

STATUS OF WOMEN



Status of Women
Officer Handbook Revised

2019-2020

FOR DISTRICT AND
BARGAINING UNIT STATUS
OF WOMEN OFFICERS

Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation
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Provincial

Role of provincial Status of Women Committee

Purpose/Terms of Reference (9.9.3)

- 9.9.3.1 To monitor the professional status of women members of OSSTF/FEESO and to advise the Provincial Executive on the need for appropriate action with respect to any developing trends.
- 9.9.3.2 To provide a forum for the discussion of issues relevant to women in OSSTF/FEESO.
- 9.9.3.3 To recommend to the Provincial Executive research and educational programs designed to promote equality of opportunity with specific reference to women members.
- 9.9.3.4 To liaise with provincial Standing Committees and Councils concerning the status and proportional representation of women in OSSTF/FEESO, and to provide assistance to Standing Committees and Councils in meeting the needs of women Members.
- 9.9.3.5 To provide Districts with assistance in establishing goals and directions for local Status of Women Committees.
- 9.9.3.6 To recommend to the Provincial Executive, on an annual basis, goals to be achieved in order to implement the OSSTF/FEESO affirmative action statements highlighting the importance of intersectionality, creating safe spaces and a culture of consent, and ways to remove barriers to women's full participation in OSSTF/FEESO.
- 9.9.3.7 To continue to report on proportional representation of women at various levels within the Federation.
- 9.9.3.8 To establish and maintain an effective communications network between the Districts, Bargaining Units, and Provincial OSSTF/FEESO with respect to women's issues.
- 9.9.3.9 To encourage and promote respect for the rights and diverse needs of all members with respect to their personal and family obligations.
- 9.9.3.10 To recommend targets, priorities, and programs to the Provincial Executive, and policy to the Provincial Council and AMPA.
- 9.9.3.11 To ensure that the chairperson meets at least once per year with the chairperson of the Human Rights Committee.
- 9.9.3.12 To develop and provide regional and/or local outreach workshops for members.
- 9.9.3.13 To advise the Provincial Executive on liaison opportunities with community partners who provide advocacy for women's issues.
- 9.9.3.14 To advise the Provincial Executive on the OSSTF/FEESO policies specific to girls and women.

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.

Every year, as part of its duties, the Status of Women Committee reassesses OSSTF/FEESO constitution, bylaws, policies and procedures to ensure they provide for women's equity and to reflect on the changing political landscape and needs of our women members. Given the current political climate, it is now more important than ever that OSSTF/FEESO maintain a strong Status of Women Committee with a focus on intersectionality.

The continued need to work with other OSSTF/FEESO committees and workgroups has been contemplated and will continue to be discussed.

Role of the Status of Women Committee Liaison

The Committee Liaison acts as a link between the Provincial Status of Women Committee and OSSTF/FEESO Status of Women officers.

This may be achieved by:

- Keeping abreast of local Status of Women (SW) events and sharing information through the Districts/Bargaining Units in the region;
- Presenting, through written and oral reporting, regional activities to the Status of Women Committee;
- Forwarding pertinent information to the District/Bargaining Unit SW Officers in the region;
- Providing assistance with respect to the planning and organizing of SW events within the assigned Districts;
- Contacting Districts/Bargaining Units to encourage submission of committee applications and award nominations;
- Promoting attendance of District and Bargaining Unit SW Officers at regional outreach and provincial SW events.

Status of Women 2018–2019 Regional Assignments

Status of Women Committee Member	District Assignment	Region
Eunice O'Mahony D12	12, 16, 34, 30	4
Kristina Budny D12	8, 13, 17, 18, 22, 19	3 and 4
Michelle Dalrymple D29 – VC	14, 15, 28, 29	5
Teresa Marrello D27 – C	25, 26, 27	5
Lisa Pilato D6A	1, 5A, 5B, 6A, 6B	1
Kimberly Daley	7, 23, 24, 35	3 and 4
Karen Kading D11	9, 10, 11, 21	3 and 4
Sarah McLaren D4	2, 3, 4, 20	2
Nancy Tshibola D32	31, 32, 33	1–5

Recent initiatives of the provincial Status of Women Committee

- █ Pathways Document development
- █ Pathways Workshop available in Districts/Bargaining Units
- █ Feminism and Unionism workshop available in Districts/Bargaining Units
- █ Wrote articles for *Update* and *Education Forum*
- █ Created five yearly Status of Women Newsletters
- █ Planned and presented biennial Regional Outreach
- █ Planned biennial SW Conference

Annual Meeting of the Provincial Assembly (AMPA)

Resolutions—On-time resolutions must be submitted to the General Secretary by the 3rd working Tuesday in January, accompanied by a maximum 150-word rationale. Any District or Bargaining Unit can submit motions.

Send your SW motions to the provincial SW Committee for consideration and support at AMPA.

Consider speaking to one of the Provincial committee motions at the Annual Meeting of the Provincial Assembly (AMPA).

Who's who is the Communications/Political Action (CPA) Department

Domenic Bellissimo—Associate General Secretary—Professional Services Division

- Member of the Provincial Executive
- Oversees all aspects of the Professional Services Division (Education Services and Communications/Political Action departments)

Gary Fenn—Director, Communications/Political Action Department

- *Update and Education Forum* Business Coordinator
- Communications and Political Action Committee (CPAC)—Secretariat Liaison
- CPAC Conference
- Coalitions and donations
- Public relations
- Coordination of elections
- Reports
- Polling
- National/International programs
- Liaison education stakeholders
- Annual Report coordinator
- Professional Student Services Personnel (PSSP) Salary Working Table
- Violence Task Force
- AMPA Coordinator (back-up)
- Direct digital communications to members (lead)
- Planning for the road ahead
- Member education for Negotiations

Dan Earle

- Communications and Political Action Committee (CPAC)—Secretariat Liaison
- Web Editor/oversight
- Anti-Harassment officer training
- *Update*
- Social Media—Twitter
- Equity Work Group (in-house)
- First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) Work Group
- Infographics

Michael Young

- Communications and Political Action Committee (CPAC)—Secretariat Liaison
- Editor of *Update*
- Media releases
- Speaking notes
- Speeches
- Writing and media relations
- Web Editor/oversight (back-up)
- University issues

Paul Kossta

- Communications and Political Action Committee (CPAC)—Secretariat Liaison
- Government relations
- Queen's Park Legislative Observer
- Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA)
- Queen's Park Notes
- Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) and Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) Political Action Committees
- OFL Convention (back-up)
- Ontario Universities Computing Conference (OUCC)
- Lobby Day
- *Update*

Tracey Germa

- Human Rights Committee—Secretariat Liaison
- Labour Council coordination
- Equity Officer (back-up)
- AMPA coordinator
- Equity Work Group (in-house)
- Health coalitions
- Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) Committees and Conventions
- *Update*
- Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) Human Rights Advisory
- Equity Mentorship (back-up)
- Social Media—Facebook

Tracey Marshall

- Communications and Political Action Committee (CPAC)—Secretariat Liaison
- Women’s issues
- Status of Women Committee—Secretariat Liaison
- Equity Work Group (in-house)
- *Update*
- Coordination events and rallies
- Student Achievement Awards
- Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL)—Canadian Labour Congress (CLC)
Women’s Committees
- School Councils
- Community liaison

Status of Women Award information

The Liz Barkley Status of Women Award, named in recognition of a former OSSTF/FEESO President, is presented annually at AMPA, to recognize activism and leadership by an OSSTF/FEESO member in advocating and building awareness of women’s economic and equality issues.

The deadline for nominations is January 31.

The following are some areas to consider when nominating an OSSTF/FEESO member for the Liz Barkley Status of Women Award.

- Involvement in projects to support gender equity and safety.
- Development of programs that have a positive impact on the lives of female students.
- Initiatives to enhance women’s involvement, activism and opportunities for leadership.
- Political action and advocacy to protect and enhance equality for women.

The member’s work may be directed within OSSTF/FEESO itself, but may also include efforts within education, labour or women’s movement, and/or the local, national or international community.

(Available on OSSTF/FEESO website)

List of acronyms

www.osstf.on.ca/search/results.aspx?q=acronyms#t=provincial-results&sort=relevancy

Anti-Harassment Policy

www.osstf.on.ca/search/results.aspx?q=anti%20harassment#t=provincial-results&sort=relevancy

OSSTF/FEESO Organizational chart

www.osstf.on.ca/en-CA/about-us/how-we-are-organized/how-we-are-organized

District map

www.osstf.on.ca/en-CA/search/results.aspx?q=district%20map#t=provincial-results&sort=relevancy

OSSTF/FEESO Regions

Region 1	Region 2	Region 3	Region 4	Region 5	Francophone
District 5A	District 1	District 7	District 12	District 14	District 31
District 5B	District 2	District 8	District 13	District 15	District 32
District 6A	District 3	District 9	District 16	District 25	District 33
District 6B	District 4	District 10	District 17	District 26	District 35
		District 11	District 19	District 27	
		District 18	District 20	District 28	
		District 23	District 21	District 29	
		District 24	District 22		
			District 30		
			District 34		
			District 35		

Local

Role of a Status of Women Officer

According to Bylaw 18 (18.1.2.8) of the provincial OSSTF/FEESO Constitutions and Bylaws, there should be a District Status of Women Officer. Please check your local constitution and bylaws for more details. Status of Women Officers should also be familiar with relevant sections of their local collective agreement.

The Status of Women Officer acts as a link to the provincial committee and as a member of the local Status of Women Committee, participating on the local committee and with its activities.

The following is a list, which includes, but is not limited to, these activities:

- To promote, generate and coordinate women's issues and events in order to raise the profile of women and women's issues in the union;
- To liaise with the Status of Women Committee Liaison of the provincial Status of Women Committee;
- To participate in Status of Women outreach regionals and biennial Status of Women Conference;
- To participate in local decision-making processes regarding budget and allocations of funds for Status of Women events;
- To identify the women's issues and concerns of OSSTF/FEESO members and to make recommendations to the local executive and council;
- To report to the local Bargaining Unit and District on the activities of the Status of Women Committee;
- To bring to the attention of members pertinent information and materials which have been forwarded from the provincial Status of Women Committee.

A year in the life of a Status of Women Officer

September

- Put out a notice of all upcoming Status of Women Committee (SWC) dates to all members and invite them to attend.
- Do a Needs Assessment for the District/Bargaining Unit and decide what events to support, promote, present.
- Promote provincial SWC resources
- Reach out to your SW Committee Liaison and introduce yourself, ensure your contact information is correct.

- Subscribe through Tracey Marshall (tracey.marshall@osstf.ca) to the Status of Women newsletter.
- Prepare for Take Back the Night events
- Prepare for Murdered, Missing Indigenous Women and Girls Sisters in Spirit vigils (October 4)
- Prepare for Women's History Month (October)

October

- Communicate with your District contacts to find out which upcoming events provincial SWC will be holding this year.
- Ask your local President to send you any Status of Women related DBUs (District/Bargaining Unit Memos)
- Prepare for National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women—December 6 events (have you ordered pins and posters?)
- October 11—International Day of the Girl
- October 15—World Rural Women's Day
- Third Week of October—YWCA Week without Violence
- October 18—Person's Day
- October—Early Childhood Educator and Child Care Worker Appreciation Day (OCBCC) (date varies from year to year)
- Prepare for 16 Days of Activism

November

- Reach out to your Provincial Status of Women Committee Liaison
- November 20—National Child Day
- November 25–December 10—16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence
- Consider nominating someone in your Bargaining Unit/District for the Status of Women Award in honour of Liz Barkley—nominations close January 31
- Publicize OSSTF/FEESO awards to your contacts
- Consider being an Annual Meeting of the Provincial Assembly (AMPA) delegate or alternate

December

- Reach out to your Provincial Status of Women Committee Liaison
- December 6—National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women (Do not forget to send us your pictures!)
- Prepare AMPA motions, deadlines for submission to provincial is January 31 and forward them to your local executive for endorsement
- Prepare for the Women's March

January

- Reach out to your provincial Status of Women Committee Liaisons
- Nominations close for Status of Women award January 31—see provincial website for details
- Women’s March events
- Encourage your contacts to apply for provincial Committees/Councils

February

- Reach out to your provincial Status of Women Committee Liaison
- Black History Month
- Strawberry Ceremony—February 14—MMIWG Remembrance and Memorial Marches
- Pink Shirt Day—February 27
- Prepare for International Women’s Day events—March 8
- Promote Biennial conference or regional outreach to your contacts

March

- Reach out to your provincial Status of Women Committee Liaison
- AMPA—visit the Status of Women table
- International Women’s Day—March 8
- Prepare for Equal Pay Day events
- Publicize Federation Family Education Fund (applications due April 15)
- Provide a written report for your District/Bargaining Unit Annual General Meeting (AGM)
- Tap other sisters to get involved and run for positions on District/Bargaining Unit Executives

April

- Reach out to your Provincial Status of Women Committee Liaison
- International Day of Pink
- LEAF Equality Day Canada
- Equal Pay Day (TBD)
- Prepare for Education Week events

May

- Reach out to your provincial Status of Women Committee Liaison
- Education Week
- Support Staff Appreciation Day—May 6
- International Day of Families—May 15
- International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia—May 17
- Prepare for PRIDE events
- Prepare for Sexual Harassment Awareness Week
- Consider putting your name forward for OSSTF/FEESO Summer Leadership Conference
- Prepare for and attend your AGM—take someone new

June

- Reach out to your provincial Status of Women Committee Liaison
- Sexual Harassment Awareness Week
- World Day against Child Labour—June 12
- National Aboriginal Day—June 21
- Register for CLC Women's Summer School
- Review the past year's activities and plan for next year
- Promote future SW events

July

- International Day of Friendship
- Canadian Labour Congress Women's School (see their website)
- Relax and rejuvenate

August

- OSSTF/FEESO Summer Leadership Training
- International Day of the World's Indigenous People—August 9
- International Youth Day—August 12
- World Humanitarian Day—August 19

Useful experience and/or skills for officers and committee members

- Commitment to advancing the policies of OSSTF/FEESO
- Membership in District/Bargaining Unit Status of Women Committees
- Federation experience in home Districts/Bargaining Units, for instance as chair of a committee
- Direct experience with social justice or women-related community organizations
- Experience developing and presenting workshops to colleagues
- Experience communicating with members
- Assisting members to optimize participation in local committees

Structure of Local Status of Women Committee meetings

- Indigenous acknowledgement
- Anti-Harassment statement and appointment of anti harassment officer
- Feminist moment (all committee members share a moment, idea or interesting tidbit to do with women's issues and/or feminism).
- Action items (review and update)
- Reports from worksites
- Emerging issues
- Upcoming events



THIRTEEN STEPS TO BUILDING AN ACTIVE STATUS OF WOMEN COMMITTEE

Step 1—ESTABLISH

Express your interest to chair or create a Status of Women Committee. Approach your local Bargaining Unit and/or District to obtain support and approval. Seek local financial support to create or expand the committee. Ask if there is an existing Status of Women budget line to access. Let the Provincial Office know who your Status of Women Officer is.

Step 2—**INVITE**

Invite members to attend the committee meetings. Send an invitation, which focusses on the role the committee and members will serve. More than one form of invitation may need to go out to reach members who may be interested, for example, flyer, email list, phone calls and reminders to worksite representatives. In addition, nothing beats tapping people on the shoulder and providing a personal invitation.

Step 3—**STYLE**

Frame the meetings as something other than a meeting. Make the meeting a place for active participation, debate or even fun around an important topic. Members need to feel that they are part of the process. This will encourage retention, participation and continuity. You may find that different people are willing to participate in organizing different events. Establish a team for the topic and let the team make the decisions as to what kind of professional development event would work for that topic.

Step 4—**MODEL**

Run your committee by consensus. Be attentive to the needs of all OSSTF/FEESO members or colleagues in your community. Be flexible about changing an agenda due to community issues that highlight a new, important topic. As chair, offer the position to others as the year ends so that others who are interested can take an active role.

Step 5—**SURVEY**

Meet as a committee and identify topics, which relate to members in their daily roles as members, as adults and as teacher/educational workers. In fact, it is best if the topics touch all domains of our professional lives. If people see their needs being addressed, they are more likely to want to become involved. The committee can use the survey results to develop ideas and generate more involvement. Be realistic though and create a manageable plan of work.

Step 6—**ADVOCATE**

Offer to take the lead on important topics. Members will continue to support a committee if it is seen as helpful in providing advice and suggestions on women's issues.

Step 7—**NETWORK**

Find other District committees who will co-sponsor your events, thereby adding assistance, additional people, additional budget and additional communities of interest. Ideal examples include Political Action, Collective Bargaining and Human Rights Committees. Strengthen your link with the provincial Status of Women Committee. Additional people with new ideas and discussions can help invigorate a committee that may be losing its enthusiasm. Again, find ways to make the networking fun.

Step 8—IDENTIFY

Consolidate your data. Consider the diversity of needs of the membership, review the survey results, and consider your resources (human, financial and other) to guide your choices in identifying the events and opportunities you might provide.

Step 9—PLAN

Set an action plan that allows your committee to offer a variety of events and resources. Consider timing, diversity of membership and the focus of each event. Consider producing follow-up events/activities to focus on a theme.

Step 10—CONTENT

Have a major focus, a start that will leave them wanting more resources on the topic. Consider offering Status of Women workshops, using guest speakers from within the Federation or from outside organizations.

Step 11—SHOWCASE

Invite recognized speakers, who will do the event for little or no payment. Find social activists from other unions, community social justice groups or agencies to speak on women's issues. Organize events in cooperation with community organizations that might need assistance or money. Members are always willing to do good for their community and those types of events should be a major part of your focus.

Step 12—PUBLISH and ADVERTISE

Use other means of getting your information out. For example, if you have a great speaker or event, get local newspapers to highlight the event so that other members see it too. It is also great for the community to see OSSTF/FEESO members working to make their communities better. Submit an article to your District/Bargaining Unit newsletter or post pictures (with permission) of your event on your local OSSTF/FEESO website or social media accounts.

Step 13—RESOURCES

Provide practical resources to the members of the committee. Committees may also use Status of Women resources or documents available on the OSSTF/FEESO website under the EQUITY tab. Remember to use swag and resources as prizes at the conclusion of your events. Do not forget to thank participants and more importantly, organizers of the event. Let them know you appreciated their participation and contributions.

Creating and passing motions

If SWC wishes an action taken, it normally passes a motion recommending or requesting that the District or Bargaining Unit Executive carry out the action. If you need assistance drafting motions, the local leadership may be able to assist you.

Application dates—how to apply for the committee

- Applications for all committees and councils are available online in early January
- Interested applicants must fill out an application and then send it to their respective Provincial Councillor (there is a drop down menu of choices in the application menu)
- The deadline for applications is March 1
- Your regional coordinator can help give you advice and/or assistance with the application
- Please see the Status of Women Committee needs for application appointment criteria
- Term appointments occur in late April
- One-year co-options occur in late May

For more information on starting a Status of Women Committee or assistance with your ongoing committee, please contact your regional Provincial Status of Women committee contact or Tracey Marshall (tracey.marshall@osstf.ca) or at Provincial Office 416-751-8300.

