

## **OSSTF/FEESO Statement December 6, 2023 – National Day of Remembrance**

On this day 34 years ago, a male gunman targeted and shot several women students at l'École Polytechnique in Montreal.

14 women died and 10 others were injured.

It was one of the worst mass shootings in Canadian history, and the women were targeted simply because they were women. This year's targeted stabbing of three women in a gender studies class at the University of Waterloo was a chilling reminder of the ongoing and ever-present threat of gender-based violence.

Today, we ask everyone to reflect on the true impact of gender-based violence, the impact on our families, schools, workplaces, and communities. Gender-based violence has ended far too many lives and traumatized countless others. Entire communities are shaken to the core when a femicide occurs, and yet, this horrific crime is on the rise in Canada.

On average, one woman or girl is killed every two days in Canada.

We can and must do more to keep women, girls, those who are Two-Spirit, and gender diverse people safe. The recent sharp increase in incidents of misogynist, transphobic, and homophobic hate, both online and in person, at work and in our communities, have further exacerbated long-standing injustices.

As a public education union, we have a huge role to play in ending gender-based violence and all forms of misogyny and hate in our workplaces, schools, campuses, and communities.

The creation of the OSSTF/FEESO Women's Advocate Program was passed as part of the 2018-2019 Strategic Action Plan, and we are proud to share that we have Women's Advocates in nearly every OSSTF/FEESO district across Ontario.

Provincially, OSSTF/FEESO is calling on the Ford government to declare intimate partner violence an epidemic in Ontario. The recent murders of a woman and three children in Sault Ste. Marie have galvanized Ontarians into calling for Ford to finally commit the necessary funds to protect against intimate partner violence. We passionately support these calls!

Nationally, OSSTF/FEESO is calling on the Trudeau government to implement the International Labour Organization's Convention 190, an international standard that establishes a clear framework for ending violence and harassment in the world of work. Even though the federal government ratified C-190 earlier this year, they have yet to take active steps to implement it.

Workers need a plan now!

So, today we come together, not only in remembrance, but also in support and solidarity. We declare in one united voice, "Never again!"



[Download](#) the OSSTF/FEESO December 6<sup>th</sup> graphic video to share on social media and visit the United Nations' [16 days of activism against gender-based violence](#) webpage to learn more about actions you can take to help end gender-based violence.

*Protecting and Enhancing Public Education*  
*Protéger et faire avancer l'éducation publique*

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