

## **Tragic Incident Support Document for BPs**

Provided below is a script/phraseology to assist Branch Presidents with supporting their school community as union leaders when tragic incidents occur at their worksite. This script is modeled from the speaking points shared with the school board system to support students through a tragic event.

### **Phraseology/Scripts for Responding to and Supporting Members**

Preamble: As the OSSTF D16 Branch President and Executives, members will be approaching you for various reasons in these difficult times. A response for both staff and students would be to focus on their feelings as opposed to reports, hearsay and/or rumours. You may have to (re) direct members affected to the available resources and supports that were shared through the EAP (YRDSB supports) and Telus Health (OSSTF supports). Members should also be reminded that they can request coverage for their classes or take a day , if they are struggling.

**If members are requesting additional information, spreading unfounded claims and/or gossiping about the tragic incident, you can communicate something similar to the following (you aren't limited to these points, nor am I a mental health practitioner):**

- Our community has been affected by this tragic incident, I do not have all the information about details of the incident. My priority as an OSSTF representative/BP is to ensure that ALL members are supported.
- I can empathize with how you may be feeling, given this tragic incident, however as an OSSTF representative/BP, I will have to end this conversation given that I do not want to participate in hearsay/rumours/ speculation/unfounded claims, which would be harmful.
- Many people are upset and are processing what has occurred. I prefer staying away from discussing details of the incident, as we do not have the information that we can share, and it's not helpful to focus on comments or speculation on social media and/or media reports.
- Thank you for sharing with me how you have been affected and how you are feeling. I am sorry to hear that you are feeling this way. There are confidential supports available through the board and the Federation that you can access at any time.

### **Supports for Members**

- If you are concerned for someone you care about, and/or are looking for support for yourself please touch base with your Employee and Family Assistance Program. Help is available and can be accessed confidentially. [Flyer for Employee Family Assistance Program](#)
- OSSTF members can also access [Telus Health](#) (formerly Lifeworks) for additional support through this difficult time.