

# **DISMANTLING SYSTEMIC RACISM IN OSSTF DISTRICT 19 TEACHER BARGAINING UNIT: Update on Addressing Systemic Racism as per the Ontario Human Rights Commission and on the D19 TBU June 2020 Statement**

## **1. Ontario Human Rights Commission: Addressing Systemic Racism**

“Systemic discrimination can be described as patterns of behaviour, policies or practices that are part of the structures of an organization, and which create or perpetuate disadvantage for racialized persons. The Commission has set out three considerations that will help the Commission and organizations identify and address systemic discrimination:

1. Numerical Data: Numerical data such as statistics may show that racialized persons are not being equally treated by or within an organization. In some instances, numerical data will suggest that there may be systemic discrimination because too few racialized people are represented, for example in positions of leadership. In other situations, it may show that too many racialized people are represented, for example in police stops.

2. Policies, Practices and Decision-Making Processes: Formal and informal policies, practices and decision-making processes can result in barriers for and exclusion of racialized persons. The use of informal or highly discretionary approaches are particularly problematic as there is more room for subjective considerations, differing standards and biases to come into play. It is also important not to design policies, practices and decision-making processes in a way that does not account for individual differences or that uses the dominant culture as the norm.

3. Organizational Culture: Organizations can have their own internal cultures which, if not inclusive, can marginalize or alienate racialized persons. For example, an organization that values a particular communication style based on how people from the dominant culture tend to communicate may undervalue a different, but equally effective, communication style used by a racialized person. Similarly, social relationships and networks that are an important part of success may sometimes exclude racialized persons.”

**Source:** <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/racism-and-racial-discrimination-systemic-discrimination-fact-sheet>

## **OSSTF D19 TBU Results:**

### **1. Numerical Data:**

OSSTF D19 TBU has attempted to gather race-based data and the results are not yet available.

Recognizing that racial identity is internally constructed, that race is a social construct that it is often externally imposed, and that there is often a mismatch between self-identification of race and observer identification of race, in the absence of the results of the data collection D19 TBU would be remiss to provide conclusive race-based data on our membership and leadership.

	<b>2021-2022</b>
Representation on Executive (leadership)	
Representation on Committees	
Representation in Branch Presidents (leadership)	
Representation in Membership	

## 2. Policies, Practices and Decision-Making Processes

- Hiring Practices – Benefits and Retirement Counsellor: encouraged members who identify as racialized to apply; included diversity-focused questions.
- Procedure 2 – Hiring of Anti-Black Racism Officers: assisted in creating a hiring process that is determined by DABRAC.
- Decision-making processes: Use of consistent, formalized process for decision-making; consultation with Dismantling Anti-Black Racism Officers on all-member Friday emails, and statements from the Bargaining Unit.
- Joint Staffing Committee: inclusion of equity focus on hiring rubric for teachers, including the consultation of the DABR Executive members.

## 3. Organizational Culture

Recognizing that OSSTF is a sophisticated organization with a multitude of structures that help get the business of the Federation done and that this complexity often requires many years of volunteering within the organization to learn organically, during this past year OSSTF D19 TBU has sought to make the complexity of the organization more accessible through the provision of resources, restructuring practices, and supporting newly engaged members in learning the often daunting amount of knowledge.

- Website redesign for ease of accessibility to information about the union, to help support member engagement with the union
- OSSTF Training Provided to Dismantling Anti-Black Racism Executive Team: Member Representation, Duty of Fair Representation, Contract Maintenance (Grievance) Training
- Creation of learning videos about OSSTF structures and practices to help support member engagement with the union
- Creation of a revised land acknowledgement statement
- Encouragement of racialized members to serve on union committees
- Meeting with DABRET to discuss how to run meetings through an anti-oppression lens
- Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP): advocating for the availability of specifically trained counsellors to support racialized members and/or their families, who have experienced trauma due to racism. Tracking data regarding calls to the program related to racism and oppression was also discussed.
- Dismantling anti-Black racism training provided to members of TBUC and Exec by ANCHOR

**2. June 2020 Statement:**

In June 2020, the OSSTF D19 issued a statement about dismantling anti-Black racism and systemic racism. It committed to the following:

- 1) Providing dismantling anti-Black racism and other equity training to our executive team;
- 2) Working with our standing committees to develop strategies for removing barriers to leadership and engagement for BIPOC members in their union;
- 3) Working with experts and members of BIPOC communities so that we can better reflect and represent the members we serve;
- 4) Representing our membership on the PDSB committees created to address and implement the Ministry Directives; and
- 5) Creating an Advisory group comprising grassroots members to advise the TBU Executive.

The following is a summary chart of the actions taken this year by the OSSTF D19 TBU to support our Black, Indigenous and Racialized members. We recognize that there remains work to be done to dismantle systemic racism in the PDSB and OSSTF:

Item	Action Taken
1) Provide anti-Black racism and other equity training to our executive team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Researched and solicited the services of Anima, and then ANCHOR to provide training</li> <li>➔ Training provided to: Executive and Branch Presidents</li> </ul>
2) Work with our standing committees to develop strategies for removing barriers to leadership and engagement for BIPOC members in their union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Data on identities to be collected</li> <li>➔ Encouraged Branch Presidents to encourage members who self-identify as racialized to serve as Branch Reps</li> </ul>
3) Work with experts and members of BIPOC communities so that we can better reflect and represent the members we serve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Consultation with the DABR Executive Team members on items related to their portfolios.</li> <li>➔ Collection of feedback via member surveys.</li> </ul>
4) Represent our membership on the PDSB committees created to address and implement the Ministry Directives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ We have in some instances not just one but multiple members represented on each of the PDSB committees created to address the Ministry Directives</li> </ul>
5) Create an Advisory group comprising grassroots members to advise the TBU Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ In June 2020 the TBU Council created the Dismantling Anti-Black Racism Advisory Committee (DABRAC)</li> </ul>