



Summary of the OPSEU
Education Planning Day
October 16, 2007

Education that Reaches a Diverse Membership

On October 16, twenty-eight people met to talk about how to ensure education gets to the locals and their increasingly diverse membership. Participants included the President's Office, Regional Vice-Presidents and other board members, staff from each region, chairs of two Provincial Committees (Human Rights and Women), supervisory staff, and staff of the Equity and the Training and Development Units.

Current Innovative Practices

We shared some of the approaches people are trying in order to involve young and part-time workers, and to build local capacity:

- A regional course for young workers only
- A "talking tool" to gather views and needs of young workers
- Lancaster House Audio education on Human Rights in the regions
- An Equity weekend
- Equity leaders co-facilitating with staff
- Orientation to OPSEU for newly organized units
- Stewards training for newly organized units
- Stewards training in the locals
- Global solidarity education on climate change and global impacts
- Using mobilizing for bargaining to develop new activists

- Use the new Bullying course to identify employer practices as the basis of demand-set for the next round of bargaining
- Identify and mentor part-time and young activists
- Equity Committee members speaking to workers in an organizing campaign
- Using "lunch and learns" for local level education. The T&D unit is producing some of these through one of the Train the Trainer programs.



Courses and Materials

The following are updated or new courses that can be run at the regional or sector level, or be broken down to teach at the local level:

- Speak Up and Organize: Challenging Workplace Bullying and Psychological Harassment
- Women in Unions: Getting Involved
- Women in Unions: Strengthening Leadership
- Power on the Picket Line
- Employment Standards Act: A Tool for Improved Collective Bargaining

- Advancing Union Issues through your Labour Relations Committee
- The Politics of Pensions
- New Treasurers' Course
- Human Rights, Union Rights and Global Solidarity
- "Lunch and Learns" produced by Train the Trainer Programs



Priorities for 2008

Much education work is happening across the union and will continue throughout 2008. However, the following emerged as specific educational priorities (not in any particular order). * indicates commitment made by the T&D Unit.

1. Take it to the Locals and Build Capacity

- new member orientations
- "lunch and learns" that reach part-time and other workers
- better use of technology
- local by-laws
- steward job descriptions and flexible, units for ongoing training
- updated materials on
 - running effective meetings
 - grievance handling
 - union administration
 - representation
 - communicating with members
- *new course in problem-solving and addressing conflict
- green education

Note that some of the above materials will be developed through the Building Local Capacity project in its pilot with 13 locals to May 2008.

2. Strengthen Mobilizing Skills

in a year of increased Bargaining

- *mobilizing training (e.g. OPS, College support, LBED, hospital professionals)
- teaching activists to think strategically
- bargaining for equity – integrate demands which reflect diverse needs into bargaining
- political action training – beyond elections

3. Increase Youth and Part-Timer Activism

- policy changes to provide replacement wages for local and regional education, faster claims process, child-care
- introductory courses on line
- course or conference for young workers
- bargaining better language for part-timers

4. Expand New Member Orientations

- bargain and creatively use employer-paid time to orient new members to OPSEU & the labour movement
- *produce new member orientation materials – print, a.v., website commercial – reflecting concerns of diversity of members

5. Integrate Equity into all the Ways we're Doing Things

- *integrate equity into all new courses
- new course on harassment and discrimination
- *bargaining for equity materials

6. Train New Facilitators (staff/members)

- *3 4-day courses for 2008, including a refresher for veteran facilitators
- *continue facilitator orientations for new courses
- *Support facilitators to develop "lunch and learns"

Next Education Planning Day: Oct 1/08