

Political Action



Shane Stagg
District & TBU President

While there are some who choose to not get involved in politics, it's important to understand that provincial politics will always involve you. It is a certainty that the working, teaching, and learning conditions in our schools are influenced by the party in power. Class size, special education funding, health and safety, workload, compensation, access to benefits, online learning, and more are all determined greatly by the decisions of the Ministry of Education and the government behind it. The upcoming provincial election is expected on or before June 2, 2022. With the next round of collective bargaining set to begin over the next year, the biggest impact we can have on the tone of those negotiations and the future of public education is to determine who we are bargaining with.

Majority governments are very powerful. The current Ford government has underspent on education and the Financial Accountability Office reports that by 2029 – 2030 there will be a 2-3 billion dollar shortfall in education funding. Let's not forget the cut to staffing that came in the form of increased class sizes in 2019. A change from a class size ratio of 22:1 to 23:1 created enormous changes to staffing at schools and led to redundancy of teaching positions for the first time in recent history. Recall that the government's goal was a deeper cut to staffing. They initially proposed hiking the class size ratio to 28:1 which would have led to the loss of 5,000 teachers in Ontario. They were not happy to be pushed back to 23:1 and be certain that a successful Ford government in the next election will come back looking for what was left behind. Recall as well that the government's intent was to remove any class size limits included in local collective agreements. That led to a centrally bargained agreement of a flex factor of 2 additional students over class size maxima in up to 10% of classes in the Board. That push back mitigated the damage

that comes with a majority government that does not value public education but we can expect to see this revisited in future negotiations if the current government remains in power.

COVID-19 has led to incredibly stressful conditions in the workplace. Quadesters, threats to prep periods, and transitions between online and in-person learning has led to burnout of permanent employees and a shortage of occasional workers

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looking to take jobs in schools. The next round of bargaining will need to focus on a reset to working conditions that are reasonable with protections in place. Achieving that will depend greatly on who is holding power in government.

Public Education is an important asset and supports a robust society. OSSTF has been advocating for protections and enhancements to public education for over 100 years and it is important for Ontario's elected officials to share in that commitment. Our goal is to elect an education-friendly government and opposition

party. OSSTF has released an education platform titled Strengthening Public Education – Rebuild Ontario. It can be found with a web search using the terms “OSSTF Education Platform” – look for the page titled “Toward 2022 and Beyond”. Key themes of this platform are: Increasing Student-Centred Supports and Services, Centering Schools as Part of our Communities, Improving Learning Conditions for All, Addressing Systemic Inequities, and Providing Safe and Healthy Learning and Working Conditions.

OSSTF has assigned to each district an election organizer.

They have been trained to apply strategies to influence election results in ridings and will be working with locals to support their efforts. Bill Hewitt has been assigned to District 13 and has been meeting with our local Education Issues and Political Action committee. We have been discussing the candidates nominated in Durham ridings and are preparing to meet with them to gather details on their commitment to public education. As the election date approaches, more information will become available on how members can play a role in defending working and learning conditions in schools.

Appointment of District Anti-Oppression and Social Justice Lead

Shane Stagg

District & TBU President

District 13 is thrilled to announce the appointment of Kokhulani (Khogu) Yasodaran as District 13 Anti-Oppression and Social Justice Lead. This new voluntary position on our Executive was created with the approval of the membership at our District Annual Meeting in May. The appointment was made by the Executive Team in November after seeking applications from interested members. The Lead is a voting member of the District Executive and serves as a liaison between the Executive and Equity Advisory Committees which are being established to bring the diverse voices of our membership to the decisions that guide the District.

Khogu brings leadership and lived experience that make her ideally suited to this position. She has strong connections throughout the District and is well versed in the resources available to enhance anti-oppressive and anti-discriminatory practices. Please join us in welcoming Khogu to the District 13 Executive Team!

D13's Social Justice Team



Garrett Metcalfe
District Representative

The world is in turmoil. COVID has turned our lives upside down, globally there has been a political shift to the right, hate crime is going up and membership to hate organizations is on the increase. Hate is also creeping into mainstream politics and social media. There is no doubt that we are certainly living in strange times.

For those of us who have been doing anti-oppression work for a while, there is also a deep sense of optimism. We are on the cusp of something really big. Every pivotal moment of true social change has come out of uncertainty and a sense of chaos. This moment in social justice history is no different.

Our institutions are changing quickly as we align more closely with the Ontario Human Rights Code. While the OHRC has been around for decades, it is finding itself embedded in all social institutions throughout Canada – including education.

District 13 has been keenly aware that these changes were coming and long overdue. We recognize that change must be embedded directly in how we do business as a local federation as well. While still in our infancy, we are proud to say that the process has begun and we are committed to seeing it through.

We also recognize that many of our members who want to do the right thing can find themselves feeling unsupported, fragile and uncertain. Change is happening quickly and this can create a sense of instability – especially given all of this is happening with the backdrop of a pandemic. We truly understand and are committed to supporting our members through these changes.

Please allow me to briefly introduce our growing “social justice team” here at D13. Alongside our office staff, Executive is pleased to welcome new voices to the decision-making table to help move us forward. Esther McCalla is now sitting on Executive in her role as chair of our Human Rights Committee. We are thrilled she will bring her own authentic voice as well as support the ally capacity role of the HR Committee. We are also excited to introduce Khogu Yasodaran into the newly

created role of “Anti- Oppression and Social Justice Lead” on our Executive. Khogu brings a wealth of anti-oppression and policy experience to our district and she will support me in my portfolio as well as act as liaison with our newly created D13 Advisory Committees. I have every confidence in our growing team in the district to help move us forward.

Stressful and uncertain times are not easy and we are all going to find ourselves challenged and make mistakes. As a union, we have a responsibility to continually advance our social justice work and support our members through this process. Our basic tenet in doing this work is that when we know better... we do better.

Our growing social justice team is here to help us all do better as we navigate these stressful but exciting times in anti-oppression work.



Advisory Committees

Join or Create the Group For You!

Rights/Equity-Seeking Advisory Committees

Our Black/Racialized group and Indigenous group has already begun...

-please reach out if you are interested in joining!

We have expressed interest in the creation of the following groups and are looking for members to launch a first meeting:

- *Jewish
- *Women's
- *South Asian
- *Queer



Please contact Garrett at garrett.metcalf@d13.osstf.ca or call the office at 905 668 7100

Your Voice

Your Space

Your Union

LifeWorks (Formerly Posaction)



LifeWorks (formerly Posaction) counselling service is available through our OTIP LTD contract for Permanent Teachers. On an annual (calendar year) basis, you can access up to 12 hours of free face-to-face psychosocial counselling for you and/or your immediate family members. LifeWorks can assist you with work-related, family, personal or dependency problems. At this time, sessions are also available via distance options. As well, there are other web-based services available.

LifeWorks is mentioned on the District 13 website and in each newsletter.

To access LifeWorks, download the app or visit otiptl.lifeworks.com.

Log in with the username and password below:

Login: Lifeworks1

Password: @OTIPTL123

Your District Executive



Nicole Bléau
District Representative

There is a group of dedicated volunteers who give their time to serve as your District Executive. These members set the direction of our District. Your Executive includes representatives from each of our Bargaining Units, the Chairs of our District committees, the elected members of the Executive, and the staff in the District Office. We have welcomed several new members to our District Executive recently so we thought this would be a good time to introduce/re-introduce you to the whole team.

Member Name	District Executive Position(s)
Kristen Bennett	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional Student Services Personnel (PSSP) President Provincial Councillor
Nicole Bléau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District Treasurer Teacher Bargaining Unit (TBU) Negotiator & Collective Bargaining Committee Chair Provincial Councillor
Avril Burns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occasional Teachers Bargaining Unit (OTBU) President Provincial Councillor
George Chaktsiris	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1st District Vice President Communications Committee Chair
Art Hanke <i>*NEW MEMBER*</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4th District Vice President
Kathie Harris	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and Safety Committee Chair
Danielle Hunter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Relations Committee Chair
Ruth Kam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District Secretary
Esther McCalla <i>*NEW MEMBER*</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human Rights Committee Co-Chair
Richard McCormack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District Representative
Julia McCrea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3rd District Vice President Professional Development Committee Chair
Adam Mercer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education and Political Action Committee Co-Chair
Garrett Metcalfe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District Representative
Shane Stagg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District and Teacher Bargaining Unit (TBU) President Provincial Councillor Constitution Committee Chair Education and Political Action Committee Co-Chair
Melissa Waddington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human Rights Committee Co-Chair
Rob Walker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2nd District Vice President
Kokhulani (Khogu) Yasodaran <i>*NEW MEMBER*</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anti-Oppression and Social Justice Lead

November 12th PD Day: Recovery, Resilience and Revitalization



Richard McCormack
District Representative

The joint OSSTF/DDSB PD day has come and gone once again

this year. This year's theme was "Recovery, Resilience and Revitalization" with workshops focused on supporting a culture of wellness and enhancing professional practices for the classroom.

The day saw a return to in-person workshops with some virtual workshops added to the mix. The feedback for the day has been positive. Thank-you to

the members who offered workshops for their colleagues. If it were not for your efforts we would not be able to run a successful PD day.

A large thank-you goes out to the members of our D13 Professional Development Committee who helped organize the day. We will now turn our attention to planning the 2022/2023 joint OSSTF/DDSB PD day.



D13 members participating in the Industry Tour workshop at IBEW.



Weave your Way to Stress Relief workshop as participants created a mini wall tapestry.

Student Achievement Awards 2022: Our Moment In Time



Nicole Bléau
District Representative

The Student Achievement Awards is an OSSTF writing and creative arts competition which is open to all public secondary school students in Ontario. The competition is meant to encourage the intellectual development of our students and an interest in society. With the pandemic top of mind, the theme this year is "Our Moment in Time". Although the pandemic has caused unprecedented challenges and tremendous risks and hardship, many communities rallied and found ways to connect and support those in need. More and more people are coming to the realization that we must advocate for a new and improved way forward. Students around the province were inspired creatively by this theme. Eleven provincial winners will be awarded \$1,000 each in prizes and will be invited to our Annual General Meeting in March, where a video showcasing their work and the OSSTF member who supported them will be screened.

In Durham, a dozen entries in four different categories were submitted from around the District. The entries included a wide variety of poetry, short stories, paintings, sculptures and digital art. Our regional winners who will be going forward to the Provincial level were supported by the following members with students at the following schools:

Division A – Prose and Poetry

Category 1: Prose and Poetry, English Intermediate, 9-10 Academic

Supporting Teacher: Chantelle Lacoursière, Student from O'Neill CVI

Category 3: Prose and Poetry, English Senior, 11-12 University

Supporting Teacher: Catherine O'Mara, Student from Sinclair SS/DDSB@Home

Division B – Visual and Media

Category 1: Visual, Intermediate, 9-10

Supporting Teacher: Erin Cay, Student from O'Neill CVI/DDSB@Home

Category 2: Visual, Senior, 11-12

Supporting Teacher: Chris Burke, Student from O'Neill CVI

Best of luck to all of the participants!

New Teachers' Workshop

Shane Stagg
District & TBU President

With over 120 new permanent teachers hired to the DDSB over the last year, District 13 hosted 3 workshops for our newest Teachers' Bargaining Unit members. These sessions were held online and took place November 24, December 1, and December 9. During these sessions, new teachers were introduced to the collective agreement, pensions, benefits, sick leave, professional boundaries, professional judgement, anti-oppression, health and safety, incident reporting, district committees and more. Starting a new career in teaching is a significant challenge at the best of times and this year has certainly proven to be remarkable. We are grateful that our newest members took time out of their busy schedules to become acquainted with the work of the District Office and the services we provide to members.

Using the Safe Schools Incident Reporting Form

Chris Davis

***Communications Rep,
Pickering HS***

One of this academic year's unforeseen challenges arising from virtual learning - aside from the much-discussed learning loss or learning gap - is the social development gap. This has even made the CBC Radio news a couple of times. The implications of this social development gap are a delay in students' maturity level, emotional intelligence, and social intelligence. This results in many behaviour issues to varying degrees. These issues include more validation seeking, attention seeking, learned helplessness, increased anxiety, and less knowledge or understanding of boundaries of many kinds. On the extreme end, behaviour issues relating to marginalization, intolerance, and violence have been seen.

Consider that our grade-twelve students are the only students in the school who have experienced what real school is supposed to look like. Despite that, all students need to be retrained on how to follow instructions, how to behave, really how to be students and good citizens in general. The aforementioned behaviours may happen anyway, even if it is not in response to us trying to retrain them. So, when those behaviours occur, we need to

remember to submit the Safe Schools Incident Reporting Form. This form can be found in Employee Self Serve (ESS). Once there, click on HRPLink, then click on Forms Online, and click on the Safe Schools Incident Reporting Form.

Complete and submit this form, regardless of the level of behaviour. When this form is submitted, by law, the admin have to address the issue, and it creates a paper trail. This gets the issue dealt with and allows the admin to see some representation of the issues in

the school. That paper trail is also hard data for the admin to formulate a plan in their school to address behaviours, or to demonstrate a need for additional support. The reality is that the social development gap and the behaviours resulting from it are not just a problem at any one school; this is happening everywhere. By completing and submitting the Safe Schools Incident Reporting Form, you support the admin to then support us in retraining the students to be students and good citizens.

FeelingBetterNow®
Connecting Mental Health Problems to Solutions

Stressed, anxious or depressed?
Go to: feelingbetternow.com/otip

Assess your mental health → View your action plan → Access your self-care toolbox

Resources in *Your Toolbox* include:

- Helping Yourself
- Stress Reduction
- Helping Others

www.feelingbetternow.com/otip

OTIP RAEQ

Trauma-Informed Resources



Garrett Metcalfe *District Representative*

Those who have heard me present on Equity 101, have heard some common themes repeated. I consider them some of the basic tenets that lay the foundation for all subsequent anti-oppression work.

1. Identity Matters: The more marginalized a person is, the more important their identity becomes. If we don't see skin colour or gender identity or sexual orientation, we fail to acknowledge and see racism, sexism, misogyny, transphobia or homophobia. We must see identity!

2. Believe Marginalized Folks: When marginalized folks articulate they have experienced marginalization... believe them! Who would better know they experienced racism than a racialized person or that they experienced transphobia than a Trans person? Instead of finding

excuses or negating the experience of oppressed folks – try listening and believing!

3. Whose House Is On Fire? The needs of marginalized folks will shift and change over time, place and circumstance. At various times, one particular group will have needs that are really pressing. Sometimes these needs are life or death. We must always prioritize those who may be struggling the most in society at any given moment. We must think about “whose house is on fire” right now!

4. The Myth of Sameness: Equality and equity are not the same thing. Treating everyone exactly the same does not mean we are treating them fairly. True equity is ensuring that everyone individually gets what they need in order to achieve success. Sometimes this means that we have to recognize someone's “house is on fire” and address their specific needs in order to support them to the finish line.

As the Board releases its new Human Rights and Anti-Oppression policies, some educators are finding themselves struggling with what resources and texts can be used in the classroom. Pedagogy around texts is

shifting towards a trauma-informed and anti-oppressive lens. Let's take a moment and look back at the Equity 101 tenets discussed earlier. Identity matters and therefore our curriculum and resources needs to reflect identities in affirming and validating ways. We must provide multiple methods of access to texts to ensure that individual needs are being met; the myth of sameness applies here. We also need to consider “whose house is on fire” at the moment? Which identities need positive and affirming texts free from stereotypes and oppressive language the most? Finally, when marginalized folks have articulated to us that certain texts cause harm and they would prefer them not be used in the classroom, why would we not believe them? Who would better know that harm is being done than the folks experiencing the harm? Marginalized communities have been consulted when approved resource lists have been formulated.

“When we know better, we do better” is an important starting point for all social justice work. Giving folks the benefit of the doubt that they didn't intend to cause harm in the classroom is important. However, as educators, we are being told

Trauma-Informed Resources (cont'd.)

that harm is happening with some of the texts we select. Nobody wants to cause harm for students, and the Federation needs to be clear in our position that we cannot support the use of any resources that we have

been told could cause harm. I would offer for us to take comfort that marginalized voices have shared with us their concerns and offered a list of texts they would welcome

and support. In the end, there is not an educator out there who would want to intentionally alienate and put a student at risk. When we know better...we do better.

Kitchen Korner

Heather Tyrrell

*Communications Rep,
J. Clarke Richardson*

The holidays are just around the corner and the hustle and bustle is in full swing. Everything from getting the gifts, wrapping them and shopping for the celebration dinner (whatever that looks like). Always a hectic time of year for sure. I love the cooking aspect of the holiday season...trying new recipes and some family favorites make the holidays exciting around our table. This year I am going to be trying these recipes for the first time, so I wanted to share them with you all.

Herb & Apple Stuffing:

<https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/ina-garten/herb-and-apple-stuffing-recipe-1941887>

And for the vegetarian in my family, I will be making: Mushroom Risotto

<https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/85389/gourmet-mushroom-risotto/>

Tip for today.... if your recipe says to use 1 stick of butter that is ½ cup!

Happy Holidays!

Food Quote:

"You don't need a silver fork to eat good food." Paul Prudhomme

Some Lighter Fare from the Experts in Communication

P. Amanda Frumkin and Linda Temple

Speech Language Pathologists, PSSP BU

Dusting off your social skills in preparation for the break? Speech and language pathologists (SLPs) are here to help! What better time to listen to us than now, as we approach the winter break and likely (with enthusiasm and joyful hearts) reconnect with family and friends for some fun after an unexpected hiatus?

Here are a few suggestions to ease into the transition from our extended work-from-home/online shopping/Netflix bingeing/knit-a-thons/having your couch automatically adjust to your body shape whenever you approach/et cetera, et cetera to joining groups <gasp> of humans as a completely adept and superb communicator:

1. **Posture:** when communicating with other people (or even when you are just looking at yourself in the mirror for primping and preening pre-party), maintain an upright position, in which ears are over shoulders and shoulders are in line with hips. You may have forgotten that this posture can be held while seated as well as standing. Soften your jaw and your face. This demonstrates to your communication partner(s)

that you are alert and ready to engage in listening behaviour and a friendly and receptive member of the group. This will also assist you in staying awake for yet another conversation about the letters of the Greek alphabet.

2. **Listen with the intention of learning something new:** listen to your communication partners' words. Really listen to what they are saying. Resist the temptation to formulate a brilliant response while they are talking. Visualize what is being said as a film on a movie screen (remember what a movie screen looks like) and really enjoy it. Grab some of Auntie's special kettle-corn and M&M's mixture to make it a veritable cinematic experience.

3. **Focus on your breath:** While maintaining the recommended posture above, breathe in and out through your nostrils, deep into the lower portions of your lungs. Do not exhale through your mouth as this will be perceived as an exasperated sigh (which could exacerbate any negative feelings anyone has about you because you didn't participate in a sufficient number of driveway visits during the past 20 months).

4. **Stay hydrated:** drink a lot (of water)! Hydration is the key

to optimal performance at social gatherings. Keep your vocal folds plump and lubricated by sending refreshing flasks (oh so fashionable) of water their way. Water will have you talking for hours after your friends and family have collapsed into a heap by the dessert table (trust us, we're SLPs, if anyone knows how to keep talking, it's us).

5. **Express gratitude:** say "thank you" and mean it. Thank your hosts for the venue, the opportunity to gather, the food, the gifts, the community. Say thank you to family members and friends who have stuck by you despite stressors and challenges and new topics about which to disagree. Exhale a sigh of gratitude that you are still working for a board that is always trying its best to do the right thing and for a union to help them continue to do so when they need extra support/reminders. Say thank you (even just quietly to yourself) to your body, brain, and your spirit for getting you through another unusual year.

Thanks to all of you! Wishing you the best of the season and hope for the new year that it will bring health, happiness, and an abundance of opportunities to gather with those you love (or at least still like)!



Attention D13 Members



The D13 PD Committee provides up to \$100 to members who attend conferences or workshops or take non-credit courses as self-directed professional development.

Apply using the PD request form by June 1st

<http://www.d13.osstf.ca/en-CA/committees/professional-development.aspx>

5 Ways to Keep Pets Happy Over the Holidays

Provided by OTIP



The holiday season brings family, food, and cheer! We all know pets are part of the family, so including them in your holiday festivities is a no-brainer. Keep these five basic tips in mind to avoid any mishaps and keep your pets safe over the holidays. #OTIPUpdate

Read more at www.otipinsurance.com/article130.

How to Maintain a Vehicle You Don't Drive Often

Provided by OTIP

From decreasing your commute to putting your car in storage for the season, there are plenty of reasons why you might not be driving your vehicle as often as you used to. But don't let it sit collecting dust — follow these steps to maintain your car and keep it ready to hit the road!

Learn more at <https://otipinsurance.com/article128>.



Harlem Globetrotters

The Harlem Globetrotters will be performing at the Tribute Communities Centre on Thursday, **March 10, 2022, at 7:00 pm**. You can access discounts on your tickets by entering the code, found on the poster. Tickets can be purchased through this link [BUY THEM HERE](#).

To find out more information about the Harlem Globetrotters Spread Game Tour 2022 visit www.tributecommunitiescentre.com.

THE ORIGINAL

HARLEM

GLOBETROTTERS

SPREAD GAME

TOUR

THURSDAY MARCH 10, 2022 - 7:00pm
 TRIBUTE COMMUNITIES CENTRE, OSHAWA ON

OSSTF MEMBERS YOU CAN SAVE BIG WITH CODE: GSSCHL

IN PERSON		BY PHONE/ONLINE	
\$25.25	Regular \$25.25 SAVE \$6.50	\$25.90	Regular \$32.40 SAVE \$9.40
\$32.50	Regular \$42.00 SAVE \$9.50	\$33.15	Regular \$47.00 SAVE \$13.85
\$41.75	Regular \$54.50 SAVE \$12.75	\$42.40	Regular \$65.75 SAVE \$18.35
\$57.25	Regular \$75.00 SAVE \$17.75	\$57.90	Regular \$99.25 SAVE \$23.35
\$65.50	Regular \$85.25 SAVE \$19.75	\$66.15	Regular \$91.50 SAVE \$25.35
\$81.00	Regular \$105.00 SAVE \$24.00	\$81.65	Regular \$104.00 SAVE \$22.35
\$136.50	No discount available	\$137.15	No discount available

18-21 years of age (age 16-17 with adult)
Seating limited for our children's program. Please contact us for more information. Offer expires March 8, 2022. Open Seating must be for 18+ attendees for this offer.

IN-PERSON: 99 ATHOL STREET EAST, OSHAWA
BY PHONE: 905-438-8811
ONLINE: WWW.TRIBUTECOMMUNITIESCENTRE.COM/PASSWORD

GROUPS OF 10 OR MORE? CONTACT:
MELISSA SMITS - MARKETING & SALES COORDINATOR
905.448.1568 OR MELISSA.SMITS@SPECTRAXP.COM

Tribute
 COMMUNITIES
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Upcoming Events for D13 (as currently scheduled)

January 12, 2022	OMERS Webinar
January 13, 2022	OTPP Webinar
February 21, 2022	Family Day Skate, details TBD
February 23, 2022	Pink Shirt Day
April 21, 2022	Parental Leave Workshop, details TBD
April 28, 2022	Day of Mourning
May 1, 2022	Steps for Life, OPG Pickering
May 5, 2022	Student Award Night, details TBD
May 12, 2022	District Annual Meeting 2022, details TBD
May 16, 2022	World Education Support Personnel Day
May 19, 2022	PSSP District Annual Meeting 2022, details TBD
May 26, 2022	OTBU Annual General Meeting 2022, details TBD
June 5, 2022	Durham Pride Parade, details TBD
June 10, 2022	District 13 Golf Tourney @ Lyndebrook Golf Course, details TBD
June 26, 2022	Toronto Pride Parade, details TBD

Home Insurance 101 for Homeowners and Renters

Provided by OTIP

The word “home” means something different to everyone. Whether home is a detached house, a duplex, a townhouse, or a condo, it’s important to ensure that your home and belongings are protected. We’ve put together a quick guide to help you determine what type of insurance policy is best suited for you and your home.

Learn more at <https://otipinsurance.com/article127>.



DISTRICT 13 OSSTF

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www.d13.osstf.ca

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