontario Association of Adult and Continuing Education School Board Administrators)

The 2021 CESBA Conference was held on November 25-26, 2021, on Zoom. Assigned staff from the Educational Services Department attended the conference on behalf of OSSTF/FEESO. The title of this year's conference was '*Bridges to Innovation*,' with keynote speaker Zabeen Hirji, a speaker, writer, and media commentator.

### **Items of Interest**

Keynote speaker, Zabeen Hirji, on Creating a Future that Works for All, spoke to the changing world of work and its impact on education. Takeaways included:

- We are in the future of work now, so let's start calling it the new world of work.
- Lengthened life expectancies are reshaping work and education: people will work longer and change careers, requiring lifelong learning and returning to school between careers.
- The half-life of technological change and skills has shrunk from 30 years to 2-5 years.
- Math is important to 70% of new jobs.
- Human skills (adaptability, resiliency, empathy, critical thinking, etc.) are important and transferable: how will educators assess and credential-ise these skills?

### Adult Education – Challenges and Benefits of Remote Learning

Dr. Lorraine Godden (Carleton U) and Dr. Sandy Youmans (Queen's U) shared the findings of a research study sponsored by CESBA. While many of the findings would not surprise OSSTF/FEESO members, some interesting statistics from surveys of adult learners and educators include:

- 49% of adult learners surveyed would like to continue online learning, while 19% would prefer a mix of online and face-to-face learning.
- The least useful strategy reported by educators was attempting to build opportunities for interaction between learners online.

### Hybrid Learning

Researchers and various presenters at the conference referred to the combination of online classes and face-to-face classes for one course or program as hybrid learning. This is different than our current conversations around hybrid learning in public education, where we are referring to hybrid learning as the attempt to teach in person and online at the same time. OSSTF/FEESO leaders and Members should be mindful to ascertain the context, or meaning, when researchers, allies, and external organizations refer to hybrid learning.

### What's new in Skilled Trades and Technology?

Dan Cardinal, Senior Community and Provincial Outreach & Engagement Coordinator at Skills Ontario, discussed how Skills Ontario is inspiring and motivating the next generation of skilled trades and technology leaders as we move toward a post-pandemic environment. Workshop participants learned about growing partnerships with school boards, colleges, government, and industry leaders to guide Ontario students to careers in skilled trades and technologies. Dan highlighted the growing shortage of workers in Ontario's 140+ skilled trades. Skills Ontario is pleased to offer presentations for students, parents, and adult learners, noting the pathways, required courses, and shortages in specific fields. There are many satisfying, high-paying careers available. They can be reached at <https://www.skillsontario.com/> for more information or to book a presentation.

CESBA is a provincial, non-profit professional association that represents, advocates for and supports adult and continuing education program staff working in about 60 school boards across Ontario. Visit their website for information, news, and resources: <https://cesba.com/>.

## **12. DBU Memos Issued Since the Last Report**

79	OCT Advisory on Anti-Black Racism
80	ELHT Advisory Work Group Appointment

81	Job Postings: AGS, Protective Services; EA, Ed Services
82	Boycott of Sheraton Ottawa Hotel Cancelled
83	Application for Educational Services Workshop Training
84	December Benevolent Council Meeting Date Change
85	Submission of Resolutions for AMPA 2022
86	Ministry Correspondence - Communication Resources to Support Vaccinations for Children 5-11
87	Ministry Correspondence - Revised Policy/Program Memorandum No. 144 - Bullying Prevention and Intervention
88	An Evening with Dr. Love - Presented by SWC, HRC and District 16, York Region
89	New Hybrid Learning Pushback Resources
90	Ministry Correspondence - Temporary Certificate of Qualification and Registration - Update
91	Appointment of Associate General Secretary - Protective Services
92	Joint Letter to the MoH regarding prioritization of C-19 booster shot eligibility
93	Ministry Correspondence - Fall 2021 Update: Mathematics Proficiency Test
94	Ministry Correspondence - Amendments to Policy/Program Memorandum PPM 132 - Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition PLAR for Mature Students
95	Submission of Resolutions for AMPA 2022
96	Ministry Correspondence - COVID-19 Winter Break Updates
97	Postponement of Provincial OSSTF/FEESO In-Person Meetings
98	OSSTF/FEESO Union Training Academy - Additional Workshops from January to June 2022
99	OSSTF/FEESO annual designated charity - Kids Help Phone
100	OSSTF/FEESO Self-Identification Survey
101	D1-D33 Provincial Executive Job Class Town Hall Meetings
102	OSSTF/FEESO MPP Virtual Lobby Day - Friday, January 28, 2022
103	Starling Minds
104	Appointment of Director, Member Protection
105	Ministry Correspondence - Return to School Update - January 2022
106	OTF Communique - 50 Day Re-employment Rule
107	2022 OTIP Teaching Awards
108	OTF Statement - OTPP Pensioner Re-employment
109	Ministry of Education Update
110	Update on Provincial Office Operations
111	Updates to the School Screening Tool