



Association of Professional Student Services Personnel

PROVINCIAL NEWSLETTER

APSSP: Your Union At Work

With over 700 members across a range of disciplines, APSSP focuses exclusively on representing the needs of professional student support services staff at ten school boards throughout southern Ontario. APSSP provides its membership with access to legal services, benefits consultants and professional union negotiation services, and has some of the best collective agreement language, including salary rates, among professional support student staff in the province. APSSP is also engaged in ongoing communication and consultation with the Ministry of Education, including success in negotiating a province-wide framework to support local negotiations.

Kathi Page is entering her fifth year of service as the President of APSSP Provincial. Kathi is a long-time member who has participated in APSSP activities at both the local and provincial level in a variety of portfolios. She is also the current Vice-President of External Affairs on the Dufferin-Peel Catholic chapter of APSSP. As the chief executive officer of our Association, Kathi chairs and directs the activities of the Provincial Executive and Governing Council. She communicates with Chapter Presidents on an on-going basis and represents APSSP in dealings with other unions, school boards and the Provincial Government.

Carmela Diano, the provincial Vice-President of Grievance, works to “ensure that employers recognize and utilize our members in a fair and proportionate fashion”. In this capacity, she consults with Grievance Officers across Chapters and assists with grievances in various ways. She has a passion for Health and Safety and believes that all members are entitled to a safe working environment. Carmela also organizes professional development for Chapter Grievance Officers in collaboration with our labour consultant Larry Robbins and our labour lawyer Mary Hart.



> 2013-2014 APSSP Provincial Executive

Dan Milne, the provincial Vice-President of Negotiations, has been active in APSSP for many years at the both the local and provincial level, and is currently also the President of the Dufferin-Peel Catholic chapter. Dan works closely with chapter Chief Negotiators, providing guidelines regarding contract negotiations and ratification, and liaising with labour consultants and legal services. Dan has devoted considerable time in the last four years both to representing the interests of APSSP members at the Provincial Bargaining Table, and to ensuring that professional student support personnel, as a unique and essential part of the education sector, have a voice in these intense negotiations.

Julie Mazzuca-Peter brings her experience as the current President and the former Chief Negotiator with the Toronto Catholic chapter of APSSP to her portfolio on the Provincial Executive. As provincial Vice-President of External Affairs, Julie's role is to develop and maintain communications with other

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APSSP: Your Union at Work

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unions, associations and government, and to monitor developments that are relevant to our Association. Over the summer, Julie worked closely with Dan to promote APSSP's interests at the Provincial Bargaining Table, and to collaborate with and build consensus among a group of other educational support unions.

Provincial Treasurer Tim Jenkins is a long-time APSSP member, active provincially as well as locally as the Vice-President of Negotiations for the Dufferin-Peel Catholic chapter. Tim works diligently to maintain APSSP's financial health, tracking all income and expenditures and maintaining records of all financial transactions. Tim prepares APSSP's annual budget and year-end report, and ensures that an independent audit of APSSP's finances is completed on a yearly basis.

Marieke Favrod started volunteering her time with APSSP as Secretary of the Toronto Catholic chapter of APSSP, and has previously served on the Provincial Executive as Secretary and as Vice-President of Grievance and Constitution.

As the provincial Vice-President of Public Relations, Marieke works to promote awareness of APSSP and the work of its members by developing public relations materials and consulting with chapter PR representatives around public relations initiatives. She is the editor of the APSSP Newsletter and is also responsible for planning the APSSP Annual General Meeting each May.

Secretary Deanne Smith is the most recent addition to the APSSP Provincial Executive, and has already put her organizational skills to rigorous use in coordinating the APSSP Educational Weekend, which is held annually in October. As Secretary, Deanne records the minutes of all meetings of the Provincial Executive and the APSSP Governing Council, tracking Motions Passed and ensuring that all business conducted is appropriately documented. She also maintains APSSP's files and facilitates efficient communication with APSSP members by maintaining accurate and up-to-date membership contact information in collaboration with local Chapter Secretaries.

Disciplines Represented by APSSP

- **ABA Specialists**
- **Attendance Counsellors**
- **Audiologists**
- **Child and Youth Workers**
- **Communication Disorders Assistants**
- **Community Relations Officers**
- **Educational Researchers**
- **Librarians**
- **Occupational Therapists**
- **Orientation and Mobility Specialists**
- **Parenting and Family Literacy Facilitators**
- **Psychologists, Psychological Associates, and Psycho-educational Consultants**
- **Settlement Counsellors**
- **Sign Language Interpreters**
- **Social Workers**
- **Speech-Language Pathologists**



From the Editor . . .

Marieke Favrod, Editor & Provincial Vice-President, Public Relations

In his 2012 report on wage incomes and wealth, economist Lawrence Mishel, President of the Economic Policy Institute, a non-profit and non-partisan think tank, expressed concern about the lack of improvement in real wages for workers over the past decade, as well as the growing wage inequality between workers at the top and those at the middle. He notes that these phenomena have impacted workers from a range of educational and socioeconomic backgrounds: working class and middle class, high school graduates and those with college degrees – in other words, the majority of the “99 percent.”

Mishel states that “a major factor driving these trends has been the ongoing erosion of unionization and the declining bargaining power of unions”, a topic we addressed in our last issue of the APSSP Newsletter.

In the current issue, we invite you to learn more about APSSP, the professional association to which you belong, and the essential work that APSSP does to support and promote the rights of its members. In this issue, you will get to know the APSSP Provincial Executive; you will

read an update about the recent gains that APSSP has been able to negotiate at the Provincial Bargaining Table; you will hear about the reconstruction of the APSSP website in order to better communicate with members; and you will learn about the duty to accommodate employees who return

“Given unions’ important role in setting standards for both union and nonunion workers, we must ensure that every worker has access to collective bargaining”

**Lawrence Mishel, President,
Economic Policy Institute**



From the Editor

to work after an absence. You will also read a reflection by an APSSP member about her experience volunteering on her chapter’s Executive Committee; we hope that you find it inspiring, and invite you to consider

one or more of a number of ways that you can become more involved in APSSP.

As always, your feedback on this issue of the APSSP Newsletter is most welcome. Questions and comments can be directed to vppublicrelations@apssp.org.

Did You Know? Duty to Accommodate

Carmela Diano, APSSP Provincial Vice-President, Grievance & Constitution

Did you know ... that when a person is returning to work after an absence and requires an accommodation, both employers and unions must co-operate in accommodating the employee that is returning to work. There are various forms of accommodations that are specific to the needs of the employee.

“The most appropriate accommodation is one that most respects the dignity of the individual with a disability, meets individual needs, best promotes integration and full participation, and ensures confidentiality.”
(Ontario Human Rights Commission)

All of these points are key aspects to which you are entitled. In order to ensure that this happens, utilize the support and expertise of your APSSP Executive members.

For further information on Duty to Accommodate, visit www.ohrc.on.ca.



A Message from Kathi Page, APSSP President

APSSP Website Reconstruction

As the air grows frosty and the leaves change colour, the education sector starts another year and many new projects. This holds true for APSSP as well. Last year, it became evident to us that our website would need to be reconstructed so that it could be used more effectively to communicate with members. The APSSP homepage remains online with a note about the reconstruction, and most of the public information continues to be available.

The reconstructed website will have a Members section that is password-protected. We will be using a new type of log-in system, similar to that of other organizations. Instead of a single, public password (which has been difficult to share and secure) every APSSP member will be able to create a personal log-in using their own email address. This preferably should be a non-work email address, as our employers are clearly discouraging or even banning the use of work email for union communication.

When we are ready to begin the registration process, you will be notified and provided with instructions. When your email address has been verified, you will receive a response with a temporary password and will be able to change it to a personal one.

Without a valid email address, you will not be able to access the Members section of the APSSP website. This is to preserve the security of the information contained in this section, and is standard practice on websites belonging to other unions and organizations. If you don't currently have a personal email address, it is easy to obtain one, free of cost, through gmail or hotmail. If you have specific questions or concerns, please contact your local chapter secretary to consider an appropriate option.

Please be aware that your email address is only used by APSSP to communicate with you directly, and for security purposes on our

website. It WILL NEVER be sold to or shared with a third party for any reason. Most of you have been asked for and have provided a personal email address to APSSP. This allows us to share important information with you quickly and economically, and we hope to expand this across all chapters in the near future.

The advantages of a web presence, as well as the efficiency and cost savings of electronic communication, have become increasingly obvious. At the provincial level, we have been expanding our use of electronic media to share presentations and documents with Chapter Executives, and to connect with individual members around their questions and issues.

The reconstructed APSSP website will be integral to our ability to share information and communicate with members, and we look forward to your feedback as it rolls out.



http://www

The redesigned APSSP website will have a secure Members section that is password-protected.

Update on the APSSP MOU 2013

Julie Mazzuca-Peter, APSSP Provincial Vice-President, External Affairs

In the summer of 2012, Dan Milne (Vice-President, Negotiations), Joe O'Connor (former Vice-President, External Affairs) and APSSP's legal consultant Sam Marino embarked on the provincial bargaining process. The venture quickly became a fractious affair and unravelled when the trustee associations and most of the other unions representing educational support staff walked away. Our APSSP representatives remained and ultimately prevailed: after a week of intense negotiation that included direct intervention from the Minister of Education, they finalized a strong APSSP Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that matched the financial parameters of the OECTA agreement and included an additional "P" clause addressing the APSSP role in mental health collaborations and PPM 149.

The APSSP MOU also includes the protective "Me Too" clause, which ensures that we benefit from any other favourable contractual enhancements that might be subsequently obtained by other unions. APSSP was the second union to successfully negotiate an MOU with the province; many other unions have followed, with more favourable terms and enhancements that we are now able to enjoy as well.

On June 14, 2013, Dan Milne, Joe O'Connor, Julie Mazzuca-Peter (current Vice-President, External Affairs) and Sam Marino joined a group of other educational support unions

and met with Ministry staff to negotiate further MOU enhancements as a result of the "Me Too" clause. The day was long and tempers flared amongst our union colleagues, but shortly after midnight, APSSP, in collaboration with the other signatory unions, concluded an MOU update which contained many additional enhancements.

We now have further job security language and an additional clause that deals with specialized job classes. The following gains were also achieved:

- No mandatory unpaid days off in the 2013-14 school year for APSSP members
- An increase in non-vested retirement gratuity payments for members in eligible boards
- An increase in personal illness days to eleven
- Options in some boards to choose the short term sick leave plan that better suits APSSP members (the OECTA plan or the OSSTF plan) for the 2013-14 school year
- Improvement in maternity leave benefits to eight week of full pay effective May 1, 2013
- Opportunity to participate in up to five voluntary unpaid leave days (VLAP)



- Eligibility for an attendance recognition award of one day's pay for members that take at least one VLAP day and use less than six of their eleven personal illness days during the 2013-14 school year

The APSSP MOU update, along with follow-up Ministry of Education memos (B19 and B20) can be found on the Ministry of Education website. Every chapter has also been provided with a PowerPoint summary of the various enhancements in the MOU update. Please read the documents to become fully informed of the improvements that you will benefit from because of the APSSP "Me Too" clause and the efforts of our strong provincial negotiations team.



Visit www.edu.gov.on.ca
And search for "APSSP" for more info on the MOU Update.

Volunteering With APSSP

Nadia Kerr, Dufferin-Peel Chapter

My name is Nadia and I am an APSSP member with the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board. I am also a member of the Dufferin-Peel Chapter Executive, in the second year of my first term as Public Relations Representative. Before joining the support staff of the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board, I worked as a federal government contract employee in an environment where contract workers were not permitted union membership, regardless of employment terms.

Fast forward to my first weeks in Dufferin-Peel as a Social Worker, on contract, settling into new employment, and getting to know principals, clients, and colleagues. I was aware of APSSP generally, but I had little sense of what—if anything—the union had to do with me. I was quite surprised, then, when a colleague involved with APSSP invited me to attend a union orientation session. I attended and was enlightened: APSSP had a different approach than the union

I'd previously encountered. APSSP works collaboratively and respectfully to support temporary and permanent members from multiple disciplines—and, in turn, to support students in need who we all serve.

My interest in union activities intensified when I attended the Provincial Education Weekend and met APSSP colleagues from across the province. The chance to hear about the efforts and dedication of people in our smallest and largest chapters led me to consider participating more actively. As our last contract expired and plans for talks began, I was honored to have the opportunity to contribute to our local chapter as a member of the Negotiations Committee.

The past round of negotiations presented unique challenges for APSSP, but being involved was truly educational. I gained a new appreciation for the work of the Association and the countless hours put in by those who serve at the local and provincial level.

I became more aware, too, of the need for ongoing and active participation by members old and new, to ensure that our capacity to represent our members effectively is maintained. With this in mind, I happily stood for a position during local negotiations and continue to serve in that capacity. It's been a wonderful opportunity to support colleagues as we endured set-backs and celebrated victories—always moving forward with a consistent belief in the work that we do, and in our intention to keep supporting students with learning, social, emotional and mental health needs.

If you're interested in finding out more about APSSP, attending the local and/or provincial AGMs is a great way to start. If you're already familiar with the work we do, consider participating in your local executive. APSSP's efforts have secured valuable protections for its members, and participation is a meaningful and enjoyable way to support an organization that supports you—and so many others.



How Can I Get More Involved in APSSP?

- Visit the APSSP website to keep up-to-date with the latest news and information
- Find out who sits on the Executive Committee of your local chapter of APSSP
- Have a conversation with a member of your local chapter's Executive
- Go to a meeting or two of your local chapter's Executive Committee
- Attend your local chapter's General Membership Meeting
- Consider participating on a sub-committee of your local chapter Executive
- Join your local chapter's Executive Committee
- Attend the APSSP Provincial Annual General Meeting on Thursday, May 15, 2014
- Contribute to the APSSP newsletter



APPSP Provincial Chapter Members

- ▶ Bruce-Grey Catholic District
- ▶ Dufferin-Peel Catholic District
- ▶ Durham Catholic District
- ▶ Halton Catholic District
- ▶ Hastings Prince Edward District
- ▶ London District Catholic
- ▶ Niagara District
- ▶ St. Clair Catholic District
- ▶ Toronto Catholic District
- ▶ Waterloo Catholic District

Have Your Say!

You can contribute to the APSSP newsletter.

We all know that APSSP members, whether individually or collectively through their chapters, are doing great work for students, their co-workers, the education sector, and the community at large. Contributing to the APSSP newsletter is one way you can share with your colleagues some of the excellent things that are going in your school, chapter, or local community.

APSSP welcomes editorial and photo contributions from all members, so go ahead and have your say. Story ideas and other submissions can be sent to vppublicrelations@apssp.org.

Upcoming Meetings:

Provincial Executive Meetings

- ▶ November 5, 2013
 - ▶ December 3, 2013
 - ▶ January 7, 2014
 - ▶ February 4, 2014
 - ▶ March 4, 2014
 - ▶ April 1, 2014
 - ▶ May 6, 2014
 - ▶ June 3, 2014
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Governing Council Meetings

Saturday, January 25, 2014
Cambridge Hotel & Conference Centre
700 Hespeler Road, Cambridge

Saturday, April 12, 2014
Cambridge Hotel & Conference Centre
700 Hespeler Road, Cambridge

Annual General Meeting

Thursday, May 15, 2014, 5:00 pm
Mississauga Grand Banquet Center
35 Brunel Road, Mississauga

How to Contact Us:

ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL STUDENT SERVICES PERSONNEL

60-8 Bristol Rd., East, Suite 737
Mississauga, ON L4Z 3K8

Tel: 905-460-6629
E-mail: info@apssp.org
www.apssp.org