

Stemming the Tide Against the Rise of Populism



Lamia Sabbagh *President's Report*

We are all educators and as such are very familiar with playground bullying. We recognize right away that the bully will target the marginalized, the vulnerable, those who are least likely to stand up for themselves. We also recognize that the typical playground bully is usually quick to mock anyone who is well educated or shows any signs of being “brainy” denigrating them as “nerds”.

It is difficult not to draw comparisons when we watch what the Ford government has done since being in power. They seem to have deliberately targeted those who are the weakest amongst us, those whose voices are easily silenced.

They started by cancelling the indigenous teacher training program that was supposed to happen in the summer. Then there was the infamous move to roll back the Health and Phys Ed

curriculum so that our children could not learn about consent or about inclusive attitudes around gender and sexuality. On the eve of the transgender Day of Remembrance, the PC Convention passed a resolution to debate the recognition of gender identity. They revoked the parts of Bill 148 which targeted the poor – the increase in the minimum wage and access to paid sick days. They removed and refocused special education (SIP) funding which took supports away from the most vulnerable of our students who have special needs. They removed the Office of Child Advocacy. And most recently, they pulled funding from the long-awaited French language university and downgraded the province’s independent watchdog on francophone services. That is quite a list of minorities or vulnerable groups: Indigenous people, children, transgender people, the poor, and francophones. It is not difficult to extrapolate who the exclusive group of people is that this government represents under their slogan of “For the People”.

The rise of populist governments is a worldwide phenomena and it is obviously

alive and well in Ontario. According to the Oxford dictionary, a populist government is one that strives to appeal to ordinary people who feel their concerns are disregarded by elite groups. It is therefore more important than ever for us as educators

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Stemming the Tide Against the Rise of Populism (cont'd)

to make sure we give voice to those who cannot. We are best positioned to protect public education and we must be vigilant and well prepared.

What can we do?

At District 13, our Executive decided to make some moves through our Human Rights Committee to make sure we are at least prepared through our own education on the issues. We made the decision to take a full day workshop to train our Exec members in Anti-Oppression and Equity training with the view of training our Branch reps as well in the future. We are doing what we do best – educating our members so that we may be allies and give voice to those who may not be able to defend themselves.

We are also allies to our OFL partners in the “15 and Fairness” campaign and will send out any information about local events to our members so that we may stand with our partners in their fight against poverty.

We will continue to look for allies who will stand by us and who share our beliefs from newly elected trustees to affiliates in the labour movement. We sent a delegation to Queen’s Park for Lobby Day on November 28th where our only message was promoting the value of public education and welcoming MPPs

to take a picture with us holding a sign that read “I support public education”.

We will begin to mobilize our members by educating them on other issues as well through site visits that will start in the new year. We hope to visit every branch by March Break to start the conversation around bargaining and what that might look like under this government.

We will continue to meet with our Provincial counterparts who are very actively preparing us behind the scenes to be strong, united and above all well educated about this

government so that we may hopefully count on them to stand by the message we proposed to them during Lobby Day and support public education.

Rest assured that all OSSTF leaders are engaged in preparations to make sure public education is protected. We cannot stand by and allow the bully to triumph. We can and should do what we do best – through education, raise awareness of the issues, stand by those who are vulnerable and need our voice to join theirs, be vigilant and prepared and never afraid to speak loudly about the value of public education.



From left to right, Ryan Kelly (Chief Negotiator D13) Matt Thomas (Co-Chair of EPAC D13), Lamia Sabbagh (President D13), Lindsey Park (MPP for Durham PC), Shane Stagg (EO D13), Josh James (teacher D14), Dave Warda (President D14).

Contract Negotiations Timeline



Ryan Kelly *Chief Negotiator's Report*

In nine months' time, the two-year contract extension we have been working under will expire, and we'll be seeking opportunities to renegotiate our current Collective Agreement. Building a bargaining brief is a lengthy process, drawing on feedback from members, and contract maintenance experiences to seek ways to improve our working conditions. Last year, we tasked our Collective Bargaining Committee representatives with soliciting feedback from each school on ways in which we can improve our current contract. These issues were compiled, and are discussed in detail at our

monthly meetings while referencing our current language and any superior language that exists across the province. Also, details from our 2017 negotiations priorities survey have been revisited, and a new survey is being prepared for member consideration early next year. Additionally, members from our District Office will begin school visits starting January to detail the bargaining process, and receive feedback from members.

At the Provincial level, districts were surveyed to gauge which issues would best be dealt with at each the Provincial and Local levels. These distinctions have yet to be made, but will be revealed to our membership as soon as they are determined. As well, our Provincial Protective Services Committee will develop a negotiations priority survey for the

membership that will, in all likelihood, deal with issues with monetary implications. This survey is expected to be available to membership sometime in February of 2019.

According to the Labour Relations Act, unions may serve notice to bargain 90 days prior to the expiration of the agreement, so it is possible we will be engaging in local negotiations as early as June of 2019. Notwithstanding the process laid out in legislation, we continue to meet with the Board to discuss ways to enhance our agreement and make 'Memoranda of Understanding' when possible.

Please continue to identify and share ways to improve our work with your Branch representatives. Your input is essential in seeking a fairer workplace for our members.

CAREpath

The Health Care Navigation System



OTIP provides support for our teachers and their families when they are faced with a new diagnosis or a recurrent diagnosis of cancer. The support also includes a cancer survivor support program which can assess health risks in order to reduce the risk of recurrence.

If you, your spouse or children need this support, call today! Contact the District Office for the LTD Policy #. If you want cancer treatment information for friends and extended family members, you can call the free Cancer Info Line at 1 800 290 5106.

We Are Having the Difficult Conversations



Garrett Metcalfe *Human Rights Committee Co-Chair*

There is little doubt we are living in precarious and unusual times, unlike anything we have seen in a very long time. Canadians must be careful not to be compliant through our silence or over-confidence that our checks and balances are strong enough to fight the global populist movement. We must be clear to recognize this is not just a global or south of the border issue. It is also not just the beliefs of a small handful of powerful individuals in government. There is a dangerous under-tone of hate-filled populism granting permission and a voice to leaders throughout the world. Specialists in equitable and inclusive practices have been seeing this trend for over a decade. They have predicted exactly where we find ourselves today and many argue it is going to get worse before it gets better.

I am very proud of the work our District has taken on as part of a strategy to counter this level of

hate and populism. Our Executive is committed to having these difficult conversations. All have participated in extensive anti-oppression training with the goal of utilizing an “ally capacity” model and a top-down approach to support all colleagues through these difficult times. Our goal is that all Branch Presidents and CBC reps be provided the skills to support marginalized colleagues as they continue to find themselves struggling both within our educational systems and within society itself.

Historic practice has always forced those who find themselves marginalized to have to do the social justice work themselves; women fighting for women’s rights, racialized fighting for civil rights and the LGBTQ fighting for Queer rights. This archaic system can lead to the further marginalization of the group that is struggling to begin with. Their work often becomes viewed as a social/political

“agenda” and moves to reinforce existing stereotypes. These targeted marginalized groups require the support of their allies. Who better to help fight violence against women than men themselves? Who better to combat racism than white folk? Who better to stand up for LGBTQ rights than their cisgender and straight allies? Of course, this model of social justice requires a key element: the consultation and inclusion of the marginalized group themselves. An ally will step in on their behalf, utilize the very power systems they are a part of and become a part of systemic changes.

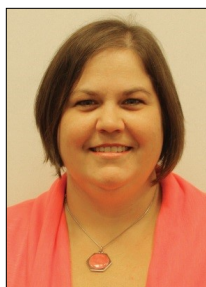
To all of the allies in Federation, please be willing to experience some discomfort in recognizing the very real plight and struggle of our marginalized colleagues. They need our support more than ever. To those members experiencing the marginalization themselves, please know that our Federation has made you a top priority and you have a home here at District 13!

How to Avoid Holiday Hazards: Safety Tips for the Holidays *Provided by OTIP*

The holiday season is a special time of the year when we get the chance to gather with family and friends, enjoy delicious food, and share in the festive spirit. However, with fun and festivity comes some increased safety risks. You can avoid holiday hazards by following these safety tips to keep you, your home and your loved ones safe this holiday season.

To learn more, visit www.otipinsurance.com/article30

Social Media Etiquette: or How to Speak Out for What You Believe in Without Losing your Job



Nicole Bléau
Executive Officer's Report

Earlier this year, the Conservative Party passed a resolution at their convention to debate recognition of gender identity. Our members rightly objected to this backwards and discriminatory move. But how should our members stand up and ferociously support the things they believe in and denounce the things they don't without putting their jobs on the line? As a citizen, you have a right to your opinion and to express it publicly. But as a teacher, it is important to be mindful of a few elements associated with those rights.

As a teacher, there are two primary areas of concern when expressing your views publicly: Labour Relations law and the College of Teachers.

Labour Relations Law

It is a longstanding labour relations precedent that badmouthing your employer publicly can be grounds for dismissal. Back in the day, the options for publicly sharing

anything were limited. You could take out an ad in the newspaper or shout from a busy street corner, I suppose. But now, with social media ever present, the opportunity, the temptation and the risk of publicly shaming your employer are that much greater. And as you know, nothing ever really dies on the internet so the proof of your misdeed will live on forever. It is possible that the DDSB, the Ministry of Education and the government as a whole could be all construed as your employer. Your employer serves the will of the government so insulting the government over a policy that the Board has implemented could be interpreted as also insulting your employer. And a disrespectful tweet or defamatory post about your employer could get you in trouble. You are entitled to disagree with your employer. But insulting them, shaming them or embarrassing them in public is dangerous.

College of Teachers

The College of Teachers expects teachers to behave in a respectful and appropriate manner at all times and that includes on social media. They have the ability to rescind your right to teach in this province if you do not. There is no distinction in the eyes of the College or the law between our

professional lives and our private lives: we are considered teachers 24/7 and our conduct must always reflect that. Privacy settings are not enough to shelter you; if you are considering posting something online that you would be embarrassed for students, their parents or your principal to see, DON'T DO IT! It's often about HOW you post. For example, a post from you that says that you disagree with the PC Party's gender identity resolution and think it is wrongheaded is different than a statement calling Doug Ford nasty names for entertaining this resolution! Remember that you cannot teach in Ontario without a Certificate of Qualification. And any member of the public is free to make a complaint to the College about you. Also remember that in class, you should stick to the curriculum. Your opinions on most things should not enter into discussions with students.

In these difficult political times, it is important to speak out on social justice issues such as these. It is just important to do so in a way that does not put your career in jeopardy nor tarnish the good standing of teachers in this province. It is important to remember that your language must always reflect the dignity of the profession.

Ahead by a Century: 2019 Student Achievement Awards



George Chaktsiris
Communications
Committee Chair

This year's OSSTF Student Achievement Awards, in honour of Marion Drysdale, saw several submissions at the District level. This resulted in a number of very difficult decisions for the Communications Committee to pick winners for entry into the Provincial competition in their respective categories. These annual awards honour students' artistic achievements on a particular theme. This year's theme was "Ahead by a Century".

As a member of the committee for the first time this year, I found myself engaged in the absolute pleasure and honour of helping to judge the fantastic pieces of work by our students. Also important to note is that each of these students needed a teacher to endorse them and their work. This is just one more example of the hard work and dedication of our own members, highlighting the time and effort we as teachers put into our working lives, to help shape the future. Let us celebrate this by continuing to move ahead by another century.

This year District 13 is pleased to announce the following entries to represent Durham for the 2019

Student Achievement Awards: Ahead by a Century and submitted to OSSTF Provincial.

Prose and Poetry Division

Pickering HS

Andre Wijesekera

"A Century of Victories: A Century of Mistakes"

Category A-1, Intermediate, 9-10 Academic; teacher Matt Thomas

Pickering HS

Paige Repton

"A Dying Star"

Category A-3, Senior, 11-12 University; teacher Matt Thomas

Visual and Media Division

R.S. McLaughlin CVI

Nurhan Kogukoglu

"Get Out of the Kitchen Ladies...It's Time to Vote!"

Category B-1, Visual Arts, Intermediate, 9-10; teacher Ryan Gordon

Maxwell Heights SS

Rebecca De Venezia

"Daughters of Space and Science"

Category B-2, Visual Arts, Senior, 11-12; teacher Jennifer Harloff

Pickering HS

Momina Malik

"The Past is the Present"

Category B-3, Visual Arts, Senior 11-12; teacher Patricia Partridge

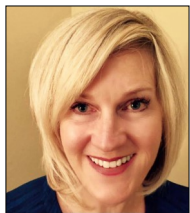
The Provincial winners in each category will receive a cash award of \$1,000 announced at AMPA, the Annual Meeting of the Provincial Assembly in March. All the best from District 13.



Posaction Plus counselling service is available through our OTIP LTD contract. 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. Posaction Plus can assist you with work-related, family, personal or dependency problems.

Posaction Plus is mentioned on the District 13 website, in each newsletter, on the yearly information cards that District 13 distributes to members in September and brochures are available from your Branch President and Health & Safety Committee reps in each school. You can also contact the District 13 Office for the LTD Policy number.

Introducing the PSSP Bargaining Unit: Our Professional Student Services Personnel



Andrea Malyon

District 13 PSSP Vice President

June 27th, 2018 marked a historic and exciting moment for us, the D13 PSSP! On that day we said an overwhelming “YES” to OSSTF/FEESO. The PSSP of DDSB are comprised of Child and Youth Workers, Interpreters/Intervenors, Psychological Services, Social Workers and Speech and Language Pathologists.

I have been asked to write about my personal experience thus far in the process of unionizing. For me, to be truthful, I would have to say that this has been a long time coming. For colleagues who know me well, the process of finally coming to this vote has been one of learning to exercise patience. Last year, one of my very insightful colleagues gave me a coffee mug that reads “PATIENCE”. I did not quite understand the message that was there for me; timing is everything!

No joke, my favorite movie of all time is Norma Rae. (If you are too young to know the movie, you can watch it online today.)

Although my experience has definitely not even been close to that of Norma Rae’s, as a Social Worker, standing up for fairness and rights of students and families has been a long-held value and belief of mine. To stand up for fairness and rights in the workplace naturally follows. What I have learned over the years, and even more specifically in joining OSSTF, is that there is power in the group. No longer do each of us have to stand alone. Where members come together, stand together, and are prepared to work hard together towards the common goals of respect, equity, fairness and safety in our workplace, we will have a say, we will have a voice!

OSSTF has been guiding us through organizing into a bargaining unit and helping us through the writing of our Collective Agreement. Thank you to Colombe Beauregard, Steven Newstead, Lamia Sabbagh, and all the diligent staff at District 13 for your guidance from day one! Bringing together a diverse group of Professional Student Services Personnel has allowed us to share, to talk, to plan, and to work together for a common good. It has provided a venue where we are supported and challenged to consider the necessities in providing

continued excellent service to our students and their families in a climate of uncertainty and change.

What I didn’t realize until recently, is that OSSTF is not only prepared to help us organize, they are prepared to help us grow. Through its leadership training, numerous committees and PD opportunities, our members will continue to develop as individuals and leaders. In closing, I would encourage our members to visit our OSSTF website; check it out! I would also encourage you to participate in committee work or leadership opportunities in the weeks and months to come... We would not be here today had it not been for each vote that was cast on June 27th... together we are stronger!

SAVE THE DATE

JANUARY 28, 2019

D13 PSSP SOCIAL

District 13 Office
601 Palace Street, Whitby

Refreshments will be provided.

Stay tuned for more details!

Beyond the Book—November 16th PD Day



Shane Stagg *Executive Officer's Report*

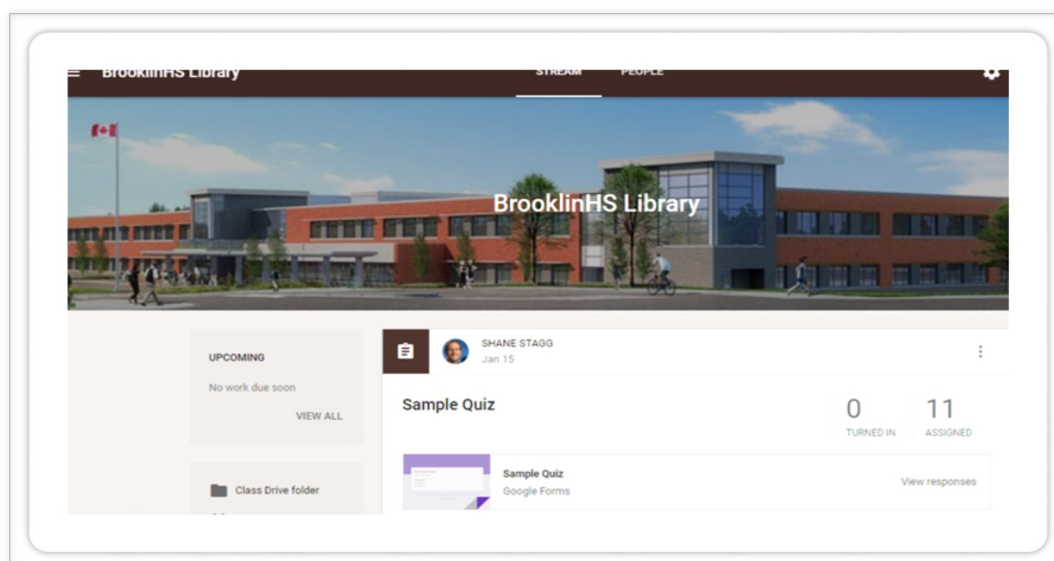
The November PD Day is unique in that it is a partnership between OSSTF and the DDSB. This year, there were almost 100 session titles and between both AM and PM slots there were nearly 200 offerings. The theme was “Beyond the Book” with a focus on activities, labs and field trips that support and extend learning for students. The day brought challenges due to snowy weather but the conditions were well-handled and didn’t interfere with the success of the day. A special thank you to presenters for welcoming new participants into their sessions on the day.

A terrific assortment of sessions was available to cater to many diverse needs of teachers. New to teaching family studies this year? There were sessions for that. Looking to embrace technology? There were sessions for that. Curious about new ways for your students to demonstrate their learning? Want to collaborate with colleagues on new units of study or assessment plans? Hoping to bring something new to your phys. ed. program? There were sessions for all of that. Sewing, Google Classroom, math activities and fitness circuits are just a few examples of the topics explored during the day.

The feedback flowing in from participants who completed evaluation forms was very positive. Comments included:

- lots of individualized learning
- respected our professionalism
- very informative and applicable to student learning
- very useful to my course
- amazing day
- great instruction, great facilities, best PD session I’ve had
- inspiring, fabulous, learned a lot
- eye opening, engaging, insightful
- very relevant, lots to take back to the classroom
- great hands-on experience

The overwhelming sentiment expressed by the comments is that teachers truly value professional development that is delivered by colleagues. Please consider what you have to offer when the call for proposals comes out next year.



Introduction to G-Suite and Google Classroom:

This introductory course was for teachers who wanted to learn how to use Google Apps for Education and Google Classroom.

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Beyond the Book—November 16th PD Day (cont'd)



Food and Photography: In this hands-on session, a chef and skilled baker showed some tips and tricks of the trade to help you and your students prepare some yummy food; then a skilled photographer helped you to understand lighting and other key techniques to take great photos of your delicious creations.



Escape Rooms: This physical adventure game involved players solving a series of puzzles and riddles using clues, hints and strategies to complete the objectives at hand. This incorporates team building, analytical and critical thinking.



Of Mind and Mud: Clay Handbuilding:

These participants spent the day mindfully handbuilding a clay mug/bowl/tray that will be fired, glazed, wrapped and ready for pick-up before the break in December.

(cont'd on page 10)

Beyond the Book—November 16th PD Day (cont'd)



Ice Hockey and Physical Education: This workshop highlighted opportunities to use community ice hockey facilities to support physical education, teamwork and leadership skills.

Think, Speak, Act - Free Stop Bullying Pink T-Shirts

OSSTF members take seriously their responsibilities to address all forms of bullying and harassment in our schools and workplaces. Pink Shirt Day on February 27th 2019, and Day of Pink on April 10th, 2019 provide opportunities to take positive action to end bullying, homophobia and transphobia, while celebrating diversity.

Our district Human Rights committee has graciously offered to purchase Provincial OSSTF Pink T-Shirts for any members that do not have one at no cost to members. If you would like to request a shirt please complete the [online form](#) that can be found on our website at www.d13.osstf.ca by clicking on the Committees menu items and choosing Human Rights. Shirts are unisex and available in sizes S – 3XL. Deadline to order is January 9, 2019.



Union Do's—Installment 6: Professional Resource Spotlight



Richard McCormack
District 13 Vice President

Our Professional Resource Spotlight is a way to share best practices and resources between teachers that is self-guided and meaningful. In this installment, we look at *Make it Stick: The Science of Successful Learning*.

Brown, P.C., Roediger III, H.L. & McDaniel, M.A. (2014). *Make it Stick: The Science of Successful Learning*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

This book delves into strategies that best help us improve the retention of new material using what we now understand about how memory works. Many common study techniques such as re-reading, highlighting and cramming are in fact

counterproductive to recalling information when needed. These methods lead to an illusion of knowing but the memories tend to be quickly lost.

Brown suggests that other techniques can lead to learning that is more durable. These techniques include self-testing, re-studying new material after a little time has gone by or interweaving one topic with another.

Your Path to a Stress-free Holiday Season Provided by OTIP

The Holidays are a time to spend with family, friends and loved ones but it can also



be very stressful. Between finding the perfect gifts, cooking the traditional turkey with fixings and accommodating everyone's get togethers, it's no wonder the holidays can be overwhelming.

Here are our top 5 ways to beat the holiday stress this season.

To learn more, visit www.otipinsurance.com/article29

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



Upcoming Events for District 13 in 2019

January 28, 2019	D13 PSSP Social
February 18, 2019	Family Day Skate @ McKinney Arena, 1—3 pm
February 27, 2019	Pink Shirt Day
April 10, 2019	Day of Pink
April 10, 2019	D13 Maternity Leave Workshop @ D13 Office, 4:15 pm
April 24, 2019	OSSTF Pension Workshop @ D13, 4:30 pm
April 28, 2019	Day of Mourning
May 1, 2019	OTIP Retirement Workshop @ Deer Creek, 4:30 pm
May 2, 2019	District Annual Meeting @ Deer Creek, 4:00 pm
May 5, 2019	Steps for Life
May 14, 2019	PSSP Annual General Meeting
May 16, 2019	Student Award Night @ D13, 7:00 pm
May 23, 2019	OTBU Annual General Meeting
June 7, 2019	District 13 Golf Tourney @ Lyndebrook Golf Course

Happy Holidays & Warmest Wishes

From District 13 Executive

*Lamia, Nicole, Ryan, Shane, Erin, Garrett, Richard, Rob, Tory,
Melissa, George, Matt, Kathie, Danielle, Avril & Jennifer*

DISTRICT 13 OSSTF

601 Palace Street | Whitby, ON | L1N 6S5 | phone 905.668.7100 | fax 905.668.5244

www.d13.osstf.ca

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