

## **TSU Weekly Wrap Up – October 25, 2019**

By Pete McKay-TSU 1<sup>st</sup> VP

Huge news on the bargaining front this week overshadows everything else.

**Bargaining** – OECTA has pulled the trigger. A **Strike Vote** will be held on November 12 and 13, in case you didn't hear. We will be holding a Strike Vote rally on November 6, with representatives from Provincial there to fill you in on what you need to know about the bargaining situation and why we need a strong Strike Vote. Keep an eye on your emails for all the information you need from OECTA regarding voting processes, PINs, etc. These will be rolling out regularly over the next few of weeks. There will also be information specific to the Rally on your TSU email so, once again, if you haven't activated it, you really need to do so. There will also be materials and info sent out, through the Unit, from Provincial that we have been asked to keep secure and confidential. We cannot send it over Board email.

To provide encouragement for the Strike Vote, the Education Minister announced, yesterday, some of what the government has been pushing at the table. Be clear about the class size debate! Class Averages and Class Caps are very different animals. When he says 25 he means average across the Board...which still means more job losses. Caps refer to the total number of students in a class, which he doesn't want any limits on. Hands up those that would like him to strip the current local contracts of caps and allow the Board to put 40 kids in front of you? Yeah, I thought so. This is a key reason that we need your voice ringing out loudly on November 12 and 13.

**Federal Election** – Hopefully, you were amongst the 66%+ who voted on Monday or earlier. The main thrust for those in the GTA seemed to be making sure another Ford-style government wasn't elected. We know what that's like! Let's hope that "collegiality and collaboration" work their way into the national lexicon and result in good governance.

**Council of Presidents Special Meeting** – OECTA called together all the Unit Presidents from throughout the Province on Tuesday. The meeting concerned the issues discussed above and provided direction for Units in moving forward with the Strike Vote and Rallies.

**Budget Meeting** – Also on Tuesday, the annual TSU budget meeting was held. After many questions for clarification, the budget was passed without amendment. We have, as required, a balanced budget for the 2019-2020 fiscal year. Thanks to the Treasurer, Joe D'Addario, and the Finance and Budget Committee for the work they put into creating the proposed budget.

**Pastoral Care Day** – Another successful Pastoral Care Day on Wednesday, from what I've been told. Our own TSU member Fr. Mike Lehman was one of the leaders for the day. Discussions around the very tough topic of grief and bereavement occurred. We now have people in the schools who have gained some insights on the issue and will be able to share their learning with other staff, such that we will all have a better understanding of how to be with those who are experiencing this.

**Conflict Resolution** – This continues to be a very big concern in schools, consuming people's time and a significant amount of their energy. The release officers have spent many hours with Isolina Varano, from the Conflict Resolution Department, and members, attempting to help them in dealing with difficult situations. We urge everyone to look after themselves by stepping back and looking at a situation in as positive a way as possible and then deciding whether they really need to be involved. Remember, we have supports through the EFAP and OTIP benefits that

we can access to help us deal with what we are experiencing. And the TSU office staff is here to guide you in the direction you need.

Have a great weekend.