

HOW DO I GENERATE INTEREST AND ENGAGE OTHERS?

SOCIAL EVENTS

- Introductory wine and cheese party
- Outings to women-friendly theatre, speakers, musical events
- Family friendly outings such as a family skate or family swim
- Pot-luck dinner
- Awards dinner/reception to highlight contributions of female members and/or students in the areas of equity, curriculum, community initiatives

AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS

- Encourage members to develop school/ worksite announcements/activities/assemblies to mark key dates and events (December 6, Women's History month, Day of Pink, International Women's Day, Sexual Harassment Awareness week)
- Encourage and support men to organize White Ribbon Campaigns and utilize It Starts With You. It Stays With Him on-line resources
- Submit articles to OSSTF/FEESO publications and/or local newsletters, newspapers and magazines related to key dates and/or women's issues
- Use Facebook, Twitter and other social media to raise awareness and stay connected

HOW DO I GET MORE INFORMATION?

- Contact your **OSSTF/FEESO District Status of Women Officer**.
- Contact the **Secretariat Liaison to Status of Women Committee at 1-800-267-7867**.
- Application forms to become a member of SWC are available online: www.osstf.on.ca/provincialcouncil.
- Sign up for the **Status of Women electronic newsletter**.
- Visit www.osstf.on.ca.

WORKSHOPS/EDUCATION

Seek the assistance of Provincial Office to organize and present workshops that are women-focused

- Develop and present a pregnancy, parental and adoption leave information workshop
- Develop and present workshops that examine union issues through a "gender equity lens" – eg. collective bargaining, health and safety, leadership, violence in the workplace
- Host workshops delivered by OSSTF/FEESO Educational Services Department—Still Not Laughing, PAIN to PRIDE, EQUIP: Equity in Practice
- Host workshops delivered by women's groups in the community

FUNDRAISING

- Fundraising drive (eg. money, clothes, books, food) for local women's shelters or women's organizations
- Fundraising dinner or other events (eg. Cook for the Cure)
- Participate in local, already organized community fundraisers (eg. runs, walks, bike rides)



WHO ARE WE?

The provincial OSSTF/FEESO Status of Women Committee (SWC) consists of 11 members appointed from across the province including a representative from Provincial Council.

There are six meetings per year in Toronto.

WHAT DO WE DO?

The provincial SWC addresses women's issues within our organization and beyond. In recent years, we have planned and organized regional outreach workshops and provincial conferences around the on-going theme of supporting and empowering female education workers.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

- To promote progressive policies regarding child care, parental leaves and benefits, sexual harassment prevention, improving working conditions for those facing domestic violence issues;
- To support and to provide training for women leaders;
- To advocate for safety and equity in the workplace.

HOW DO I GET INVOLVED?

- Volunteer to be the worksite representative to your District Status of Women Committee;
- Attend local SWC events, provincial SWC outreach workshops and the biannual conference;
- Consider being a member of the provincial SWC by speaking to your Bargaining Unit President.

HOW DO I ORGANIZE A DISTRICT STATUS OF WOMEN COMMITTEE?

- **DON'T** try to work alone. Reach out to others. Even one or two will get you started. Get them to work with you. Find projects that will bring others on board.
- **ORGANIZE** a network of contacts. Build communication links with SWCs in other Districts to develop an awareness of issues and initiatives. Contact community groups who advocate on behalf of women.
- **ENCOURAGE** others. Seek SWC representatives in each worksite. Hold women-focused events to draw interested participants.
- **WORK** with District executive members. Ensure formal recognition of the importance of the work of this committee in order to access District and Bargaining Unit resources, including budget, meeting reports and communication links.
- **DEVELOP** a plan and act on it. Choose priorities carefully and establish realistic goals and timelines. Look for projects that address member concerns and needs, and initiatives that create interest.
- **BUILD** awareness and support. Use provincial, District and Bargaining Unit newsletters, websites, bulletin boards and meetings to provide information to members about initiatives and issues.
- **MAKE** use of provincial OSSTF/FEESO and other resources and opportunities. The provincial Status of Women Committee has a regional liaison structure to provide information and support to Districts. There is a biannual Status of Women conference, as well as outreach workshops.
- **DON'T** be discouraged. It takes time to lay the groundwork for a successful SWC. People are busy and there are many competing demands/interests.
- **DON'T** take on more than you can handle. Burnout is a real concern, especially for women. So pace yourself.

HOW DO I ORGANIZE AN EFFECTIVE MEETING?

- **ADVERTISE.** Set dates, times and places for meetings well ahead and advertise the dates. Indicate refreshments will be available. Consider family-friendly times and provision of childcare. Circulate agendas and background information in advance.
- **NETWORK.** Encourage members to bring a friend, reach out to schools and worksites. Ask a member of your Executive to attend, and invite members from other committees.
- **AT YOUR FIRST MEETING.** Set priorities and use them as a focus for discussion.
- **AT SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS.** Use time efficiently by creating sub-groups and working groups for different projects. Provide background information to assist with decision making and select an effective chair to ensure timelines are met, the agenda is followed and discussion is productive.
- **RECORD DECISIONS** and ensure follow through. Keep a clear record of decisions made. Designate persons responsible for implementing decisions, and check previous minutes for items that require follow up.
- **PUBLICIZE RESULTS** and acknowledge contributions and support. Provide reports on activities to council and executive meetings, publicize committee's events, acknowledge the contributions and supports of the committee members and others.