

OSSTF/FEESO endorses Team Ignite for OFL Executive Leadership

The Provincial Executive of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF/FEESO) are pleased to announce their endorsement of Laura Walton, Ahmad Gaied, and Jackie Taylor - Team Ignite - as the next Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) Leadership team.

"I am proud to endorse Team Ignite; they have a vision for our labour movement that will put workers first," said OSSTF/FEESO President Karen Littlewood. "I know they will fight against privatization of our public education and health care systems and ensure we have more equitable and healthier communities. I am looking forward to the OFL elections and to working with them."

Laura Walton, who is running as Team Ignite candidate for OFL president, has served over the past four years as the president of the Canadian Union of Public Employees' Ontario School Board Council of Unions (OSBCU) and has worked diligently to promote an equitable and strong public education system across Ontario. Her dedication to workers' rights and fair bargaining was illustrated when she led 55,000 co-workers to withdraw their labour for two days in November 2022.

Jackie Taylor, who is running for the office of OFL executive vice-president, is a long-serving, energetic and committed activist. Jackie has been a part of the United Steelworkers (USW) as the District 6 Education Co-Ordinator, a member of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU), and an advocate for local USW Members through her work on the union's pay equity and bargaining committees.

Ahmad Gaied, the current secretary-treasurer of the OFL, has worked to restore stability and transparency within the organization. He has been instrumental in guiding the development and deployment of the Enough is Enough campaign, inspiring action in communities across Ontario to demand real wage increases, well-funded publicly-funded education and health care systems, and affordable cost of living for everyone.

"These leaders are dedicated trade unionists and have been long-time activists for workers' rights. This endorsement comes with my deep respect and belief in the abilities of Laura, Ahmad, and Jackie to lead the OFL through the coming years and in their ability to positively impact workers' lives across the province," adds President Littlewood.

The OSSTF/FEESO Provincial Executive send their deepest gratitude to the OFL's outgoing President Patty Coates and Executive Vice-President Janice Folk-Dawson for their leadership through many challenges and battles over the last few years, including the pandemic and the Ford government's continued attacks on workers' rights and the rights of all citizens in Ontario. During this time, they showed the rest of the country and our allies across the globe what true labour unity looks like and have worked to build a fairer and more inclusive society for all workers.

Elections will take place in November 2023 at the OFL's 17th Biennial Convention.