

MEDIA RELEASE

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Talks Fail - OSSTF/FEESO Durham teachers on strike April 20

(Whitby)— District 13, Durham, of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF/FEESO) is disappointed to report that negotiations with the Durham District School Board have not led to an agreement and high school teachers and occasional teachers will be on strike as of Monday, April 20.

The employer continues to insist on the punitive micro-management of teachers' professional lives in a way that diminishes their ability to provide the best possible education to our students.

"Our teachers would much rather be inside classrooms with their students", stated Dave Barrowclough, District 13 President. "But this employer's refusal to engage in real negotiations has really left us no option. They refuse to enshrine in the collective agreement even language that would clearly enable us to improve our teaching practices. Until they undertake a wholesale change of approach, progress isn't possible, although we will remain ready to engage in meaningful bargaining at any time."

"We have worked hard, in the most sincere way possible, to reach an agreement that meets the needs of both parties. It's unfortunate that Michael Barrett, Chair, and the rest of the board, seem more beholden to some inexplicable strategy of inaction cooked up by the Ontario Public School Boards Association than they are to the educational needs of students who are supposed to be in their charge," said Harvey Bischof, OSSTF Vice President and chair of the local negotiations team.

OSSTF/FEESO, founded in 1919, has 60,000 members across Ontario. They include public high school teachers, occasional teachers, educational assistants, continuing education teachers and instructors, early childhood educators, psychologists, secretaries, speech-language pathologists, social workers, plant support personnel, university support staff, and many others in education.

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