

OSSTF DISTRICT 18  
UPPER GRAND  
ESSP/ECE  
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MARSHALL

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Scholarships
- Sick Leave
- GALA
- PD funds
- Did you know

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# ESSP /ECE CONNECT

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## President's Report

February is over. Can you believe it? That means spring is on the way....soon I hope.

We have had a few glitches with our new negotiated items and we ask that you be patient with us and even with the board. It always takes a little time to make sure we are all on the same page and that administrators know the details of what we negotiated. We are working hard to get out the creaks and will send direction to you whenever we come across any issues.

We collected over 100 pair of adult and children mittens/gloves for drop off to 40 Baker Street in Guelph. They were very appreciative of our donation. In addition, your executive voted to sponsor this worthwhile group in

their 200 for 40 program. You can read about this group on Facebook "40 Baker Street". Many of our students and families receive food, clothes and support



**One of our 2015 John F. Ross GALA winners in the special photo booth! Awesome!!**

from this wonderful group of people. If you know of any other worthwhile centers that we should be donating to, let us know and we will talk about it and make a decision. We are

always looking for ways to get involved in our communities. Our next drive will be for socks and you can read about it later in this newsletter.

Our PD committee is in the throes of planning a spectacular day for you in June focusing on a wellness fair and some really fun and active team building activities. I can't wait!

Keep in mind the upcoming GALA for our students with learning differences is approaching in April. Please remember to get your student nominations in by the required date. If you have any questions regarding this amazing event, don't hesitate to call me.

Warm regards, Tracey

## How can we support you?

Many of our members have difficulty from time to time. Whether it's trouble in your worksite, a chronic illness, divorce, substance abuse issues, family struggles or financial turmoil...we have the resources available to provide assistance. We have many specialists on hand to assist you with any issues. I am always available to help with issues in your worksite. If there are violence issues, staff relations problems, difficulty communicating

with your admin or colleagues, I can definitely help. If you're having difficulty working or struggling with a chronic illness, Cindy Scholten, our sick leave and return to work/accommodation specialist can definitely assist you. If you're an ECE that needs some assistance or advice, or your struggling with your team or maybe need a little mentoring, Cheryl Lampkin can definitely assist you. In addition

to the three of us, we have an entire provincial team of experts that we rely on for advice. Don't ever hesitate to give us a call.

## Benevolent Committee—You can definitely help!

Every life contains beautiful moments and happy memories - that's what makes life so wonderful! Unfortunately, as we all know, life isn't always full of perfect moments and each of us must deal with our own trials and tribulations. During times of crisis, wouldn't it be nice to know you don't have to carry the burden alone? As a member of the ESSP/ECE bargaining unit you don't have to. Because we all need extra support sometimes, we are creating a committee to offer just that. Here's your opportunity to 'pay it forward'. As part of the Benevolent Committee, we are looking for empathetic individuals to offer their time, energy and/or skills to other members in their time of need. Perhaps a member is off with an injury or serious illness - wouldn't it be nice to provide them with a hot meal so it is one less thing for them worry about? Maybe during a family crisis a member is just too exhausted to pick up a few more

groceries or finish those last couple of chores. It would be so helpful if someone could just take care of those things. Of course, we all have busy schedules and we don't always have extra time to give. That's okay too, because you can still contribute. The committee can't possibly know what is going on in the lives of all of our members. We need people to keep us informed when someone among us needs our support. Just passing on that information is a huge help and, in fact, is the only way to make this initiative successful. We are looking for members, permanent or casual, from all of the areas among our district. For example, if a member is struggling in Palmerston, it would be ideal if someone in that area was able to

support that member. Being part of the committee will not be time consuming, as there will be no in-person meetings. We will connect through email, or perhaps by phone, to keep one another informed and make sure everyone's needs are being met. Obviously, working in the fields we do, we are all kind, caring individuals who want the best for our students. I'm sure that concern carries over to all individuals. Please take this opportunity to extend your support to your colleagues in their time of need. If you are interested in joining our committee, or would like further information, please contact me at [kimjohnson76@hotmail.com](mailto:kimjohnson76@hotmail.com). I look forward to hearing from you. ☺

*"This would give us the bargaining clout to be able to support a province wide walk out of up to 6 weeks of every member of OSSTF."*

*"We are all dedicated to our students; but there are those who have something special and they give that each and every day to their students, colleagues and community."*



## Possible fee increase coming to AMPA

If you're familiar with our Union structure, you will know that AMPA is our Annual Meeting of the Provincial Assembly and we meet once a year to vote on constitution/bylaws and decide the direction of the union for the coming year. We have 5 delegates going this March break to represent us. Our delegates are John Potocska, Cheryl Lampkin, Alissa Pearson, Jenn Hayston and Janet Piper. This year one of the motions coming forward is a possible fee increase to start September 2016. As you know our strike fund (member protection account MPA) was greatly depleted during the job action of 2015. In fact we used 23 million for

one 3 bargaining units to be on actions for up to 6 weeks. Out of that 23 million strike pay, benefits, pension, advertising and legal bills were paid. At one time it was thought that the optimal level of our MPA was around 50 million. Due to the increase of members in our union, a study was done; with support from various bargaining units across the province. This would give us the bargaining clout to be able to support a province wide walk out of up to 6 weeks of every member of OSSTF. While I will not be at AMPA this year, I do believe that this fee increase is an important step in protecting our members. The actual

increase would be .3% of what our union dues were last year. That is approximately a .4% decrease of what we are paying this year, due to the special levy. This fee change will be in place until the MPA reaches the desired level of 140 million. While I know that not everyone understands the inner workings of a strike and the importance of being able to back up a job action, you can see evidence of that this year with our own sanctions and the movement we got at the negotiating table because of that action. Remember that this possible increase is also tax deductible union dues!

## Nominate a Colleague!

Each year your Bargaining Unit Executive sponsors the Educational Assistant and Early Childhood Educator of the Year Award. Everyone works with someone amazing. We're all dedicated to our students; but there are those who have something special and they give that

each and every day to their students, colleagues and community. It's simple to recognize your colleagues by nominating them for this award. Simply send a letter, outlining the reason your nominating your colleague and send it to Cathy Bruder VP. The EA/ECE of the Year Award is given out

each year at our Annual General Meeting, which will be held at our District Office on April 2016. Nominations must be sent to Cathy Bruder by April 10th via email to: [sea\\_bee@hotmail.com](mailto:sea_bee@hotmail.com) Don't forget!

## Synopsis of our new local collective agreement—Sick Leave



Sick leave may seem confusing to navigate, but the long and short of it is; it's simple. Currently, if you are a permanent employee or employed as a casual in a temporary assignment (which some call an

**Don't come to work when you're sick. Take time to get better!**

LTO) you are entitled to sick leave. We have 11 days at 100% of your salary. You don't need to tell your Principal or inform your teaching partners of why you're off, you only need to submit your absence into SMARTFIND. Once you use the 11 days, you have a further 121 days @ 90%. After using the 11 the board may ask you to participate in their early intervention program. Essentially,

with the assistance of Cindy Scholten the board/union work together to make sure that you can get back to work safely and according to your doctor's orders. After 80 days the board will send you a long term disability package. We encourage you to fill it out in a timely manner and if you need assistance, contact us and we will help you out. Remember, you can use sick days only for personal illness and doctor appointments. If you have any questions or need help regarding sick leave contact Tracey Marshall.

## Worker's Health and Safety Centre Scholarship

### WHSC 2016 STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP CONTEST

The Workers Health and Safety Centre (WHSC) is calling on Ontario high school seniors to expand their health and safety awareness by applying for a post-secondary scholarship.

**WHAT:** 16th Annual WHSC Student Scholarship Contest

**WHO:** Students residing in Ontario and beginning their first year of full or part-time studies leading to a degree, diploma or certificate from

a publicly-funded Ontario College or University. Entrants must not have graduated high school prior to summer of 2015.

**DEADLINE:** Friday, June 10, 2016  
The aim of this scholarship initiative is to shed light on the fact new workers, many of whom are students, face excess risk to their health and safety at work. Research suggests they are four times more likely to be injured during the first month on a job than workers with more than one year experience.

Applicants for the 2016 WHSC Student Scholarship contest must write an essay or create a poster exploring an existing or emerging occupational health or safety hazard. Submissions must also explain why and how employers should prevent or control exposures based on the hierarchy of control. Up to six candidates will be selected and will be eligible to receive a \$1,200 scholarship. Want more information? [www.whsc.on.ca](http://www.whsc.on.ca) or Julie Wagner.

**"Workers do not get injured because they are 18 years old or they all behave a certain way, they are injured because precautions have not been taken."**  
**Dave Kilham,**  
Executive  
Director WHSC

## It's almost time for our Annual Gala!!

Don't forget to get your nominations into Tracey Marshall before 4:00 p.m. on April 1st, 2016. The GALA will be held on Wednesday April 20 @ 5:00 p.m. Our nomination categories are Art, Written Word, Environmental Steward, Most Improved, Citizenship, Photography and Technology. If you need a reminder of the criteria, send Tracey an email and she will

resend it to you. This is such a fantastic event for all of our students with learning differences so please don't leave it until the last minute. Send your nominations with the student's work to Tracey Marshall, OSSTF office. You can either send your nomination through the board courier or you can drop it off at our OSSTF office @ 294 Mill Street East, Suite #205

in Elora. This year our theme is "Children Around the World". There will be food, entertainment, photo-booth, friendship and fun. Please remember to join us @ the Centre Wellington Sportsplex. RSVP to Tracey Marshall by April 10th.



**ESSP Annual Gala for Students with Learning Differences—Join us!**





"If we all donate one pair of socks, we could drop off over 700 pairs of socks to our local organizations that support people in our community".

## Join us for some...sock love!

Athletic socks, tube socks, long socks, short socks, fuzzy socks, cotton socks, work socks, thermal socks, toe socks; it doesn't matter!

Starting March 1st we will be collecting socks for those with precarious housing in the Wellington and Dufferin counties. There is nothing worse than enduring the wet and cold spring without a pair

of warm, cozy, hole free socks.

Please send your donation of new socks, various sizes to Tracey Marshall @ OSSTF Office through the board courier. You don't need to wait until you have a bunch of socks, just send them one at a time in an interoffice envelope or a box if you have a bunch. If we all donate one pair of socks, we could drop off over 700 pairs of socks to our local organizations that

support people in our community. Everyone has a favourite kind so send your favourite to us and we will send it on your behalf to either one of our community agency contacts in our county. Thanks so much in advance. I know for sure that someone's feet will be so appreciative of a warm pair of cozy socks this spring. I will be sending out an email soon to remind you of this great community initiative.

## Are you retiring this year?

There are a few steps that you need to take if you are retiring this year. First thing is to notify Tracey Marshall that you're retiring. Next there are a few things that you need to do in order for your retirement to start smoothly. First you must forward a retirement letter to Jennifer Rose/Human Resources with a copy to your supervisor/principal. A retirement package will be sent to you approximately one month prior to your retirement date.

The retirement package will contain all information pertaining to your retirement; OMERS/OTPP paperwork and any benefit information that is applicable. Once your last pay has been paid out, OMERS/OTPP will be sent your financial information for the year you're retiring along with the OMERS/OTPP paperwork you complete and return to Human Resources. The first pension cheque will likely start mid to late month because of when the last pay from UG-

DSB will be paid. All other pension cheques will be in the bank the 1st day of the month. You're encouraged to sign up for "myOMERS" or OTTP "iaccess" This gives you options for completing pension quotes etc. It is of great value to anyone who wants to complete a pension estimate quote. Lastly, don't forget to come to our OSSTF retirement dinner held in June. It's a lovely evening complete with fellowship, food and federation fun. Let us send you off in style!

## Did you know we have money for you?—Cindy Scholten

Did you know that in addition to money available at the Board level for personal PD, we also have Bargaining Unit funds for your professional development? We have \$5000/school year set aside for PD for you to access on a first come-first served basis. You only need to fill out an

application form, get approved and then attach the proof of payment of your professional development course and I will write you a check to cover up to \$500 for your PD activity. Remember to apply early! If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Cindy for more information. Re-

member it's first come-first served. Contact Cindy Scholten, [whitemancindy2@gmail.com](mailto:whitemancindy2@gmail.com) for an application form.



"We have \$5000/school year set aside for PD for our members to access on a first come-first served basis."

# Mentoring ECE Students—Cheryl Lampkin

Have you ever wondered about ECE students at your school? Is your teaching partner expected to mentor them or you, the RECE?

I had a fantastic conversation with Conestoga College recently about mentoring ECE students. I spoke with Bev Laking who is the field placement coordinator for ECE students. I asked her if they had a policy on who was to be mentoring their students. She was adamant that only RECEs working in an ECE role could mentor their students. They feel RECEs working in schools are the experts on their position and offer the best placement experience. They would only ask a classroom teacher to mentor in an extenuating circumstance, which was common to do before the implementation of FDK in 2010. These were called “special placements”.

Bev also shared that they have been asked about paying of the

RECE to mentor the student. It is understood that teachers (OCT) are paid when mentoring students from teacher’s college. This cost is covered by the student as part of their tuition. It is actually the student who is paying the Mentor. The cost to the student is high and not something the college is considering adding to their program.

We should also be aware that mentoring of ECE students is part of our Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, we are expected to do it. Conestoga College is finding that RECEs in school boards decline mentoring students quite often. The concern is that RECEs may feel that mentoring ECE students is optional, when in fact it is not. We know it’s a lot of work and we don’t get planning time to fill out paper work and evaluations, but did you know that you can use the hours that you do have a student toward your annual Continuous

Professional Learning (CPL). At this point the CPL is still voluntary but the intention is to make it mandatory so keeping track of time spent mentoring ECE students will be valuable.

If you have an ECE student at your school that is being mentored by an OCT and not an RECE feel free to let me know at [eccexecutiveofficer@gmail.com](mailto:eccexecutiveofficer@gmail.com), they are likely not from Conestoga College and I’d be willing to call their college affiliate and find out their program philosophy and advocate for our profession. If you have further questions, feel free to contact me.



## OSSTF Family Education Fund

The Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation established this fund to assist financially the children of OSSTF/FEESO members (or deceased members) to obtain their first degree/diploma/certificate or apprenticeship. Ten \$1,500 bursaries are available this year. Bursaries are awarded through a lottery process.

The following are the criteria for the Federation Family Education Fund:

- The applicant must be a dependent child or ward of a member, or deceased member, of OSSTF/FEESO in good standing.
- The applicant must have applied to enter a publicly-funded post-secondary college or university program or an apprenticeship program that includes an academic portion offered through a college.
- Interpretation and administration of the terms of this fund are at the discretion of the OSSTF/FEESO Educational Services Committee subject to the approval of the Provincial Executive.
- All awards are made conditional upon the recipient being enrolled in the program and proof of tuition paid equal to or greater than the \$1,500. It is the responsibility of all successful applicants to ensure that documentation confirming enrollment and paid tuition is received at: OSSTF/FEESO Attn: Karen Metherall 60 Mobile Drive Toronto ON M4A 2P3
- Only on-line applications will be accepted.
- Although one may apply multiple years, applicants may only receive funding in the amount of \$1,500 once in a lifetime.

Applications must be received at OSSTF/FEESO Provincial Office no later than **April 15**.

*“Although one may apply multiple years, applicants may only receive funding in the amount of \$1,500 once in a lifetime.”*



Although care has been taken in preparing the information contained in this publication, accuracy cannot be guaranteed. The opinions and views expressed do not necessarily represent OSSTF District #18. We reserve the right to edit for content and/or space.

### Tracey Marshall, President

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Have you been sick? Are you worried about Mat leave? Call Cindy Scholten 519-835-0249

Are you an ECE and having issues in your school? Call Cheryl Lampkin 519-820-3989

Let us not take thought for our separate interests, but let us help one another.

### Important Upcoming Dates:

**March 12—20—March Break**

**March 22—Workplace Violence Committee**

**March 25—Good Friday**

**March 28—Easter Monday**

**March 29—ECE Committee**

**April 7—EA Committee**

**April 20—ESSP Annual GALA**

**April 25—PD Day**

**April 27—ESSP/ECE Annual General Meeting**

**May 23—Victoria Day**

**May 24—EA Committee**

**June 1—District Annual General Meeting**

We're on the web! [www.osstf.ca](http://www.osstf.ca) [www.d18.osstf.ca](http://www.d18.osstf.ca) FACEBOOK OSSTF-D18-ESSP/ECE MEMBERS and LIKE D18 Educational Assistants and Early Childhood Educators

## WSIB—Did you know?

Have you ever been injured on the job? Do you know the steps you need to take in order to ensure that you're fairly represented to the board and more importantly to WSIB? Many times the board and WSIB make workers think that they have to return to work when a worker may not be well enough to return. That's where we come in. We can help you navigate the sometimes confusing process that is sick leave, return to work and WSIB paperwork/legalities. It doesn't take a second to give us a call, but it can save you years of aggravation, stress and a drain on your finances. Here's the scoop of what you need to know to protect yourself. If you become injured at work you must first report it to

your supervisor (administration) that you have become injured. If you are unable to do it, get a colleague to notify them. Then you should seek medical attention of either attending a local emergency room or your family doctor. Don't wait! Sometimes a simple injury can become more debilitating and complex the longer you wait to obtain treatment. When you are seeing a doctor, inform them that this was a workplace accident and they will then fill out the appropriate forms. After you leave the emergency room the board will send you a Form 6. You need to fill that out immediately or WSIB may not cover you. You should be indicating on the Form 6 that your Union can represent you in your

dealings with WSIB. Your contact is Cindy Scholten 519-835-0249. Then you need to contact Cindy Scholten asap. The board does NOT notify us when a member is hurt at work, so we would have no way of knowing that you might need our help. You may have already damaged your case with WSIB if you don't speak to us in a timely manner. Of course representation is up to you, but remember WSIB is insurance and they don't want to pay if they can help it! In addition to assisting you with cumbersome paperwork, we can also support your return to work, when your doctor is giving you the all clear to ensure you're successful in getting back to work. We are here for YOU!!!!