

**NEGOTIATING  
TOWARDS  
EQUALITY:  
PAID MATERNITY LEAVE**

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YOUR NEGOTIATORS ARE  
MAKING THIS ITEM A  
PRIORITY.

PLEASE GIVE SERIOUS  
CONSIDERATION TO  
THE FOLLOWING.

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS  
ABOUT PAID MATERNITY LEAVE

Q. Why should I support someone else's children?

A. Society places the highest value on family life. As educators, we understand the importance of psychological and financial security in the family unit right from the very beginning.

These children can help stop declining enrolment. They represent your future jobs.

It is provincial OSSTF policy (see the last page of this pamphlet).

Q. Isn't paid maternity leave discriminatory since only pregnant women are eligible for it?

A. By the same token, paid sick leave could also be considered discriminatory, as only those who are sick benefit from it.

It is, however, discriminatory to penalize women, who are the only ones to bear children, by failing to provide paid maternity leaves.

Q. Who else has paid maternity leave?

A. 75 advanced industrial nations, including West Germany, France, Italy, Sweden and Denmark, have some form of paid maternity leave.

In Canada, 19% of union contracts have paid maternity leave clauses, including Quebec teachers and government employees, CUPW and CUPE locals, and many federal government employees.

Q. Wouldn't this benefit be too expensive for the Board?

A. The highest birth rate occurs in the age group under 20 years of age. Teachers do not fit into this group; our median age is 43.

In Scarborough, the "youngest" Metropolitan Toronto Area OSSTF district, 52 women were on maternity leave in 1984-85. This is 2.4% of the teachers.

Q. How costly is it at present for a woman to take unpaid maternity leave?

Women secondary school teachers in Ontario in 1984 had a median annual salary of \$39,287.

Seventeen weeks of unpaid maternity leave reduce that salary by about \$16,600.

A maximum of \$4,140 is currently paid by the Unemployment Insurance Commission.

Approximate Net Loss: \$12,450

Additional costs for the woman on unpaid leave include cost to maintain fringe benefits and to make contributions for full Superannuation credit for leave period.

PAID MATERNITY LEAVE  
IS FAIR AND REASONABLE  
NOW  
IS THE TIME TO NEGOTIATE IT!



## OSSTF POLICY

It is the policy of O.S.S.T.F. that:

- (a) a pregnant teacher should be entitled to up to 17 consecutive weeks of fully paid Maternity Leave, the timing of which shall be at her sole discretion;
- (b) a Board should not terminate the employment of a teacher because of her pregnancy regardless of the length of employment prior to the taking of the leave;
- (c) upon returning from Maternity Leave, a teacher should receive full seniority and credit for teaching experience for the period of the leave;
- (d) if the Board requests a teacher to take more than 17 consecutive weeks of Maternity Leave, the Board should do so in writing, and if the teacher agrees, the teacher shall continue to receive all salaries, allowances, benefits, seniority accumulation and sick leave credits for the period of such extension;
- (e) the Maternity Leave should be extended as unpaid Parental Leave at the teacher's discretion to a maximum of two years. (A.81)

from page 42 in the 1985-86 OSSTF Handbook:  
Section 2 - Collective Bargaining Leave and  
Gratuity Policy  
Part D - Maternity Leave

PREPARED BY

THE METRO AREA OSSTF STATUS OF WOMEN COALITION  
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