

SCHOOL CLOSURES DOS AND DON'TS FOR OSSTF/FEESO MEMBERS



All district school boards can have accommodation issues associated with student enrolment changes. These issues must be addressed through boards of trustees and an Accommodation Review process.

OSSTF/FEESO members can be affected by the management decisions that are made regarding school closures. These decisions can cause significant disruptions in members' professional and personal lives.

OSSTF/FEESO is responsible for using seniority and staffing provisions in collective agreements to protect members' interests to the fullest extent possible.

If as an individual, you feel strongly that you want to try and influence the board's decision regarding your workplace, you should keep the following guidelines in mind to avoid any issues arising from your involvement:

Dos

- Use established structures and procedures to voice your concerns. For example, there is staff representation on Accommodation Review Committees.
- Funnel your concerns and comments through this type of committee or through other avenues that may be established by the employer.
- Attend public meetings on issues and where appropriate, speak as a concerned citizen or parent.
- When speaking at public meetings, stick to the facts, focus your comments on public issues and ensure all commentary is respectful.
- Avoid becoming involved in situations where you could be seen to be using your influence and authority as a board employee to direct parents or students during the accommodation process.
- Remember that you cannot suspend your role as a board employee. You do have the duty of loyalty that is expected of any employee to the employer.
- Let OSSTF/FEESO local union leaders make any criticism of the employer's actions when such comments are necessary.
- Consult with your workplace representative, your Bargaining Unit President and/or executive regarding any concerns you may have regarding the accommodation process.
- Seek assistance from your local Bargaining Unit President, Field Secretary or Provincial Executive Liaison to address concerns regarding the accommodation process.

Don'ts

- Do not have conversations with parents or students regarding the accommodation process. Refer students and parents to school administrators.
- Do not engage with students or parents in email, chat room or social media discussions regarding the accommodation process.
- If speaking in public forums as a concerned parent or citizen about the accommodation process, do not be malicious, defame the employer or undermine the reputation or credibility of the employer.

