

November 2009

OSSTF/FEESO Status of Women Committee Update

1. December 6th; National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women

a) *Remembering the Past...Committing to Change*: OSSTF/FEESO December 6th Poster

By now, you should all have received your copy of the October *Update* and your new OSSTF/FEESO poster commemorating December 6th. Please encourage members to put the posters up in their schools, worksites and union offices, and explore the ideas and web resources provided on the reverse side of the poster.

Information about December 6th is now also posted on the provincial OSSTF/FEESO website. It features the new poster and a brief message about the 20th anniversary of the Montreal Massacre and the need for action to end violence against women. There are links to website resources included in the message and connections are also provided to last year's poster, the *Violence Against Indigenous Women* resource, and a suggested December 6th announcement that may be adapted for local use.

A recent issue of *Chatelaine* magazine highlighted the 20th anniversary of December 6, 1989 by publishing moving interviews with three women whose lives were changed forever by the horrific events of that day. A copy of this article is attached.

Suggestion

Use locally developed newsletters or email "blasts" to provide members with information, ideas and resources about December 6th activities.



b) *20 Day/20 Ways to End Violence Against Women*: CLC launches postcard campaign:

Information on the Canadian Labour Congress postcard campaign on ending violence against women, as well as their December 6th statement can be found on the CLC website in both French and English. OSSTF/FEESO has distributed 3000 postcard packages to members across the province to help support this campaign. Overall over 100,000 packages have been circulated across the country.

Postcards can also be sent electronically each day through the CLC site. Click on the topic(s) shown on the right hand side to go to the postcard with that message. Each postcard remains up on the site only for a few days.



[English](#)

www.canadianlabour.ca/action-center/20-days-20-days-end-violence-against-women

[French](#)

www.congresdutravail.ca/centre-daction/20-days-20-ways-end-violence-against-women

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2. Highlighting local SW Initiatives.....

The provincial Status of Women Committee loves to hear about – and share – the good things you are doing around the province so keep in touch. Some recent initiatives undertaken by local SW Committees include:

- ♀ Held workshop on *Using a Gender Equity Lens* (D27)
- ♀ Planning workshop later this year on *Pregnancy-Parental Leave* (D23)
- ♀ Organized student poster contest to mark *Women's History Month* (D29) – see attached flyer
- ♀ Preparing *Cook for the Cure* event in December to raise awareness and funds for breast cancer research(D12)

3. Ministry of Education posts Gender-Studies Outline

The Ministry of Education has just finished receiving feedback on the newly developed Women and Gender Studies (WGS) draft course overviews. For those interested in taking a look, the overview is still posted on the Ministry website at

www.curriculumreview.ca/SSandHumanities/index.html.

4. Implementation of Full-day JK/SK

In October, Premier McGuinty announced roll-out plans for phasing in full-day learning for 4 and 5 year olds. Starting next September, approximately 35,000 spaces will be available across the province with full implementation in all schools by 2015-2016. The full day programme will run during the regular school year using a blended staffing model with one teacher and one ECE. Extended day options beyond the regular school day will be led by ECE staff and funded through parent fees.

Each school board has been allocated a certain number of spaces based on predicted JK/SK enrolment and had until November 30th to identify proposed sites to the Ministry. Information for parents will be finalized in January in preparation for September 2010 registrations.

Investing in comprehensive learning and care programmes is not only good for more equitable outcomes for children, it has



Looking Ahead to the 3 A's

Thinking about agenda items for your next Status of Women meeting? Look at including the following topics:

♀ *AMPA:*

It's time to put your name forward as a possible delegate to OSSTF/FEESO's Annual Meeting (AMPA) Find out how your District selects its delegates and encourage local members of SW to get involved.

♀ *Applying to a Provincial Committee:*

If you have ever wanted to learn more about OSSTF/FEESO at the provincial level, applying to join a provincial committee is one way to get started. The list of Provincial Committees comes out in January. Speak to your President or Provincial Councillor to find out more.

♀ *Awards Nominations:*

Nominations for many provincial OSSTF/FEESO awards, including the Status of Women Award, are due in January. Consider whether you have a woman member in your bargaining unit who should be considered. Information on awards and nominations forms can be found on the OSSTF/FEESO website.

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been the cornerstone of successful anti-poverty strategies and improving women's economic equality. For these reasons, there are concerns about the limited announcements by the government which come nowhere near the visionary recommendation provided by Dr. Pascal. That being said, the government's decision to move ahead despite these challenging economic times and pressure to delay is a welcome one.

5. TDSB Director announces schools for boys

As indicated in the last email update, Chris Spence, the new Director of Education for the Toronto District School Board, has announced one of his priorities is to address lagging standardized test scores and higher rates of suspension among boys. His plan? It's to launch a boys only school staffed mainly by men by next September 2010. The *Toronto Star* quotes Spence as saying that many classrooms are based on co-operation, "but boys thrive on competition... When you've got a majority of teachers who are female, that might not be the natural inclination for them to bring competition into the classroom in a balanced kind of way."

The school, to be called the Male Leadership Academy, will start with boys from kindergarten to Grade 3 and expand to higher grades over time. As you can imagine, Spence's plans and his comments have provoked a storm of debate. For a small sampling of what's being said on both sides, see attached articles and letters to the editor, including one from OSSTF/FEESO and Status of Women Committee member, Leslie Wolfe. Leslie has also published an article in the November issue of *Update*.

6. NDP statement on *Fairness for Women*

You will find the recent NDP statement on women's issues attached in both English and French.

In closing,

WHEN THE WORLD TAKES CARE OF WOMEN,... women take care of the world. The world is doing a terrible job... There are approximately 200 mln pregnancies in the world every year. 20% end in abortion and half of those are unsafe and illegal. These unsafe illegal abortions result in 68,000 deaths of women and girls, and 5 mln injuries/infections, most requiring hospitalization. About 9 mln children under 5 die every year, 40% in their first month - the underlying cause is the ill health of the mother. 500,000 women die in childbirth every year... Stephen Lewis, former U.N. ambassador to Africa for AIDS, says: "I challenge you to enter the fray against gender inequality. There is nothing of greater import in this world. All roads lead from women to social change."

- Excerpts, column, 22 June, 2009, Jane Roberts. www.rhrealitycheck.org/blog/2009/06/22/when-world-takes-care-women-women-take-care-world