

# Union Station: Newsletter

## District 23 ESS / ECE

VOL. 2, ISSUE 2

01.17.2024

### From the President's Desk

Welcome to 2024, I hope everyone was able to enjoy the holidays with their family and friends. This year brings many changes to District 23 ESS and ECE Bargaining Unit as 2024 is an election year for the bargaining unit. I will not be seeking re-election to a third term. I encourage all members to get involved with their Executive and Council. The Executive and Council are not "the" Union. All members make up the Union and you have a voice and a right to get involved.

As a union, OSSTF has taken a different approach to this round of bargaining at the Central table. Whether you agreed to it or not, the membership voted in favour of the Voluntary Binding Interest Arbitration. The first part of VBIA includes Bill 124, being arbitrated this month. Arbitration dates were set for January 14 and 15, 2024. The expectation is that once the 3rd year percentage has been decided by the arbitrator, payment, and grid adjustments should happen by the end of June 2024.

The Executive and Council members attended several conferences in the fall including Health and Safety, Education Worker Retreat, Communication and Political Action Regionals, Equity Conference, and Protective Services Regionals. The PSR focused on grievance writing. Equity is a new focus for OSSTF and there has been a steep learning curve on how best to implement and approach equity within our union. CPAC Regionals focused on engaging members politically as OSSTF is starting to gear up for the next provincial election as well as the upcoming municipal elections.

This past year the lack of supply staff has been at the highest it has ever been, the use of emergency staff is on the rise and as a bargaining unit, we have seen more resignations than ever before. During my first year as President staff left due to retirement, but in the past 12 months that has changed and there have been over 12 resignations as opposed to retirements. Many of those members who have resigned have not worked for the Board for longer than five years. I see retention is going to be a challenge for our employer as many of the job classes are starting to age out of the workforce and younger employees demand better working conditions.

On a lighter note, District 23 had its first Winter Wonderland Children's Party, in person. Thanks to the pandemic it has been over 3 years since the District has been able to hold such an event. Fun was had by all, and it was well attended at the Blessed Sacrament Hall in Burford. The District is already planning and preparing for next year's event.



Quarterly newsletter brought to you by OSSTF District 23 ESS– ECE

*Leslie*



## **Executive Members for the 2022 –2024 Federation Years**

President – Leslie Brown

1<sup>st</sup> Vice President – Chris Girardi

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President – Carlee Bond

Equity/Anti Oppression/Anti Racism Officer - Christine Gohn

Treasurer and Communications Officer – Tamara Quigley

Chief Negotiator/Grievance Officer - Terri-Lynn Zakrzewski

## **Job Class Representatives**

EA Rep – Carlee Bond- St. Pius X

ECE Rep- Patti Bulleyment – St. Joe's

O &M Rep Rachel Moreau – St. Mary's Brant

IT Rep – Chris Girardi – IT Services

LRT Rep – Kristen Szoczek – St. John's & St.Leo's

CYW Rep Antonia Matos – St. Joe's





## Federation Family Education Fund

The best lottery odds in the province!

**\$3000**  
Ten to be won!



The Federation Family Education Fund was established to assist the children of OSSTF/FEESO members with the cost of college, university or apprenticeship programs.

Have your child apply today!

Award details and applications are available at

[www.osstf.on.ca/federation-family-education-fund-en](http://www.osstf.on.ca/federation-family-education-fund-en)



**APPLICATIONS DUE BY APRIL 15**



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OSSTF  
Night  
at the



BULLDOGS

★ GAME ★



BRANTFORD DISTRICT LABOUR CENTRE

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2023

Doors Open At 6 PM | Game starts at 7 PM  
Civic Centre | 79 Market St S, Brantford, ON

Members can receive 2 complimentary OSSTF tickets by sending an email to [district23@osstf.ca](mailto:district23@osstf.ca) to register, as well as donating 2 non-perishable food items, new or gently used clothing and personal care items.

100 tickets have been secured for our Bargaining Unit.  
Tickets and toques will be distributed on a first come, first serve basis.

Come out to cheer on the Brantford Bulldogs while supporting your local food bank and women's shelter!

Make your donations:

In Brantford – OSSTF D23 ESS & ECE office at Brantford District Labour Centre

In Haldimand – St. Mike's, St. Stephen's & St. Pat's schools

In Norfolk – St. Joe's school



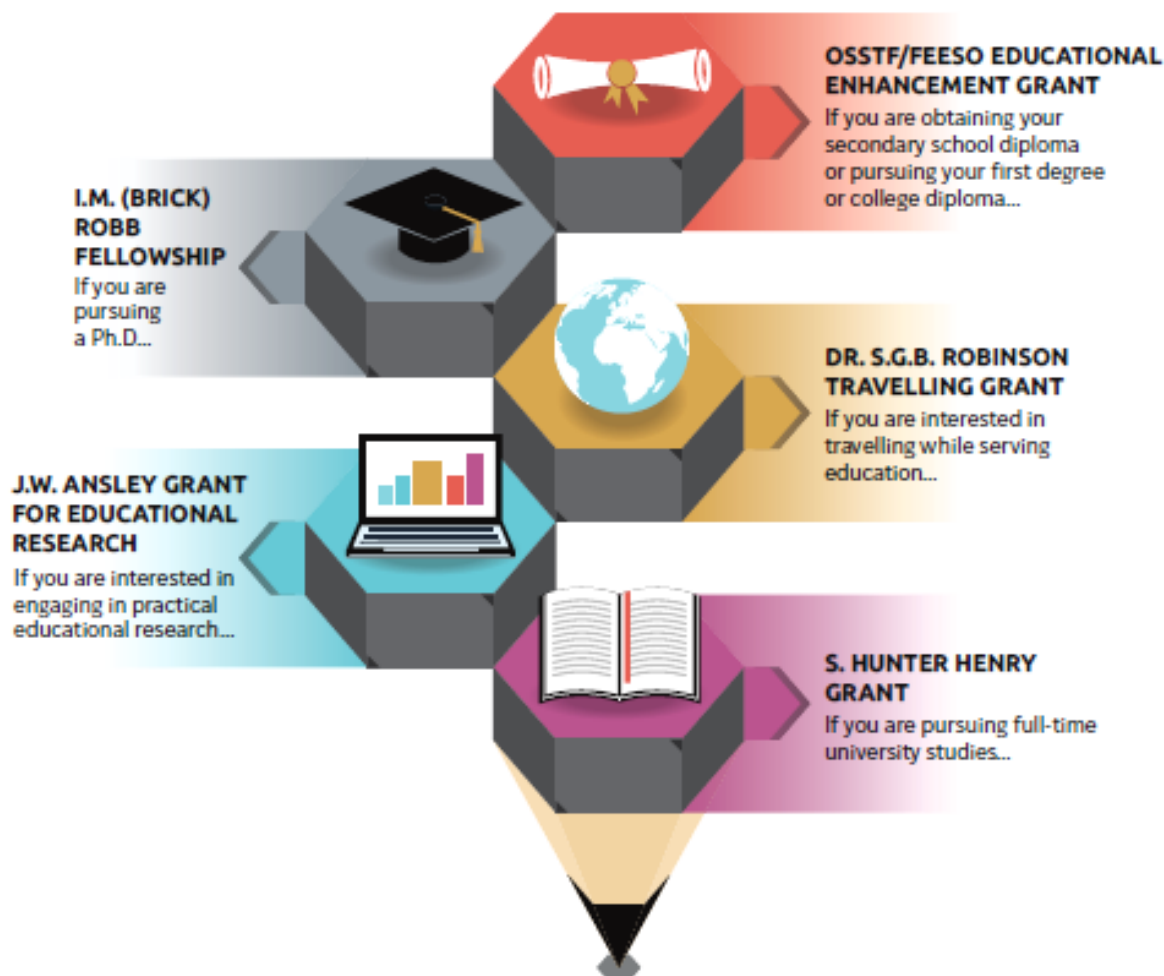






## Have you applied?

Financial assistance awards for further education



Award details and applications are available at

[www.osstf.on.ca/scholarships-en](http://www.osstf.on.ca/scholarships-en)



**APPLICATIONS DUE BY APRIL 1**





## OMERS Statement on Ontario Investment Footprint

On November 3, 2023, OMERS issued the following statement regarding its current and future Ontario investment footprint.

“OMERS” is the pension plan for active and retired Ontario municipal and local board employees. We have a very significant investment footprint in Ontario which means that, every year, OMERS investments and operations support 5 billion of GDP (Gross Domestic Product) and more than 40,000 jobs across the province.

Our Ontario infrastructure investments include, to name a few: Bruce Power, the world’s largest operating nuclear facility; Beanfield, an infrastructure company that provides fiber internet services to homes and businesses; and NextBridge, a 450-km regulated electricity transmission line in northern Ontario.

We are always interested in pursuing new investments in our home province and we look forward to engaging with the government on new opportunities that may help build our province while generating returns that will help us pay pensions to our members.”

## OMERS to invest US\$400 million for an indirect 5% stake in Maple Leaf Sports & Entertainment (MSLE)

On November 6, 2023, OMERS announced its plans to acquire a 5% indirect stake in Maple Leaf Sports & Entertainment (MSLE) for US\$400 million, through a 20% direct stake in Kilmer Sports Inc. (KSI). KSI currently owns 25% of MSLE and is owned by MSLE Chair Larry Tanenbaum.

## The Pension Blueprint Podcast

OMERS has launched a new podcast series, The Pension Blueprint. Each episode explores different aspects of the pension landscape across Ontario and provides pension education to help listeners learn about the OMERS Plan and kick-start their retirement planning.

The podcast features in-depth conversations led by members of the OMERS Pensions team. The episodes are packed with educational content about the OMERS Plan – everything from factors to consider when choosing the best time to retire to ways to maximize monthly retirement income. Some episodes take a deeper dive into the latest buzzworthy topics around pensions and retirement. The Pension Blueprint can be accessed on the OMERS website (<https://www.omers.com/the-pension-blueprint-podcast>), as well as multiple major podcast services.

*Reprinted - Nov 17, 2023 Provincial Council Late Report*





## Multi-Factor Authentication do we need it?

By Chris Girardi

Our lives on the web are very complex and as technology advances, more and more of us are banking, shopping, playing games, reading articles, working or just using social media. Most sites usually require a membership / account of some sort asking us to create a username and password to store personal information and keep things secure.



### WHAT IS “MULTI-FACTOR AUTHENTICATION”?

“Multi-factor Authentication (MFA) is an authentication method that requires the user to provide two or more verification factors to gain access to a resource such as an application, online account. Rather than just asking for a username and password, MFA requires one or more additional verification factors, which decreases the likelihood of a successful cyber-attack.

*Ok, so what does this really mean for me and how does it work?*

When we supply our username and passwords into a site that has MFA (Multi-Factor Authentication) enabled we are prompted to supply another form of identification as mentioned above. This can be by pre-defined questions and answers to supplying a 1-time code that can be texted and or sent via email. Other forms can be used by an application on our phones to supply a number into an app to quickly verify it's you.





## COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS AROUND MFA

1. **If I use the authenticator app does the Board have access to my accounts, passwords or physical location?**

No, the authenticator application simply passes a “verified” token back to the website indicating that the access is approved or denied. While the app itself does know what country you are authenticating from, the Board does not actively collect or store this information and it is not used in any way.

2. **If I use an authenticator app the Board has access to anything on my phone.**

Absolutely not, again, the authenticator application simply passes a “verified” token back to the website indicating that the access is approved or denied. The Board cannot see any data or apps that you have installed on your phone through the authenticator app.

3. **Strong and unique passwords will keep you secure enough.**

Regardless of your password length or the number of unique characters you use, passwords were not built to withstand motivated hackers and their evolving threats.

4. **Multi-factor authentication (MFA) is complicated and time-consuming.**

The benefits outweigh the costs of a compromised account, hackers will not stop if they are motivated. The time spent adds an extra layer of security that gives us all a piece of mind.



In summary, I want to ensure that the use of Multi-Factor Authentication is a great benefit to our members and their privacy. As someone who works in Information Technology, I highly endorse the user of MFA, 2FA, and any combination in use with our online accounts and transactions. If anyone has any questions feel free to email me as I would be glad to address your concerns.









## ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY INSTRUCTOR'S GOALS FOR STUDENTS

By *Rachel Moreau*, O & M Instructor

The goal of Orientation and Mobility (O&M) is to enable students who are blind or partially sighted to travel safely, efficiently, and as independently as possible in their school and home environment with or without the use of a mobility device such as a white cane.

Areas of instruction include:

- Concept development
- Sensory development
- Social skills
- Use of devices
- Motor development
- Visual skills
- Techniques of orientation and mob

### BENEFITS OF ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY.

Movement is important to everyone. Orientation asks the questions:

“Where am I?”

“Where am I going?”

“How do I get there?”

Mobility involves getting there safely and efficiently. Orientation and mobility (O&M) begin with understanding where your body ends, and the environment begins. It also includes knowing about relationships between different objects in the environment.

O&M is a lifelong learning process. It is important because:

### MOVEMENT TEACHES THE BRAIN.

O&M teaches movement with a purpose. Purposeful movement may not occur naturally for students with a visual impairment. An early O&M evaluation is critical.

### SAFETY CREATES CONFIDENCE AND A SENSE OF WELL-BEING.

O&M skills enable children to safely explore and interact with the world, including the home, school, and community. When infants and children, including those with low vision or multiple disabilities, understand their environments, they feel safe. Early O&M evaluation is critical.





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## EXPERIENCE BRINGS CONTEXT TO LIFE.

O&M instruction provides real experiences essential to all children. The skills learned reduce isolation by giving students a “common ground” for interacting with family, friends, and future employers. O&M instruction brings the general curriculum to life. Early and periodic O&M evaluations are critical.

## O&M EVALUATIONS INCLUDE ACTIVITIES SUCH AS ASSESSING A STUDENT WHILE:

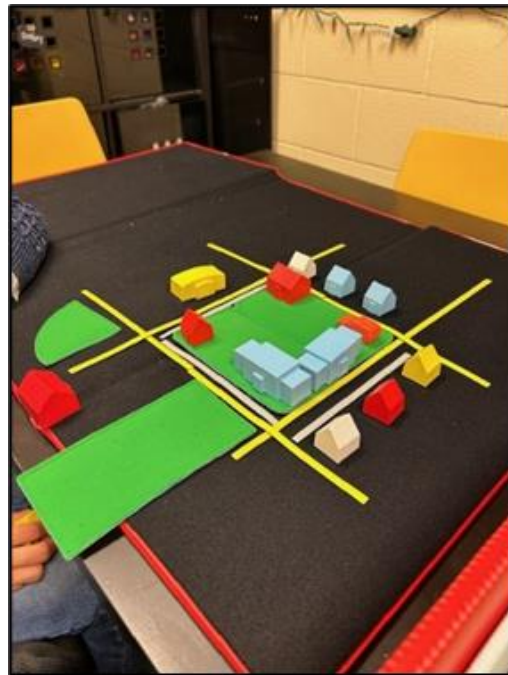
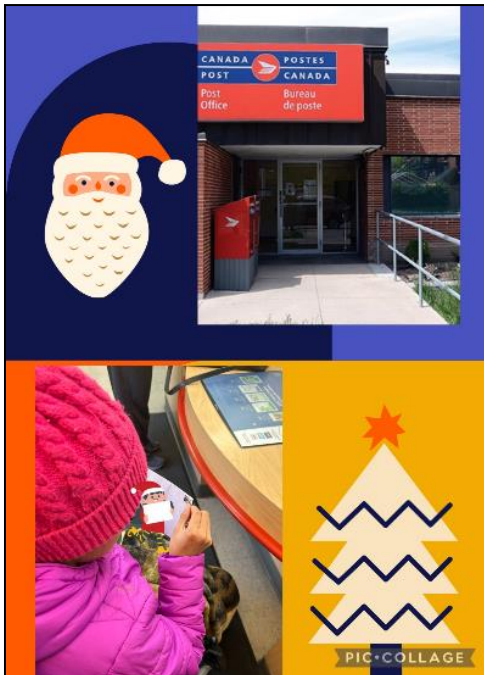
- They move around a different campus to evaluate their abilities in unfamiliar environments.
- They use their limited night vision in the neighbourhood or community.

## O&M INSTRUCTION INCLUDES ACTIVITIES SUCH AS TEACHING:

- the parents of an infant how to deal with their fear that their baby will hurt himself as he moves around the room.
- a young child how to move towards her mother’s voice.
- a young child with limited movement that those movements create changes in their life.
- a student how to find their way in the community by using a telescope or monocular to read street signs.
- an adolescent how to use a cane and the bus system to independently meet his friends.
- a student to travel independently to a future job in the community.

Developed by Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, & the Professional Preparation Advisory Group, edited by KC Dignan

<https://www.tsbvi.edu/om-benefits.pdf>





## Winter Retirees

**Glenna Bennett**  
**Secretary**

**Charlene Zaluski**  
**Educational Assistant**

HAPPY  
*retirement*



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If you have any items, announcements, or thoughts you'd like to see added to our next newsletter, please send them to [leslie.brown@d23.osstf.ca](mailto:leslie.brown@d23.osstf.ca).

The opinions expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect those of OSSTF or District 23.



*Solidarity forever! For the union makes us strong.*

*~ Ralph Chaplin*

### Did you know?

All members are entitled to have Union representation at any meeting.



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