



**District & TBU
Annual General Meeting
May 27, 2021**

REPORTS

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District President Report

Rachelle Séguin

I would like to start my thanking my office colleagues; Andrea Loken and John Vince, for helping me adjust to my new role as District President. I would also like to thank PSSP President Laura King and Instructors’ President Wendy Bonnell for supporting me as I learn my roles.

I also want to thank our Treasurer, Stewart Williams, who does an excellent job of overseeing the finances of the District. Lastly, thank you to everyone on the Executives – Committee Chairs and other Officers – for their work and caring about all the Members. I am grateful to be surrounded by such passionate and committed unionists.

AMPA

The Annual Meeting of the Provincial Assembly (AMPA) in March was once again held virtually. The business of the house was not complete during the allotted time due to lively debate and concern about how to address perceived white supremacy in OSSTF. The agenda was passed but not the budget, so a second weekend has been scheduled June 5 and 6 to conclude the business of the house.

Property Committee

This year an ad-hoc property committee was created to examine our current office and the needs of the District. The committee compared our office with the offices of two similarly sized Districts. We made a list of things that were lacking in our current office and tried to find a property that would meet our needs. The District put an offer on one property but it was not accepted. The committee hopes to visit other Districts and to continue the search for a property that would better meet our needs.

GSMA

The Gay Straight Members' Alliance was rekindled this year. The group had several events this year including a viewing and discussion of one of Reelout's films, a guest speaker about conflicts that can arise about gender inclusive language in schools, and a virtual trivia night. The group also organized resources to send to worksites to support Trans Day of Visibility.

I hope that next year will allow us to return to in person meetings and that will give me the opportunity to be able to get to know our committee members better.

Teachers' President Report

Andrea Loken, President

The Most Difficult Year Ever

Last year, I started this report with "The Strangest Year Ever". This year has arguably been the most difficult in the career of many Teachers beginning with uncertainty as to whether we would be able to teach safely in person. Sadly, the Ontario government has left the education sector scrambling throughout the year with several late Friday announcements that needed to be implemented within the next week. It does feel like chaos is the design of this government, to destabilize education.

OSSTF had hopes for the Ontario Labour Relations Board (OLRB) to intervene and declare schools unsafe. This strategy was ruled out in October when the OLRB dismissed OSSTF's case as outside the OLRB's jurisdiction. As it turns out, despite no ability to socially distance, poorly adhered-to masking and cohorting restrictions, and very meager improvements to ventilation systems, Limestone schools have remained fairly safe with few cases and outbreaks relative to almost anywhere in the province. We are very fortunate. Thank you to all the Education Workers for heroic efforts on the front lines so that students, who are disproportionately harmed by school closures, are able to get an education through all this.

Through Branch visits, surveys, and direct calls and emails, Members have told us that they were at the breaking point. Sadly, there have been some Teachers who have decided to leave the profession early and a number of Members who have needed to take sick leave or unpaid leave. Pivoting to remote learning on short notice, despite having essentially no training and limited resources and support has required incredible resilience. I don't wish to be negative, but I do want to acknowledge the collateral damage that this year has caused.

Our recent initiative for Members to recognize colleagues with an "Appreciation Award" hopefully lifted some spirits. Thanks to all who took part.

A New Collective Agreement

A Central Collective Agreement was achieved in June 2020, despite a lukewarm endorsement at best by District 27 Teachers. We are pleased to have settled a Local Collective Agreement in January 2021. The new agreement is almost ready for publication and will be up on our website soon.

Board-Federation Relationships

This year marked a new beginning with a new Director, Krishna Burra. We have been pleased with the change and have noticed a change in tone from the senior leadership at the Board. Differences are always going to arise in union-management relations, but if the relationship is positive and

trusting then issues can be worked out. We all desire to make things better for all employees of the Board and for students. We have not had to file any new grievances this year and we have been able to re-open discussions on a few grievances that were on the way to arbitration.

With the change in leadership at the Board we have been invited to many more collaborative discussions than in the recent past. Communications between the Federation and the Board have vastly improved. This could be a reaction to the awful communications coming from the Ministry of Education; announcements with significant implications being made frequently at the last minute without any heads-up to the school boards or the unions. We have regular meetings with the Director and Superintendents to get updates and provide input. Refreshingly, our input is often reflected in the Board's decision making.

Thank you

Thank you to the TBU Executive which has met regularly all year. Branch Presidents and those who serve on Executives and Committees are the backbone of the union, volunteering their time to support Members, uphold the Collective Agreement, protect worker rights and mobilize Members. It has been wonderful working with District President, Rachelle Séguin, this year who brought great energy and new ideas to the District Office. Thanks to my bargaining unit counterparts, Laura King (PSSP) and Wendy Bonnell (Instructors), who have been excellent comrades to me and leaders for their Members. Thanks also to John Vince, whose efficiency in serving members and the District never ceases to amaze me. Thanks to Stewart Williams whose work keeping our financial affairs in order is truly appreciated. And finally, thanks to our Provincial Executive Liaison, Malini Leahy, for help and support. Malini has attended many of our Executive meetings.

I am honoured to serve as TBU President for another term. Thank you for your support.

Community Education Instructors (CEI) Report

Wendy Bonnell, President

This report addresses Bargaining Unit activities from September 2020 to present.

Community Education Instructors provide ESL language instruction and Literacy and Basic Skills to a diverse population of adults ranging in age from 18-80. We are a small staff group but provide a vital service to students and the community with four locations in Kingston, Sydenham and Napanee. Instructors assist students with many skills, including literacy, language acquisition, understanding civic rights and responsibilities, with a focus on employment or further education. Strong partnerships with various stakeholders such as the ministries that fund us (MLTSD), community agencies, and LDSB credit programs are key to delivering effective programs to our learners.

A Full Year of Covid...

From August onward, my main focus was to advocate for the Board to build increasing awareness of the unique challenges in serving our adult population (students with language barriers – many of whom come from war torn countries and students with a number of barriers to learning including disabilities, transportation challenges, mental health issues, and generational poverty). This was key to a safe start up in September. Another priority was navigating members' concerns about providing programming safely to our adult learners.

Programming began in person in September with the exception of a trial virtual class for ESL learners. Despite the many challenges of teaching daily in a pandemic, classes have operated well, maintaining attendance and quality instruction to our learners. Instructors rallied to go back and forth to provide a blend of synchronous and asynchronous learning and to maintain and provide essential contact with our students.

Virtual Programming – While each Instructor has worked to deliver quality distance learning, one Instructor in particular worked to develop virtual programming throughout the year. This position was created late August in order to capture the ESL students who did not want to return to in person learning. This program has thrived with positive outcomes including strong attendance, differentiated instruction, and has allowed adult learners such as mothers with young children to attend virtually, as well as seniors and learners with transportation issues being a barrier to service.

Board Fed

We continue to work to have the Administrators in our programs recognize the Federation as the sole bargaining agent of our bargaining unit. (Everyone has their own unique learning curve ;-)

Ongoing issues include:

- Staffing
- Health and Safety
- Letters of Agreement recognizing work being performed by staff outside the provisions of our Collective Agreement (Virtual classes /hybrid classes)
- Scheduling of Planning Days
- Finding a way to bridge the gap between Instructors and Admin to provide effective well-run programs with more support from Admin
- Coordination of Programs
- Working Conditions
- Finalizing the Collective Agreement

Moving Forward

Member Mobilization: I believe this will be an important issue as we enter into next year, building toward election readiness for the June 2022 provincial election and preparations for another round of Central and Local Bargaining. Working together to raise the profile of the services we provide to our unique learners within OSSTF continues to be a focus for me both locally and provincially.

As Nelson Mandela said, “What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the lives we lead.

Thank you

Thank you for your confidence in allowing me to serve the Instructors’ Bargaining Unit. I am honoured to be in a position to advocate for our programs, the adults we serve, and to be a liaison to the Board. I look forward to another term.

Retirements and Resignations

It’s always hard to say good-bye to co-workers. This year we have had one retirement and one resignation from permanent status. It will be our pleasure to have both Instructors work on an occasional basis.

Thank you to the members of the Instructors' Bargaining Unit for their commitment and support. As well, I would like to recognize all Instructors for their hard work every day, despite many challenges.

I would also like to acknowledge members of the Executive for their commitment to union work and attendance at Executive meetings both in person and virtually. Your work on various District committees such as Collective Bargaining, CPAC, Educational Services and Status of Women is valued. Your work and time are appreciated!

Also thanks to Rachelle Séguin, District President, 2020-2021, for her work with us at Board Fed, Executive Meetings, and providing valuable support. Serving on the District Executive as well, I look forward to continued collaboration with District 27 in the upcoming year.

Professional Student Services Personnel (PSSP) Report

Laura King, President

I looked back at Cindi's notes from last year for some guidance in writing my first AGM report. She joked about getting t-shirts made that said, "I survived 2019-2020... barely!" It's amazing that after a year like last year, we have survived yet another extremely stressful and overwhelming year. It is a true testament to our strength, resilience and dedication and an honour to represent such a professional and dedicated group. I thank you for your patience as I learn the role of President. Behind the scenes OSSTF-PSSP undertakes a lot of work to help make our work environment safer and to ensure that our voices and concerns are addressed. I now see the union like a big brother, watching out for us when we didn't know we needed the protection. The accumulative stress of the strike action last year, followed closely by Covid lead to another unprecedented year. The constant threat of pivoting and the eternal uncertainty was overwhelming. We have watched as students, families and colleagues struggle to keep up with the ongoing demands that Covid created. We were challenged in so many ways. Our numbers were staggering this year, we saw more need than ever before. All this coming on the heels of what was considered the most stressful year we had had in a long time.

Covid complicated our lives in countless ways. Everything single thing we did in the regular day took longer than it did before. It added so much responsibility to our roles and took so much time from us. It ate away at the free time in our evenings and the free space in our heads. It was a lot, but through this and behind the scenes we continued to build solidarity with other bargaining units and districts. We fought for safety, security and equity in the workplace. We continued to highlight the extremely important work of PSSP members during this very critical time when our community has been so fragile.

As a first year President and new to the Federation, I leaned heavily on Rachelle Séguin for support and guidance and I would like to thank her for her never ending patience and knowledge. I would also like to thank Emily Landon, Laura Stevens, Krista Mather, Leah Carey, Tiff Idems and Lydia Coyne. I could not have done this without your ongoing support and dedication to PSSP members. Miigwetch, merci, thank you and may the rest of the school year be kind to you.

Yours in solidarity, Laura

District Treasurer Report

Stewart Williams

I hope this report finds each member of D27 Limestone doing well during this highly unusual time. This has truly been quite a year with the COVID-19 pandemic. Please take care of yourself and your loved ones as we get through our current situation.

I have been working hard on your behalf to keep the finances in order, paying expenses on time, and recouping all possible monies from Provincial Office to which the District is eligible. Also, the District has generated a profit on its investments again this year. Thanks goes out to Educators Financial Group for their advice and managing of our investments.

The current year has been markedly different from past years from a financial perspective. There have been a number of expense lines barely accessed due to the restrictions on in person meetings. As a result, many of the committee and bargaining unit lines have used much less than previous years. Also, other lines traditionally accessed, have been greatly underutilised. However, with the safety protocols required, the district office has had to spend much more on various cleaning supplies and equipment to be COVID compliant.

Preparing this year's budget has also been challenging due to the fact that the provincial OSSTF budget won't be passed until the June 5-6 weekend. As a result, the District Budget Committee worked without knowing what funding the district would receive from Provincial Office in the form of the District Rebate. I'd like to acknowledge their input was greatly appreciated in the preparation of the 2021-2022 district budget.

It has been an honour working on your behalf as Treasurer for the past 14 years and I look forward to continuing in the position next year.

Collective Bargaining Committee of the Teachers' Bargaining Unit Report

Shawn Lavender, Chair and John Vince, Chief Negotiator

Thank you to our engaged Teachers' Bargaining Unit (TBU) Collective Bargaining Committee (CBC). Every month, representatives (often multiple per branch) participate in an interactive meeting. Concerns are shared and updates are provided. Most importantly, we look for ideas to make our working life better.

Local Negotiations

We had a number of productive bargaining meetings with the Board last fall and winter. Covid-19 made this a challenge as we saw for the first time local negotiations taking place virtually on some occasions.

There were many very important issues to discuss with the Board in our Brief. For example, language on school closure, health and safety and how personal leave is granted. This process was very extensive and saw the negotiation team meet thirteen days with the Board to work out an agreement. A special thanks to Andrea Loken, Brian Moelker and Elizabeth MacDonald for their time and expertise that they shared on the Local Negotiating Team. I cannot thank John Vince enough for all the time and effort that he put in as our TBU Chief Negotiator during negotiations so that we received a deal that benefits all our members.

Our deal was ratified in March and at present the final pieces of the agreement are being implemented and a new copy of the Central and Local agreement should be out to work sites very soon.

Thank you to all members for your dauntlessness during the past two years. Although it seems a long time ago, the solidarity and comradeship we shared on picket lines in 2019-2020 was important; it demonstrated to the LDSB that we had strong support from our membership at the local negotiation table. I believe in the end, this is why we were able to achieve gains during this round of local bargaining.

Covid 19 and the Past Year

It has been such a challenging year for members. Covid 19 has meant an octomester year and many changes to our working conditions. Members have had to tolerate; covering 75 minutes of another person's class (times 3), moving Teacher-Librarians and some consultants back into classrooms, 'pivoting' at short notice, Google classroom and Minds-Online challenges and teaching a screen of faceless, voiceless avatars to name a few.

Next year will bring more changes, as it looks like we will be doing a quadmester model for Semester 1. Hopefully, for Semester 2 some sense of normalcy will return. However, with all the recent buzz about UFOs, don't hold your breath.

Collective Bargaining Committee

I want to thank Chair Shawn Lavender for all of his good work as Chair of the CBC. Shawn's dedication to unionism and willingness to engage and include a diverse range of voices strengthens our District. I would also like to thank the CBC for putting your trust in me as Chief Negotiator and for all your hard work in the branches supporting our members.

Thank you for your continued support.

Communications and Political Action Committee (CPAC) Report

Candice Bovard, Chair

This year, the Communication and Political Action Committee of the District and TBU continued to focus on issues that affect District 27 members as well as the greater community. An Anti-Racism sub committee was formed and hosted a Book Club on "me and white supremacy". This project engaged members from a variety of sites and inspired some insightful conversations.

The Communication and Political Action Committee continued to participate in other political and social justice activities. Our successes include:

- representing OSSTF Limestone District 27 at the Kingston and District Labour Council, the KDLC's OSSTF CPAC Conference
- election readiness planning
- organizing opportunities to meet with local MPPs; NDP Ian Arthur, PC Daryl Kramp, and independent Randy Hiller

Next year the committee will have a focus on the 2022 Provincial election and continue to plan anti-racism activities.

The achievements of the committee are due to the time, energy and enthusiasm of the members of the CPAC committee. Thanks to Andrea Loken, Rachelle Séguin, Dieter Brueckner, David Mathers, Simon Baron, Wendy Bonnell, Cindi Scott, Tiff Idems, Melanie Ball, Richard Rusheleau, and Shawn Lavender. A special thanks to David Mathers for acting as Secretary. If you are interested in political and social justice issues, I encourage you to consider becoming a part of this committee next year.

Educational Services Committee Report

Stewart Williams, Chair

On behalf of the Educational Services Committee, I hope this report finds each member of D27 Limestone doing well during this highly unusual time. This has truly been quite a year with the COVID-19 pandemic - the changes it has brought to our workday, along with the changes in our lives outside the workplace. Please take care of yourself and your loved ones as we get through our current situation.

The Educational Services Committee has been busy this year, planning workshops, providing funding and making members aware of PD opportunities. The Educational Services Committee is always looking for new members. If you would like to join next year's committee, please volunteer yourself at your particular branch or with your bargaining unit. Each branch or bargaining unit may have more than one representative on the committee.

If you are not sure who your committee representative is, please go the district website: www.osstf27.org, and select the Committees link, then choose Educational Services. Your committee representative can be found on the page that appears.

The committee also provides reimbursement for those who wish to further their professional development by attending self-directed PD. Application forms and guidelines can be picked up from your committee representative, or from the Educational Services page on the district website (on the same page as above). The forms are at the bottom of the page. Completed applications and any questions should be given to, or directed towards, your representative. Please include documentation for all expenses you wish to claim, especially the registration receipt. Please note there are 2 pay periods for reimbursement – after the 1st semester and in June. If you attend a self-directed PD event in the fall, get your application in before the end of the 1st semester to be eligible for some funding reimbursement. See the guidelines on the District website or talk to your branch/BU representative for more details.

Next year, branch and bargaining unit representatives will continue to make you aware of any conferences that are run by or endorsed by OSSTF, and if any additional funds are available to attend.

The committee will be meeting on Tuesday, June 8th to go over all the applications it received for the 2020-2021 school year. As a result, you need to get all your forms in quickly, with the necessary documentation, in order for your application to be processed this year. The deadline to get them in this year is June 1, 2021. Your submission should be emailed to Stewart Williams at tazman2909@gmail.com, as well as cc: your branch rep (see instructions above to find out who your rep is). With the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions put in place, we have noted a marked decline in submissions to date.

The committee had organized a virtual workshop day for May 6th with two OSSTF created workshops to be presented. Unfortunately, Provincial Office was not able to find any presenters available for the date requested. However, the committee will continue to look at ways to offer workshops in the upcoming year. On a positive development, the committee has provided funding to 20 members who responded to our advertisement to attend the Antiracist Educators Summer Series. These spaces filled quickly, and we hope the members find the Summer Series a worthwhile experience.

This year, D27 Limestone had 2 of its members on the Provincial Educational Services Committee, Brian Heaton and me. This District is having an impact when it comes to looking at educational issues and pedagogy, as well as planning provincial and regional events for Educational Services Officers, as there are only 23 OSSTF members from around the province on this committee.

Once again, thanks to all the people who have volunteered their time to help foster the professional development of the members of District 27.

Status of Women Committee Report

Elizabeth MacDonald, Chair

Thank you to our school reps and members who support us in their work sites and our community. Our committee has members from all three of our bargaining units and contacts in all work sites. We encourage participation by any member interested in our goals.

Monthly committee reports are presented to the District and bargaining unit executives. Those reports summarise committee and community activities and issues concerning women, families and children.

Goals of the Status of Women Committee of D27 OSSTF:

- To educate members about issues and support learning about legal, social and historical concerns of Canadian Women and girls.
- To locate and distribute diverse resources, including web links, teacher guides, and tool kits for action, websites, e-learning modules & other electronic sources of information.
- To share resources with Status of Women Reps and to our membership on our local website.
- To support education and to increase member awareness about a broad range of issues and inequalities affecting the daily lives and future success of women and girls in our schools, community, work places and beyond;
- To provide local opportunities and resources to empower, inspire and engage Status of Women members and school communities to create and sustain safe, caring, inclusive, school communities free from fear; and
- To promote respect for human diversity.

Yearly Activities:

We plan activities around the following monthly events subject to the direction of the committee member's interests each year:

September: Take Back the Night Rally, safety at home and in the community

October: Women's History Month; Canadian Heroines; International Day of the Girl Child, Person's Day

November: Aboriginal Education Month - Ending Violence against Aboriginal Women; Moosehide campaign events

December: National Day of Remembrance to End Violence against Girls and Women (December 6)

OSSTF Support of the White Ribbon Campaign – It Starts with You. It Stays with Him. Resources acquired and shared to work sites

February 14: Global End to Violence Against Women and Girls; OSSTF Toolkit – Still not Laughing: Challenging Sexual Harassment in Our Schools

April: Equal pay day

May: Send committee delegates to the OSSTF Provincial Status of Women Conference and, in alternate years, OSSTF Regional Meetings

What is the role of the provincial committee?

The role of the provincial Status of Women Committee (SWC) is to ensure that the bylaws, policies and priorities of OSSTF/FEESO are representative of women members (65 per cent of our membership). The SWC is a voice and advocate for women's equality issues within the Federation and in the broader community. It strives to be a voice for all of the women within our Federation on issues of importance to them and to advocate for all women within our society as well. The SWC

advises the Provincial Executive (PE) about issues facing women and girls and provides information and resources to local Districts and Bargaining Units. The SWC monitors provincial, federal and global politics in order to inform and advise on issues that impact women's equality

Health and Safety Report

Shawn Lavender, District H & S Officer and Jamie Reid, Teacher's H & S Officer

Site-based Committees

Representatives for site-based JHSC are now selected using an application process. The three affiliate Unions (CUPE, ETFO and OSSTF) review the applications and select representatives by the end of September. Terms to serve as a worker representative are for two-years, with opportunity of extension as determined by the affiliates. The process will be opened this spring with the applications being released in June, 2021.

The duties of the worker representative is to attend quarterly meetings with the site-based JHSC (usually two administrators and two workers with alternating worker/board members chairing the meeting). The workers are to perform site-inspections according to a schedule agreed to by the committee.

Dispute about inspections

We are currently in dispute with the Board over inspections. It is our position that time-release be provided to our workers to do this important work. The Board's position is that the workers are to do the inspections on their "free" time. This seems bizarre in a normal year, let alone in the time of Covid-19. Over the past year, the Board has continued to "fight" us on this position. We have had three arbitration dates and have another five dates booked in the fall of 2021 at the Ministry of Labour. We are hopeful that a fair and equitable agreement can be reached within the parameters of the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

We would like to express a huge thank you to our Health and Safety Site Reps that do such a great job keeping our sites safe.

Thank-you

Human Rights Officer Report

Suche James

In the Human Rights world, this year past year will likely go down in history as one that was very significant. There were much more personal reflections, reckoning with our own history, conversations, and activism that emerged as a result of world events. That phenomenon continues as we speak. The pandemic exposed already existing inequities and made it more obvious for everyone to start to take notice. The George Floyd murder and continuing Palestinian/Israeli conflict has opened up questions, conversations, and activism with respect to anti-Black racism,

Islamophobia, anti-Indigenous racism, and anti-Semitism in ways that we haven't seen since the civil rights movement in the United States back in the 60s.

I am very proud to say that OSSTF District 27 decided to engage members and support these conversations and actions through the Human Rights Officer role. As a result, this year, in some ways, has been a revival Human Rights Officer role. I would like to thank Stewart Williams, the Executive and members for establishing a renewed budget line moving forward. It is an important step in continuing the work. I believe that you will see this role evolve to serve all members in a meaningful, impactful way while taking into account the wide array of identities, lived experiences, and intersectionalities in our membership. Along with supporting the GSMA, we took this year to engage with conversations and understanding about race through Layla Saad's book, "me and white supremacy". This was an opportunity to engage members with these conversations with an emphasis to continue the work next year and an eye on action. I have to thank Candice Bovard and Tiff Idems for spearheading this initiative through CPAC. From there a small working group planned and facilitated these conversations. Thank you to all those who helped put this together. It took several late evening discussions. Special thanks to Andrea Loken and Rachelle Séguin for really taking care of all the organizing, communications, logistics, and being a major part of the planning as well. This really wouldn't have got off the ground with those efforts.

As a final note, I would also like to thank and congratulate Andrea Barrow for being selected as a member to the OSSTF Provincial anti-racism professional learning writing team. These professional learning modules are in the pilot stage, and I am looking forward to the final product. Thank you for having me as your Human Rights Officer this past year. Although I will not be returning, I won't be far, and I look forward to transitioning someone new into this role. It will become increasingly important in the years to come. I don't exactly know what the future holds for me, but I do want to take this opportunity to say that I have been proud to be an active OSSTF member over the last 20+ years and it has been a particular honour to serve the membership in this role. I won't forget the present and historical role that OSSTF has played in the fight for fair working conditions, human rights, and the quality of life that I personally enjoy.