

What do I get for my union dues?

The Teaching Profession Act requires all secondary teachers employed by Ontario public school boards to be members of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation. In addition, thousands of other educational workers have chosen to join OSSTF/FEESO.

Many types of educational workers are needed for a full service school model to work. At the centre of the team is the student – the reason that the team exists. Education is more than textbooks and curriculum. It is a life changing experience.

Strength

The strength of OSSTF/FEESO is well known by the public. It exists to promote and advance the cause of public education and the rights of students, educators and educational workers. OSSTF/FEESO commands respect in all areas: collective bargaining, professional development, educational research, and political action. When the OSSTF/FEESO president speaks, whether provincially or locally, the community listens.

Democracy

OSSTF/FEESO prides itself on its democratic traditions. We were the first educational union in 1919, when a courageous group of men and women banded together to try to achieve equal pay for equal work and other basic rights for teachers. Since then, our 60,000 members are active voices at the school level, at the District level and at the Provincial level.

We believe in, and practise, grass roots control, with expert advice available whenever members ask for it. Leaders are elected, policy determined and budgets passed by the membership. When given the opportunity, be sure to vote!

Protection

Teachers and education workers need the protection of a strong collective agreement, actively enforced through grievance whenever necessary. OSSTF/FEESO collective agreements guarantee that you will be treated fairly by your employer, including negotiated protections for how you will be evaluated, your salary and benefits, and all-important workload provisions which protect learning conditions for all secondary students. Whenever members need help, OSSTF/FEESO is there with advice and assistance.

Professionalism

Each year, OSSTF/FEESO sponsors training workshops and conferences and organizes hundreds of local PD workshops. Visit us at www.osstf.on.ca which contains a wealth of information about OSSTF/FEESO as well as links to many professional development opportunities and resources. The OSSTF/FEESO Resource Books assist thousands each year, and are particularly appreciated as a source of ideas and strategies for new teachers. Your Federation Day kit contains excerpts from three of the most popular resource books as well as a flyer for our award-winning Common Threads curriculum series.

So...how much will it cost?

It is difficult to put a price on protection and security. It is impossible to put a price on respect. Provincially, OSSTF/FEESO membership costs 1.3 % of your gross salary, one of the lowest in Canada. Much of that money is returned to local districts for local priorities. Teachers in many districts vote to pay an additional small levy. Automatically deducted from your pay cheque, all union dues are tax deductible. There is no better deal around!