



October 28, 2008

Dear colleague

The OSSTF Provincial Executive is sending this letter to provide you with an update on negotiations strategy and recent developments from discussions with government and school board representatives related to the Provincial Discussion Table.

Based on these discussions, and after full debate and consultation with local leaders, the Teacher/Occasional Teacher Ad Hoc Advisory Workgroup and the negotiators in our Protective Services Department, the Provincial Executive has determined that conditions are now most favourable for developing a teacher/occasional teacher provincial discussion agreement framework. The Provincial Executive believes that participating in province-wide bargaining with the government to produce a provincial framework for teachers and occasional teachers is the optimum way to get the best results for our members.

To facilitate achieving this goal, the Provincial Executive has unanimously supported the following motion and is recommending that you vote in favour of OSSTF attending a Provincial Discussion Table:

THAT the Provincial Executive approve conducting a vote of all teacher/occasional teacher members (excluding PSAT members), in accordance with Bylaw 20.1.1.4.4 to seek approval to enter into province-wide bargaining, thus allowing Provincial Office bargainers to negotiate a provincial framework agreement to provide the best possible conditions for local bargaining.

The Staff Room Rap issued October 6, 2008 updated you on the state of negotiations for both support staff and teachers/occasional teachers. As stated in that document, OSSTF would consider going to a Provincial Discussion Table for teachers/occasional teachers if that strategy created a more positive local negotiating environment which would enable the discussion of local issues as well as issues discussed within a provincial framework.

In order to gauge the impact of establishing a provincial framework, the Provincial Executive has been monitoring the progress of support staff bargaining since the establishment of the provincial framework agreement on September 12, 2008. This provincial framework agreement is producing success at local support staff bargaining tables. Settlements are being achieved that satisfy the local priorities identified by bargaining units.

It must be stressed that returning to the Provincial Discussion Table with the intent of establishing a framework does not relieve the employer from the obligation and responsibility of productive bargaining with its teachers/occasional teachers. (Including its continuing and adult education teachers). Failure to make progress may result in bargaining units following the traditional Labour Relations Act process which includes conciliation, mediation and the possibility of asking you and your colleagues to support the bargaining unit negotiating team with a strike mandate.

OSSTF has always believed in the strength of local collective bargaining. This local approach has resulted in OSSTF collective agreements that have achieved significant gains for members in areas such as salaries, benefits, staffing, working conditions and language to address specific local priorities. OSSTF's main purpose for attending the Provincial Discussion Table is to establish the provisions required to negotiate successful local agreements. Your local negotiating team has been diligently pursuing those local priorities identified by you and your colleagues at the bargaining table as well.

In conclusion, the Provincial Executive recommends you vote in favour of OSSTF attending a Provincial Discussion Table.

As we go forward, we must remember our motto that urges us to not take thought for our separate interests, but to help one another. We appreciate your continued support.

On behalf of your OSSTF Provincial Executive



Ken Coran
President
OSSTF/FEESO

Your local bargaining unit will be deciding on the best ways to facilitate the vote and will be in contact with you shortly regarding those details.

The ballot you will see when the vote is held is produced below:

In accordance with Bylaw 20.1.1.4.4, which outlines processes for provincial collective bargaining:

The Provincial Executive is seeking your approval to enter into province-wide bargaining for OSSTF teachers/occasional teachers with the Government of Ontario to negotiate a provincial framework that will facilitate the negotiation of collective agreements at the local level.

- I am in favour
- I am not in favour

SAMPLE BALLOT