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Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF)

In 1976, the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation published "The Effects of Sexism on the Career Development of Teachers". The report was generated by the work of the Task Force on Women created by the Provincial Executive. The Task Force's mandate was to examine the persistent under-representation of women in positions of responsibility despite the significant increase in the numbers of women teaching at the secondary level, and to recommend remedial actions. The research also provided information about women members and their representation in OSSTF leadership roles.

Metadata

Title: **Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF)**

Region: **Ontario**

The creation of the Task Force arose not only in response to the growing numbers of women entering secondary teaching, which had traditionally been a largely male preserve. It also reflected the rise in feminist awareness and activism emerging through the late 1960s and into the 1970s. There was growing recognition of gender inequality in our schools, both as learning institutions and as workplaces.

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followed, and district SW committees grew in numbers and activity. By 1982, at the urging of the SWC, childcare was made available at the Annual Assembly. Over the next few years, delegates to the Annual Assembly passed policies on affirmative action, childcare, paid maternity leave, superannuation, pornography, and non-sexist language. In 1983, it approved a by-law dealing with sexual harassment within the Federation. And in 1985, support was given to carry out a large follow up survey of members to evaluate what changes had taken place for women in secondary education during the ten years since the 1976 report. This initiative also provided some data on women's participation in OSSTF, as well as attitudes towards male and female students.

Outside the Federation, OSSTF became part of the Ontario Coalition for Better Childcare, submitted briefs to the provincial government on equal pay legislation, and participated in the Ontario Federation of Labour Campaign on Women and Affirmative Action, which held public forums across the province to raise awareness of discrimination against women in the workforce. OSSTF members were encouraged to make local submissions. These can be read in the OFL brief "Making Up the Difference", which reported on what it heard from women and made recommendations.

The provincial OSSTF Status of Women Committee and local SW committees played an important role during the 1980s in ensuring issues such as paid maternity leave, child-related emergency leave, and seniority were taken up in collective bargaining as part of Negotiating Towards Equality. The need to name and take action against sexual harassment in the workplace was identified. Numerous articles were written, and pamphlets and informational materials produced, to support these concerns becoming priorities for the Federation to address.

Status of Women was also a driving force in winning OSSTF support for implementing Board of Education Affirmative Action programs. And in the mid-80s OSSTF set up an internal affirmative action project to look at its own practices as an employer.












The early focus of the SWC was women in secondary teaching. This shifted after OSSTF changed its Letters Patent and began organizing others working in education. Many of these newly organized members were women working in a wide range of job classifications. Equal pay for work of equal value and other concerns emerged as new challenges to take up.

Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF) Documents

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	<u>A Long Way Yet to Go (Forum) – February 1983</u>	1983	Ontario
	<u>Affirmative Action</u>	1985	National (all of Canada)
	<u>Background Information on Family Benefits and Childbirth Leave</u>	1983	Ontario
	<u>Count Me In</u>	--	Ontario
	<u>Count Me In: Special Insert (Update) – May 1982</u>	1982	Ontario
	<u>District 10 Peel Status of Women: Recommendations to Collective Bargaining Committee on Parental Leave</u>	1983	Ontario
	<u>Letter Inviting Applications to 1st OSSTF Status of Women Committee</u>	1981	Ontario
	<u>Mail and Female (Forum) – October/November 1981</u>	1981	Ontario
	<u>Making Up the Difference: Mandatory Affirmative Action (Forum) – October/November 1983</u>	1983	Ontario
	<u>Metro Status of Women Coalition – Negotiating Towards Equality: Paid Maternity Leave</u>	1986	Ontario
	<u>Negotiating Towards Equality – Paid Maternity Leave</u>	--	Ontario

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	<u>OSSTF Affirmative Action Project Update</u>	1985	Ontario
	<u>OSSTF Membership Summary (1986)</u>	1986	Ontario
	<u>OSSTF Status of Women Membership Survey 1985</u>	1985	Ontario
	<u>OSSTF Status of Women Membership Survey 1985: Conclusions and Recommendations</u>	1985	Ontario
	<u>OSSTF Urges Amend this Pay Equity Legislation (Update) - October 1986</u>	1986	Ontario
	<u>Reflections of an Ex-Status of Women Committee Member (Forum) - December 1982</u>	1982	Ontario
	<u>Statement on sexual harassment</u>	--	Ontario
	<u>Status of Women Committee - One Year Later!</u>	1982	Ontario
	<u>Ten years later... Exploding the Myths</u>	1985	Ontario
	<u>The Effect of Sexism on the Career Development of Teachers</u>	1976	Ontario
	<u>What OSSTF Members Need to Know About Negotiating Child-Related Emergency Leave</u>	--	Ontario

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	<p><u>Women in Teaching.(Forum) – April 1981</u></p>	<p>1981</p>	<p>Ontario</p>
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Related Organizations


[Ontario Federation of Labour Women's Committee](#)

Related Issues and Actions Pages


[Labour Movement and Women's Equality](#)


Related Organization Material



[Report \(1990\): A Brief to the Government of Ontario: Daycare](#)
[Deadline](#)



[Making Up the Difference: Ontario Women Speak Out – OFL Brief to Government of Ontario](#)
[Ontario](#)


Related Photo Material


[OSSTF Status of Women Committee – 1st Year Meeting](#)


[OSSTF Status of Women Committee – 1st Year Meeting](#)


[OSSTF Status of Women Affirmative Action Campaign – Count Me In!](#)


[OSSTF Status of Women Committee – 1st Chair, Shelagh Luka](#)


[OSSTF Leader Liz Barkley – Toronto Secondary School Teachers' Strike](#)

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