

## INTRODUCTION

Each year as I prepare this report, I review the work of OTF for the past year. I start by looking back on reports from previous Board meetings. At first, I think it will be easy to simply borrow from such reports since, each year, there are a number of activities which have become routine for OTF, but it is not quite that simple. Each year brings new challenges and new opportunities for OTF and the Affiliates and this past year was no exception. Given the October provincial election, this coming year will also no doubt be an interesting one.

I've written a longer than usual preamble to this report for a number of reasons. The prime reason, however, is that OTF will be undergoing changes in staffing in the coming year. As you read the report, you will see that our professional learning program, funded by Ministry grants, is beginning to wind down. We will still have a reduced program as funds allow, but our PD Manager for the last three years, Siria Szkurhan has retired and there are no longer adequate resources for the continuation of this position. We have benefited tremendously from Siria's hard work and enthusiasm. We have contracted with her to help us complete some particular projects.

We are also saying goodbye to Kathleen Devlin, Director of Policy and Public Relations who is retiring at the end of this month. Kathleen has seen OTF go through significant challenges over her 17 years here – 17 OTF Presidents – nine or 10 Education Ministers, governments formed by all three parties, many political and advocacy campaigns in education, not to mention a few internal crises at OTF as well. Kathleen brought with her a rich background and talents from teaching, government service and communications. She will be missed; I hope Governors will have an opportunity to pass on their good wishes to Kathleen over the course of the meeting.

It is important for organizations to look forward at times of significant change. While we are losing two OTF staff at this point, others are also near retirement. We need to take a forward look at how OTF will maintain and improve its capacity to act in the most effective way possible to meet its statutory objects as the professional organization for teachers and as the voice for members in the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan.

Taking stock of OTF – who and what we are – is not a new thing. Reviews of OTF, its mandate and role have been frequent. We have had an opportunity to do that over the last two years in reviewing the Act, Regulations and Bylaws of OTF. That work will continue as we proceed with our policy review as well. Essentially, the changes to our Act, Regulations and Bylaws were primarily housekeeping to reflect the current reality of what OTF does and how; the process reaffirmed what we do and clarified how we do it. Our policy review gives us the opportunity to review our beliefs and positions as OTF.

Over the last decade as fee issues arose with two Affiliates, OTF undertook in the first instance, a significant restructuring and, through a process in which the Executive and Board were all engaged, established the "three pillars" as a conceptual framework for the work OTF did at that time. A more recent fee issue led to a review of particular policies and, last year, the Executive scheduled specific times, including a full day of Executive Planning, to discuss the continuation of the professional learning program specifically, and the three pillars generally. As a result of

those discussions, plans were put in place for the continuation of the Ministry professional learning program while funds allow and that will be described in detail in this preamble. From the Executive Planning meeting, it was determined that pensions and member advocacy programs supported by all Affiliates should be of prime importance, that OTF should only respond to legislation when all Affiliates are in agreement and, from my perspective, these directions have been “operationalized”.

In terms of the Ministry PD funds and how they have been used at OTF, the following provides a summary and indicates what we will continue to offer with funds remaining.

In 2006, the Ministry of Education provided \$22 million shared among the Federations and OTF. The Ontario Teachers’ Federation retained \$4.4 million. Over the period of the professional learning program managed by OTF from the Ministry block funding, some additional funds were also received from the Ministry of Natural Resources and/or the Ministry of Education to support the summer Going Green and Financial Literacy programs respectively. The Ministry PD funds have been used since that time to provide a rich professional learning program, but those funds are diminishing. As a result, the program will continue in 2011-2012 but in a significantly reduced manner.

It is appropriate in this report, to provide a few summary comments about the professional learning program OTF has been able to offer since 2006. When the funds were first received, a decision was made to reallocate some funds among Affiliates so that the proportions were more reflective of membership; in particular, initial allocations had been quite unequal between Affiliates representing elementary and secondary teachers. OTF took several actions in terms of managing its funds including setting up an approval process at the Executive for allocations to programs. Since its inception, the Executive has approved new program allocations and received regular reports on events. Other initial steps included a survey of teachers to ascertain their professional development needs, a research report and video (*PD that Works*), a provincial summit on this topic as well as the establishment of the PD website and the PD newsletter. Having conducted the research and established the framework and capacity for the program, the program evolved into a series of workshops, conferences, and follow up on-line conferences along with the provision of services (the PD calendar) and resources (ie. Video on Demand). We also included other organizations in some events such the media violence conferences and, more recently, we subsidized the cost of the Democracy Boot Camp conference organized by Student Vote.

Since 2006, in all aspects of the OTF’s professional learning program, we maintained important tenets that, I believe, were critical to its success. First, we routinely referred back to what we learned directly from teachers about the PD they wanted and found most effective in choosing programs to recommend to the Executive.

All our programs were voluntary. Not all offerings were suitable for all grades and levels but the majority of our programs were suitable for all teachers (ie. critical thinking, IT conferences) since they have such wide applicability. Teachers value learning together and from each other so we incorporated follow up learning and networking for teachers; some of our programs have been two part programs. Those not offered in two face-to-face sessions generally had the possibility for on-line continued learning and sharing among participants.

We made our programs as proportional to Affiliate membership numbers as possible. In earlier years, we had some difficulty attracting francophone teachers and/or providing them with as rich

a program as we provided in English. We have improved quite significantly in that respect, proven by participation rates.

We continued to get high quality presenters. Teachers really appreciate hearing from the real experts in a particular field and we were able to bring them the leaders and pioneers in particular areas.

Where possible, resources were also provided directly to teachers. We were able to do that, for instance, with the media violence conferences where teachers received the OPSBA media literacy curriculum resources along with our Safe@School resource produced for the Ministry in partnership with COPA.

We valued teachers' time when we offered a conference or program by including some release time in almost all our programs. Specifically, the *It's About Time* program allowed groups of teachers to work together on an area of common interest to their professional growth. We also offered programs, such as the Environmental Film Festival, which promoted teachers working together and the development of leadership among teachers, providing them with some release to do so.

Teachers' preferences for subject based professional development were met with our summer program in which we worked directly with the subject associations to deliver workshops relevant and timely to teachers.

The program was advertised in several ways including our twice yearly newsletter, on our website, through Affiliates, by word of mouth and by email to a network of teachers who attended events and who passed on information to their peers. More recently, social media has taken over as the means of relaying information as teachers twitter amongst themselves! In early days, some conferences were under-capacity; recently the challenge has been the opposite as demand exceeded supply.

Teachers have come to appreciate and expect PD delivered by their Affiliate and/or OTF. All of this professional development has been highly subsidized. When the subsidies are gone from OTF and Affiliates and/or programs terminate, there will undoubtedly be disappointment. Nonetheless, we have finite resources and must deal with that reality.

To do so, we have a plan for the 2011-2012 year and we have adequate resources to meet these objectives.

In the coming year, OTF will:

- devote time to the consolidation and posting of resources developed through our programs to our website. This component of the website is built and the process has begun but it requires completion. This will be an ongoing, available and free resource to teachers, thus making it sustainable and lasting and would meet prior obligations for Ministry funding received for summer programs.
- cancel the print PD newsletter – an electronic newsletter will be used to promote remaining programs and resources for the duration of the funding. Experience tells us that our promotion has succeeded; teachers are checking in to the OTF site to see what is being offered.

- discontinue the license for the “Videos on Demand”. They are being used but we’ve not had hard data or comments on how much teachers actually value them; we have had feedback on all our other programs that they are valued and this component will be too costly to retain with remaining funds.
- continue the PD calendar. This initiative started well before the Ministry funds were received. It is sustainable at low cost and is of value to teachers.
- continue to offer some conferences/workshops as funds allow. Costs could be reduced by potentially offering them regionally (to minimize release, travel and hotel costs) and/or with somewhat reduced levels of subsidization. In all likelihood, reduced subsidies would reduce demand but for some of our most popular conferences, it is still possible that they would be supported by teachers even if registration fees increased.
- offer ongoing learning through the 2011-2012 year to teachers who have taken part in our conferences through further webinars. This would help foster and consolidate networks of learning which are being built among teachers with common interests and needs.

It is very difficult to know exactly when the PD funds will run out. We need to maintain funds to cover invoices not yet received the largest of which are for release time. As well, staff at OTF will still have considerable reporting and accounting to do for programs which have already taken place. This summer, 40 workshops and one major conference took place and all of those expenses will need to be accounted for as well.

We are hopeful, however, that there may be further Ministry funding toward a summer program next year. The funding provided for Financial Literacy workshops this summer was intended to be multi-year but firm commitments for years two and three have not yet been made. If OTF has funds remaining heading into the summer of 2012 and/or if the Ministry follows through with continued funding, a Summer Program of some scale may still be possible in 2012; that will be known as the year unfolds.

Earlier this year, I was asked to prepare a very detailed report for the Executive on OTF’s professional learning program. While I have provided only a synopsis of that report here, the numbers attending our summer program tell the story. They grew from 256 teachers (in 2008) to 714 (in 2009) to 1088 (in 2010) to over 1500 teachers this summer. A two part evaluation is used for each event – including both a numerical satisfaction scale and open comments. Comments were overwhelmingly positive and where constructive comments were provided, we did our best to take them into account in the next offering. The numerical ratings of our conferences bore out satisfaction as well averaging well above 3 out of 4. We are disappointed that this program cannot be sustained in its current form as it has proven very popular with teachers. We will do our best this year to maximize the benefit for teachers with the funds available. Again, thank you to Siria Szkurhan for her outstanding efforts and accomplishments.

Returning to the deliberations of the OTF Executive at our Planning Session, in terms of pensions, one of OTF’s key objects and of utmost priority to teachers, there is a “new normal” evolving. I have been in this role for just over four years and have seen significant changes in the pension portfolio at OTF. While we are required to file valuations every three years and have had the option of filing valuations more often, for the last several years we have been in a constant state of activity with respect to the Ontario Teachers’ Pension Plan. Valuations were

filed in 2005, 2008, 2009 and again in 2011. Over these years, we have had to address funding shortfalls and have taken decisions which were both necessary and difficult in order to protect the long term health and sustainability of the Plan. Making such decisions has required the involvement of the Pension Committee, the Executive and Board. Our legal and actuarial advisors have been invaluable resources to us. Such deliberations require a level of education for all involved and OTF has offered support in that regard by sponsoring an annual Pension Forum, arranging for orientation sessions with Plan staff, meeting regularly with Directors and Plan staff, providing access to conferences and resources for committee and Executive members and establishing several new groups dedicated to a more regular and thorough sharing of information among the Plan, the Government and OTF – namely, the Sustainability Working Group (of 2010-2011) and the ongoing Partners' Consultative Committee and Communications Work Group.

We have simultaneously responded to and communicated with Plan membership on a variety of issues ranging from labour relations issues in companies wholly or substantially owned by the Plan to the question of socially responsible investing. OTF responds to many diverse calls and emails regarding the Plan and the Partnership. We have recently established a protocol for members wishing to express their concerns about Plan investments; the protocol was described in the report to the Spring meeting of the Board of Governors.

The funding pressure on our Plan is not unique. Pensions are increasingly in the news and the public is eyeing defined benefit plans much more critically. We will need to be proactive on this issue and defend the right of teachers to a jointly sponsored, defined benefit plan. A good understanding of the overall pension world, not just of the OTPP, will be invaluable to OTF in the years ahead.

During my time on the OTF Executive and as Secretary-Treasurer, we have enjoyed a co-operative and collegial relationship with our Government Partner. This has come to be expected. Aside from working with our Government partner at the time of filing valuations, we work very co-operatively through the Partners Committee, co-chaired by the OTF President and a Government representative. At this level, technical aspects of the Plan are reviewed and amended from time to time, employers are designated and de-designated and issues such as changes to buy back provisions and post-retirement working limits are addressed. This committee has dealt with significant issues over the past several years as well.

The three parties have worked together in other areas which may be less well known to Governors. There have been a number of human rights complaints filed against the Teachers' Pension Plan and the Partners. As these are legal matters, they remain confidential until addressed but the volume of complaints has escalated significantly. All three parties are respondents and each party has legal counsel in these cases who co-ordinate responses. While it is important that individuals have access to the Human Rights Commission (HRC) in any society, it is frustrating that individuals may make complaints about a component of the Plan which has already been determined by the HRC to be non-discriminatory. Successive complaints on the same issue tend to be addressed more quickly but a defense must still be prepared each time and presented through a mediation or hearing process. A report will soon come to Governors regarding previous Plan matters before the HRC but as a matter of information for Governors, on June 28, 2011, eighty-three (83) complaints were made simultaneously to which the Plan, Government and OTF must respond.

OTF has ensured that the pension portfolio has been given priority and support. Each successive budget over the last four years, has allocated more resources to budget lines for pension legal, pension actuarial, pension negotiations and pension education. OTF ensured that Special Board or other necessary pension meetings, took place expeditiously. We keep regular contact with the Plan, Government, Outside Stakeholder organizations, the Social Investment Organization and pension colleagues in other provinces. We could benefit by doing even more of this. We take advantage of information available through workshops and regular updates (ie. Mercers' Fearless Forecast, presentations by ACPM, Conference Board, Borden Ladner etc.). Carrying out OTF's responsibilities for the pension takes a considerable share of the time and resources of OTF.

As Governors are aware, however, pension is only one of OTF's objects. Our statutory obligations through *The Teaching Profession Act* and, as a body corporate, are:

- to promote and advance the cause of education;
- to raise the status of the teaching profession;
- to promote and advance the interests of teachers and to secure conditions that will make possible the best professional service;
- to arouse and increase public interest in educational affairs;
- to co-operate with other teachers' organizations throughout the world having the same or like objects; and
- to represent all members of the Pension Plan established under the Teachers' Pension Act in the administration of the Plan and the management of the pension fund.

OTF's advocacy work and work on policy and legislation takes many forms and there is often a fine, or even blurred line, between the two. We advocate on behalf of teachers on matters of education policy; we advocate for teachers with the public and other stakeholders.

It is OTF which has responsibility for teacher candidates who are associate members of OTF under Part 4 of *The Teaching Profession Act*. This report details the many aspects of our involvement with the faculties, deans and associate teachers and teacher candidates. This responsibility has grown as education programs have been offered at more Ontario faculties and campuses and as faculties have extended their own programs. You will see that over 20 visits took place at faculties across the province to inform teacher candidates of the role of OTF and their Affiliates and the rights and obligations which come along with associate membership in OTF. The visits primarily take place in the autumn months and the President is invited to do as many presentations as he or she can. The Director of Professional Affairs co-ordinates the attendance of OTF staff and the President at the many Federation Days which take place.

Aside from meeting and speaking with teacher candidates, OTF staff has frequent contact with the Teaching and Policy Standards Branch of the Ministry of Education. This allows for effective two-way communication between the Government and OTF on all matters related to pre-service education for teachers. Monitoring the progress and impact of the Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT), for example, has been an important component of that liaison over the last couple of years. A more recent survey by the Ministry of associate teachers was another area of OTF involvement. Liaison with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (TCU) has proven to be more challenging but is also very important as well. Regular interaction with the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) includes matters related to teacher training as the College routinely reviews and approves Additional Qualification Courses (AQs) and has been engaged in a multi-phase review of teaching qualifications (TQR). We are frequently asked by the College to

participate in consultations. Our staff maintains regular contact with College staff and the General Secretaries and Secretary-Treasurer of OTF meet regularly with the Registrar and Deputy-Registrar as well.

Further reports related to teacher education and the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) appear later in this report and provide more detailed information. In terms of its role with the faculties and OCT, OTF plays both a direct role, as well as a co-ordinating role with the Affiliates. For example, the Teacher Education Staff Workgroup and the College of Teachers Staff workgroup (who meet four times a year with the members of the Governing Council), provide the venue for all Affiliates and OTF to share views and consolidate opinions and actions on behalf of all teachers.

OTF's role in teacher professional learning takes many forms, beyond our role in teacher pre-service. While the most obvious may be the professional learning program which has continued to be offered through Ministry funds allocated to OTF and the Affiliates some years ago, OTF has a long history of involvement in teacher professional learning through programs offered by OTF or in partnership. Since the late 1980s, these have included a Global Education program, Creating a Culture of Change, the Electronic Network of Ontario (ENO), the Common Curriculum Innovation Fund, the OTF Summer Institutes, Survive and Thrive, Teach in Ontario and more recently, Safe@School and the Teacher Learning and Leadership Program (TLLP). OTF had committed to and budgeted for an on-line PD calendar as a tool for teachers prior to receipt of Ministry PD funding in 2006.

The TLLP Summit in November 2010 and the TLLP training session in May of 2011 were both very successful and are described in the report. Safe@School (Phase 3), Teachers Gateway to Special Education and Survive and Thrive have all experienced success this year as well. We would appreciate Governors becoming familiar with these resources and sharing that information with their members/colleagues. We are very proud that the Teachers Gateway to Special Education received a national award this year at the Canadian Education Association (CEA).

The Ministry arts grant resulted in opportunities for many teachers to have their participation in professional learning in the arts significantly subsidized. With some funds remaining from the initial grant, workshops were offered by arts subject associations this summer. Workshops were also offered for Spirit Horse, the joint project delivered by OECTA and ETFO with these funds. Again, these Ministry funds were finite but provided positive opportunities for members of OTF.

The TVA project – *Teacher Voice on Assessment* – is moving into the resource phase for teachers and a web-based resource will soon be made available to support secondary teachers in their assessment/evaluation practice and provide them with useful tools.

OTF continued to be a strong voice, along with the Affiliates, in various areas of government policy. In the report, you will read about OTF's role with respect to curriculum and assessment.

Under separate cover is a report from the Curriculum Forum Steering Committee outlining their work over the past year. The Forum is another group which has grown over the years as new subject associations have been added. This structure is another venue through which the views of teachers can be shared with other teachers and the Ministry.

Public advocacy for the profession through events like Word on the Street, the Aboriginal Festival and the OTIP Teaching Awards are highlighted in this report. As always, we are looking

for volunteers to help with the Word on the Street Festival (September 25, 2011) and hope some Governors will be able to join us. While we take other opportunities to participate in events supportive of teachers and education, these are the key events which take place every fall. We have agreed, again, to work with the Toronto Star on the Education Supplement and with their teacher award. These regular and ongoing contacts with organizations and media are of real value to teachers.

This year, we are hoping to draw attention to an important cause in Ontario and to highlight the compassionate nature of teachers at the same time. Later in the meeting, you will hear about OTF's challenge to teachers, and to members of the education and labour communities, to register as organ donors. This is a way we can make a positive difference and show the broader community the giving spirit of the teaching profession.

This past year was marked by several important summits – the BB4E International Summit organized by the Premier, OTF's Summit, and a Canadian Education Association (CEA) Colloquium among others. A number of us from OTF attended the Education Futures Symposium organized by the Alberta Teachers' Association. More recently, I attended the CTF President's Forum as well. There are common threads among these events. The level of collaboration, sharing and partnership in education has seen a noticeable change in the last decade. Teacher organizations are increasingly part of the dialogue about education and education improvement although we are not always able to convince others on particular issues (ie. accountability vs. responsibility). We have opportunities, however, to take advantage of such venues to represent the wishes of the profession and offer our expertise as teachers and teacher leaders. Doing so effectively takes time and resources; establishing the network of leaders in education with whom we can confer and who we want to influence is essential. Despite our best efforts to schedule a joint liaison meeting late spring, we were unsuccessful; we will attempt another early in the school year. The timing of the election makes this very important.

Over the past year, we have seen the education course we do not want to follow play out in the United States. The debt crisis this summer overplayed the education protests in the United States. Although the Save our Schools Rally on July 30 in Washington received attention, it would no doubt have received more coverage were it not for the stalemate on deficit expansion at that time. Many of you may have seen the Matt Damon speech at the rally; if not, it is worth a look. Support from OTF and the Affiliates to our colleagues in the United States took various forms over the last year; we must continue to monitor the education agenda south of the border and across Canada. I was struck by a comment from a fellow General Secretary at the CTF Annual Meeting. As a group, we were discussing the education reform agenda which is playing out in various places and discussing how we could best collectively deal with the issues. She quoted a labour speaker who said that "we no longer have the luxury of celebrating our differences." This comment resonated with me. While we have differences among us here at OTF, we have more which unites us than divides us. Our common purpose and co-ordination of effort may prove increasingly important here in Ontario as the political direction becomes clear this fall.

In Ontario, we've been highlighted as an education success story – partly attributed to the positive relationship between teacher organizations and government. As a result, OTF has been invited to meet many international visiting delegations, including my recent invitation to present to a delegation from Norway. A large delegation from China earlier in the year was particularly interesting; China is clearly looking outward at a time when a country such as the United States is looking increasingly inward. Earlier in the year, I was also interviewed for a

report being prepared by a professor at Harvard for the OECD on Ontario's success. As the world looks to Ontario and its education system, we have been invited to meet with teacher and education leaders and have been candid about changes in Ontario – including both positive changes and issues of concern such as the continued focus on standardized testing. This voice and these relationships cannot be taken for granted.

## **ADVOCACY**

### **Word on the Street**

The first public event of each school year for OTF is always Word on the Street. This celebration of literacy is a natural fit for teachers and teaching. It is held on the last Sunday of September and provides a great opportunity to showcase teachers as champions of literacy and reading. For several years, OTF has had a booth welcoming teachers, parents and students.

We attract students and parents with education related handouts from OTF and the Affiliates - study tips, literacy guides, word magnets and customized Annikin books. We have a sample of a recent version of the book. Last September we focused on the launch of the new Special Education gateway website which was very popular. We also have a limited number of special packages for teachers.

The booth is staffed by volunteers from the OTF staff, Executive, Board and local teachers. Every year this festival becomes more and more popular. OTF has a prominent position and we receive lots of parents, students and teachers. While we bring more material every year, every year we run out. We could also benefit from a greater number of teacher volunteers for each of our two hour shifts. You will be asked to volunteer by signing a sheet that will be passed around during this meeting.

### **Aboriginal Festival**

For the second year, Education Day at the Canadian Aboriginal Festival took place at Copps Coliseum in Hamilton. This educational event for students has been part of the OTF calendar since 1998. Thousands of students participated along with their teachers on the fourth Friday in November. President Rian McLaughlin, along with leaders from ETFO and OECTA, participated in the official opening ceremonies.

The Aboriginal Youth Creative Writing Awards, presented by the Lieutenant Governor, were held on the same day. The Secretary-Treasurer attended on behalf of OTF.

### **Teaching Awards**

The seventh annual OTIP Teaching Awards were presented in Toronto on September 30, 2010. Each year this ceremony is held on the closest Thursday before World Teachers' Day to honour three special teachers.

The OTIP Awards recognized an elementary teacher who makes learning fun, a secondary teacher who connects her students to their natural environment, and a beginning teacher who brings history to life every day in his classroom. They were:

Elementary Teacher Alice Désormeaux, St. Anne Separate School, Hanmer  
Secondary Teacher Colleen Drew-Baehre, North Hastings High School, Bancroft

Beginning Teacher Matthew Biggley, Vincent Massey Secondary School, Windsor

We also presented the *Toronto Star* Teacher Award and the TFO Prix d'enseignement. These awards went to Bernadette Taylor-Dolha of Baythorn Public School, York District School Board and Gilberte Bissonnette, a teacher at l'école Le Carrefour in Ottawa. You can read more about the 2010 winners or see short videos of them in action at [www.teachingawards.ca](http://www.teachingawards.ca).

The process for the 2011 awards has been completed. You will hear a report from the Committee later in the meeting. The awards are announced on the day of the ceremony.

### ***Toronto Star* Supplement**

Once again on World Teachers' Day and in conjunction with the OTIP Teaching Awards, we published a special supplement in partnership with the *Toronto Star*. This publication focuses on the good things that our teachers make happen in the schools such as new approaches to curriculum and social justice projects. It also contains stories on the OTIP Award winners, the *Toronto Star* Teacher Award winner and the TFO Prix d'enseignement winner.

We had a glitch in the 2010 publication but following several discussions we have resolved the issue and once again OTF will partner with the Star on this project. The publication date is set for the same day as the Awards Ceremony - September 29, 2011

### **Marlies' Teacher Appreciation Day**

For the second time, we partnered with the Toronto Marlies for Teacher Appreciation Day with the Toronto Marlies. We had a family skate and special rate tickets. We are pleased that we were able to raise funds for Children's Mental Health while we still had fun. After our second try at this event we reviewed our participation. We have determined that the organization takes too much staff time for the return. We have notified the Marlies organization that we will not take part next year. Organizing such an event for teachers may, however, be of interest to Affiliate locals in the GTA.

### **Building Blocks for Education: Whole System Reform (BB4E)**

One of the greatly anticipated events early in the school year 2010-2011 was an international summit on education hosted in mid-September by the Government of Ontario. Federation was very concerned when the speakers' list was published as one of the keynote speakers was Arne Duncan, the Secretary of Education in the Obama Cabinet.

In preparation for the conference, OTF and Affiliate staff prepared background information on each of the speakers, the featured education systems and the co-chairs of the conference. We invited teacher leaders from across Canada and the U.S. to register so that the teacher voice would be represented.

The week before the Summit, we convened a meeting of the Joint Liaison Committee. The Committee is an informal organization of all organizations in the education system. We expanded the attendance at this meeting to include parent and student organizations. At this meeting, we shared the briefing notes and following a discussion, developed share/speaking points on issues that would be raised at the Summit.

The day before the Summit we gathered the national and international teacher leaders and shared the briefing notes as well as the issue speaking points. It was good to hear the perspective of our American colleagues on education reform in the U.S. from the teacher point of view.

## **C4C21**

In response to the Government Summit, the Executive asked OTF to take the lead in organizing our own education symposium entitled C4C21 or C to the fourth power for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The four Cs are Creativity, Critical Thinking, Citizenship and Community. While the Building Blocks conference did not generate the anticipated coverage, it was agreed that the Federation needed to continue with the symposium to refocus the education conversation in Ontario. The purpose was to address the way forward in education and to spark a conversation about education policy and accountability moving beyond standardized testing.

The Steering Committee for the symposium included:

AEFO	Maureen Davis
ETFO	Vivian McCaffrey
OECTA	Lyn Vause
OSSTF	Craig Brockwell
	Marc Robilliard
OTF	Kathleen Devlin
	Cyndie Jacobs

The symposium took place at the Harbour Castle Hilton in Toronto on May 5 and 6, 2011. There were 229 participants. While the number did not reach the anticipated 300 registrants, there was an excellent cross-sectional representation of the education sector - Federation leaders from Ontario and across the country, local federation leaders, classroom teachers, parents, students, Ministry officials, the Ontario College of Teachers, supervisory officers, principals and support staff.

Keynote speakers included Diane Ravitch, author of *The Death and Life of the Great American School System*, Dennis Shirley, co-author of *The Fourth Way*, and Tom Wujec, author of *Return on Imagination*. There was also a panel of education researchers who outlined the current research on our themes.

Evaluations indicated that the speakers were well-received. The lessons from the U.S. were taken as a cautionary tale, and Diane Ravitch's analysis of the public sector under attack was important. Dennis Shirley moved the focus of the symposium toward the future and the importance of reaching beyond testing. The members of the research panel offered perceptions of the system from student perspectives. The final speaker, Tom Wujec, was initially perplexing to the participants, but his insights into the role of creativity in teaching and learning were inspiring. The participants thought the symposium was a useful beginning conversation. There were many who expressed their willingness and interest in continuing the conversations across the sector.

The proceedings of the symposium were videotaped. We are in the process of putting together a summary of the discussion and presentations for the participants in an electronic format.

## **Aboriginal Education Project**

OTF continues to work in partnership with the Aboriginal Education Office of the Ministry of Education on raising teacher awareness of the Ontario First Nation, Metis and Inuit Education Policy Framework.

The project has three components:

- a teacher resource entitled, *Seeing Every Face, Hearing Every Voice* which is the final stages of production for distribution to teachers early in the school year;
- summer workshops entitled, *Aboriginal Perspectives in Education*. These workshops were offered in the summer of 2010 and 2011; and
- *Books of Life* is the third part of the project.

At the end of the last school year teachers were invited to apply to participate in this project. The year-long project was conceived to involve 100 teachers made up of 50 teams of teachers which were matched based on the information teachers provided. The teachers and classrooms will spend the year creating books about their lives. This literacy-based project is designed to build awareness and make connections between schools and classes with high First Nation, Métis and Inuit student bodies and other schools.

OTF has partnered with Frontier College to bring the teacher partners together in October for a two-day workshop on storytelling and bookmaking.

## **Hospitality Suites – Political Conventions**

It is OTF practice to co-host hospitality suites at the political conventions for the parties in Ontario. In February we welcomed delegates to the Ontario Liberal Party meeting in Ottawa. We also participated in a reduced way at the Green Party meeting during April. The meeting itself had been scaled back due to the Federal Election.

## **Nelson Mandela Children's Fund Canada**

OTF has been a strong supporter of the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund (Canada) since its creation. Starting with the Nelson Mandela and the Children event at the then named Skydome in 1998, OTF has participated in several school-based activities of this important charity.

Unhappily, the fund has had to wrap up its operations this year. The headquarters in South Africa made a decision to take another direction as an advocacy organization. Canadian charitable taxation laws do not allow for advocacy to be a primary activity and retain charitable status at the same time.

As part of the wrap up, NMCF (Canada) has transferred resources to another charity that we support - the Stephen Lewis Foundation.

## **Local Government Week**

Local Government Week (LGW) is a project developed by the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario (AMCTO) with participation from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MAH) and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO). For the last two years, the Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE) has been directly involved in the project by fully endorsing it and ensuring that all boards are participating.

LGW provides many opportunities for students in all grades, and especially those in Grades 5 and 10 Civics, to learn more about municipal government and all aspects. Now entering the fourth year of operating the program, the organizers of LGW are hoping to expand on the resources previously developed and distribute them to many more classrooms across Ontario. The huge success of the 2010 program, in which LGW partnered with Student Vote to run the first ever province-wide parallel municipal election, will hopefully engage more schools and communities in learning about municipal government.

Once again, information will be sent directly to schools across Ontario in September. Teachers who have previously participated will receive information directly from LGW organizers. We are hopeful that the LGW program for 2011 will exceed the record number of more than 1500 schools that participated in the 2010 Local Government Week.

### **Teacher Voice on Assessment**

Phase 2 of the Teacher Voice on Assessment (TVA) project is almost complete. A website has been developed in keeping with the final research report from Aporia Consulting, which stated very clearly that teachers prefer to learn together and from one another. The collaborative model for professional learning is the foundation for the design of the site.

The website, entitled *Connect2Assess*, will function like a wiki, where teachers can interact with other teachers, download resources, add content, edit resources, upload new items, etc. It will be "owned" by those who use it. Members of OTF will require their board email address to log-in and participate.

*Connect2Assess* will house secondary assessment resources such as:

- subject-specific rubrics
- exemplars
- question banks
- checklists
- published material

The resources can be found through drop-down menus specifying Grade, Subject and whether the resource is a Classroom Resource or for Teacher Learning.

On the home page of the site there is some background information about the origins of the project and a disclaimer regarding the content of the site. The statement makes it clear that materials posted on the site must be suitable for public viewing and sharing, must be free from copyright and that all materials are the responsibility of the teachers who post them, not OTF or the Ministry.

There are currently a few hundred resources across subject areas that have been edited to ensure alignment with the basic principles of Growing Success. These are now being uploaded to the site. At the time of writing my report, the site is being beta-tested by the developer and the TVA team.

A parallel French site is being discussed and we are awaiting confirmation from the Ministry that this can continue to be developed.

Originally, the team had hoped to develop a marketing plan to spread the word to secondary teachers about the existence of the site. Unfortunately, this will not happen and the remaining funds will be returned to the Ministry. OTF will provide a brief description of the site and a link for use by OECTA and OSSTF and we hope that the information will be published in the Affiliate newsletters and other publications.

## **Professional Development Projects**

### Teacher Learning and Leadership Program

We continued our successful involvement with the Teacher Learning and Leadership Program (TLLP) once again this year. The Governors will recall that the TLLP is a Ministry initiative that enables experienced teachers to apply for funding to undertake professional development and leadership enhancement experiences. The teachers also receive support to share their learning with other educators in their school, board, or elsewhere in the province.

In November, we held the second *TLLP Sharing the Learning Summit*, an event that gathers together all of the previous year's participants at an exposé of their remarkable projects. 118 participants presented 71 TLLP projects at the Summit this year, and were joined by some 50 guests, including the Minister of Education, teacher leaders from Jamaica, school board personnel and staff from the Affiliates.

On May 11 – 13, OTF hosted the fifth *Leadership Skills for Classroom Teachers* training session. This two-and-a-half-day event is offered to teachers whose proposals have been selected for TLLP funding. It provides the teachers with the skills they will need in the year ahead to effectively manage their learning projects and to share their learning with others. In total, 169 educators representing 89 projects attended the training session. There were also 34 presenters, ASL interpreters and invited guests in attendance. As in previous years, renowned teacher educator Ann Lieberman of Stanford University addressed the participants on what constitutes teacher leadership, and provided insights into how the TLLP is reaching this goal. The session was facilitated by Laurent Joncas, with staff from the Affiliates sharing their expertise on diverse skills including project management, working with adult learners, data collection and report writing. The Deputy Minister and I were also in attendance, and we were pleased to contribute to the high energy and excitement level of the participants.

### Safe@School – Phase 3

Our highly successful bullying prevention and equity and inclusive education programs entered their third phase this year. We continued to work with our project partner, le Centre ontarien de prévention des agressions (COPA), with a focus this year on promoting usage of our highly successful resource materials developed in earlier phases of the project, and on the continued provision of our whole-school training programs. There is also a small student engagement component to the project. I reported in the spring that we are using some leftover funding from last year to produce a printed version of our web-based professional learning module on bullying prevention. We anticipate that the book will be available in time for the beginning of the coming school year. Demand for the Safe@School resources continues to be very high, and we have received many compliments on the usefulness of the DVDs, books, buttons, posters and website from teachers and others. Just within the current school year, over 75,000 unique visitors accessed the website.

## Teachers' Gateway to Special Education

We have also experienced great success this year with our newly-launched, web-based resource on special education. Since the beginning of the school year, when the site was released, over 63,000 people have visited it. In the 10 months since it first went live, the site has garnered a great deal of attention and praise, and it was recently honoured by the Canadian Education Press Association with an award for excellence in the category of electronic publications.

We continue to work on developing some unique instructional images to include on the site. These should all be finalized and published to the site by the start of the coming school year.

## Survive and Thrive/Surmonter les défis

The Governors will recall that in the spring I reported on our decision to remove the registration requirement from *Survive and Thrive*, our online resource centre for beginning teachers, occasional teachers, mentors and teacher candidates. What this means is that we can no longer track the exact numbers of our target audience who register for the site, but the gain is that many teachers who previously would have left the site due to an unwillingness to register can now access the non-interactive resource areas. As evidence of this gain, since removing the registration requirement in April, we have had almost 10,000 unique visitors access *Survive and Thrive*.

## **OTF Professional Learning Program (2010-2011)**

### Professional Learning Newsletter

Again this year, two *Professional Learning* newsletters were developed in French and English to promote the initiatives of the *Professional Development* Project. The newsletters were distributed to each teacher in the Province in September and April.

### Media Violence Prevention Conference

*When Violence Becomes Entertaining: Recapturing Childhood and Adolescence from the Toxic Influence of Media* was held on October 15-16, 2010 in Toronto. There was representation from all four Affiliates with a total of 350 in attendance. This two-day conference explored a variety of violence prevention strategies and programs, many of which are highly applicable in the classroom. OTF brought together an impressive group of expert leaders in the areas of bullying prevention, violence prevention, safe schools and media literacy to share their expertise and explore the common elements of these challenges.

The conference featured, as keynote speaker, Lt. Colonel David Grossman, an internationally recognized scholar, author, soldier and speaker, Lt. Colonel Grossman made a return visit to our OTF Conference. The conference also featured Dr. Craig Anderson, a Professor of Psychology and Chair of the Department of Psychology at Iowa State University. In addition, S/Sgt. Robyn MacEachern, OPP addressed the issues associated with Cyber Bullying and Victim, A.R. related her story of Internet exploitation.

Along with our three keynote speakers, the conference featured a panel representative of police, students, parents, educators and advocates. The panel was moderated by CBC reporter Wendy Mesley. Also, a special session on the promotion of violence in sports included Dr. Peter Jaffe, Dr. Charles Tator and former NHL referee Ron Wicks.

Resources geared to teachers, including the recently released Safe@School resource, were provided to all participants. Teacher workshops on "Addressing Violence in the Media" project which included the recently developed resources with practical tools and skills specific to their grade/course/level were provided to teachers. Teachers' feedback was overwhelmingly positive. The OTF website has been updated to include links to keynote speakers' resources and to related Workshop resources.

### Thinking About Thinking

OTF hosted a very successful two-day conference, *Thinking About Thinking: Developing Curriculum to Nurture Critically Thoughtful Learners*. This conference was held in partnership with The Critical Thinking Consortium and facilitated by Garfield Gini-Newman on October 29-30, 2010 in Toronto. The purpose of the conference was to support classroom teachers in their own professional learning and provide them with effective strategies and a critical thinking framework to apply to their classroom practice.

This program has grown significantly over the last four years. There was representation from all four Affiliates with a total of 330 teachers in attendance. We had 42 AEFO members in attendance; as a result, we were able to bring Armelle Moran from B.C. to facilitate the identical program in French.

### Instructional Strategies for Integrating Technology into Curriculum: *Teaching and Learning in the 21st Century: An Inquiry-based Approach*

OTF recognizes the need teachers have for support in 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning as they strive to increase their knowledge and expertise in the area of Information Communication Technology (ICT). To meet these needs, OTF hosted a very successful three-day technology conference in Toronto, February 10-12, 2011. All four Affiliates were represented with a total of 160 teachers in attendance. Teachers' feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

Registration for this event reached capacity within an hour of the opening, leaving over 200 teachers on a waiting list. In response to the great demand, a second three-day conference was hosted in Toronto on July 20-22, 2011 as part of the OTF Summer Program. Once again, there was representation from all four Affiliates with a total of 160 teachers in attendance and over 70 teachers were left on the waiting list.

The goal of both conferences was to inform teachers on current Information Communication Technology using an inquiry-based approach. Teachers of all grades and subjects had the opportunity to examine ways to deepen student learning through technology-enhanced critical inquiry. Participants were provided with the opportunity to become fluent in specific technologies and leave with ideas and practical examples on how to effectively apply the technologies in their classroom practice. The facilitators for the conference were Will Richardson and Garfield Gini-Newman. A Panel Discussion with Will Richardson, Affiliate, teacher, student and Board representation addressed concerns regarding the use of Web 2.0 tools. OTF partnered with the Educational Computing Organization of Ontario (ECOO). ECOO

members offered technical support and shared their expertise as they facilitated the Minds on Media program on the third day.

The teacher feedback from both conferences was very positive and consistently indicated the need for more teacher support in this area.

### It's About Time

Over the last three years, the *It's About Time* program has offered teachers leadership opportunities through a problem-based learning model. Teachers have been given the time to direct their own learning and collaborate with team members to produce educational resources. These resources can be used in their own classroom practice and shared with colleagues across the Province on the OTF website. OTF has run five phases of the *It's About Time* program. The feedback and evaluations from teachers who participated have been consistently positive.

### OTF/Planet in Focus: Environmental Film Festival

To support teachers in their efforts to raise environmental awareness in their school communities, OTF, in partnership with Planet in Focus, assisted teachers in hosting a total of nine Environmental Film Festivals in communities across the Province. This project offered teachers a practical professional learning experience to develop and improve leadership skills along with collaborative team work.

Over the months of March, April, May and June, each of the chosen teams conducted very successful Environmental Film Festivals touching an estimated 15 000 Ontarians from diverse communities and schools across the Province. Each team selected powerful films appropriate for their particular viewing audiences and publicized their event to their communities. With ongoing support from Planet in Focus, the teams established dynamic, interactive and impressionable events, which actively engaged and united teachers, students, businesses and the community around the fundamental issues of environmental sustainability.

The OTF website has been updated to support all teachers interested in hosting an Environmental Film Festival in their school community. The website includes the OTF/PIF Environmental Film Festival Guide that gives teachers the steps on how to organize their own film festival, and the link to Planet in Focus.

### OTF 2011 Summer Programs

OTF offered a series of three-day workshops in July and August that provided opportunities for teachers to come together with colleagues to learn, reflect on their teaching practice and share what works in their classrooms. Five types of programs were offered: *A Sound Investment* Financial Literacy workshops, environmentally-themed *Going Green* workshops, Spirit Horse follow-up workshop, Critical Thinking workshops, and Subject-based workshops offered in partnership with numerous subject associations that are members of the OTF Curriculum Forum.

The OTF 2011 Summer Program far exceeded our expectations with over 1500 teacher participants. By comparison, last year's total registration for the Camp OTF 2010 workshops was 1128. The staff at the OTF office worked very hard throughout the spring and summer to ensure the smooth delivery of a total of 40 workshops across the Province.

Bark Lake	July 25-27 Aug. 8-10 Aug. 8-10 Aug. 8-10	Going Green Secondary CODE Integrated Arts (Environmental Focus) OMEA Integrated Arts (Environmental Focus) OSEA Integrated Arts (Environmental Focus)
Barrie	Aug. 3-5	ECOO Media Texts
Brampton	July 20-22	Financial Literacy Elementary/Secondary (FRENCH)
Fort Frances	Aug. 24-25	Going Green Elementary/Secondary Combined
Hamilton	July 12-14 July 25-27 July 25-27 July 25-27 Aug. 2-4	Going Green Elementary OMEA Accent on Music Learning (Gr. 1-6) ECOO Digital Storytelling Critical Thinking-Nurturing Intelligence in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century CODE Drama/Dance (Gr. 1-8)
Kingston	Aug. 10-12	Going Green Elementary
London	Aug. 17-19 Aug. 17-19 Aug. 17-19	OMEA Of Primary Importance (Gr. 1-6) ECOO Wikis and Web 2.0 Critical Thinking - Nurturing Intelligence in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century
Mississauga	July 18-20 Aug. 15-17	Going Green Elementary COEO Literacy/Numeracy (Environmental Focus)
Niagara-on-the-Lake	Aug. 3-5 Aug. 3-5 Aug. 3-5 Aug. 10-12 Aug. 10-12	Going Green Elementary Going Green Secondary Financial Literacy Secondary OMEA Revised Music, Grades 9-12 ELAN Critical Literacy
Oakville	July 4-5 July 6-7	OFSHEEA Introduction to Fashion (Gr. 9-10) OFSHEEA Advanced Fashion (Gr. 11-12)
Ottawa	July 26-28 July 26-28 Aug. 8-10 Aug. 10-12 Aug. 10-12 Aug. 17-18	Financial Literacy Elementary ECOO Cloud Computing ECOO Digital ClassWorks (Financial Literacy Focus) Critical Thinking - Nurturing Intelligence in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Critical Thinking - Nurturing Intelligence in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century (FRENCH) Going Green Elementary/Secondary (FRENCH)
Sudbury	Aug. 10-12	OAPT Physics (Gr. 11&12)
Toronto	July 6-8 July 12-14 July 12-14 July 18-20	OSLA Library Studies (Financial Literacy Focus) OMLTA Common European Framework Critical Thinking - Nurturing Intelligence in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Financial Literacy Secondary

July 18-20	CODE Integrated Arts/Critical Literacy
Aug. 8-10	Financial Literacy Elementary
Aug. 8-10	OPHEA Revised Phys.Ed.Curriculum (Gr. K-8)

Far North      Late August      Spirit Horse - three Follow-up Workshops (1 day each)

### OTF Ongoing Support: *OTF Connects*

OTF members have communicated to us a desire to continue learning through interactive online tools that suit every teacher's needs and schedule.

OTF has been helping build a teacher support network through online interactive web conferences with *Illuminate!* These sessions are designed to increase and support teacher knowledge and continue to connection teachers.

### Teacher Resources

OTF has been working with The Exclusive Group to develop the *Teacher Resources* section on the OTF website. The online *Teacher Resources* link will enable teachers to easily search hundreds of lesson plans and resources, searchable by curriculum language, subject, level, grade, focus and keyword. It will include resources that have been developed by the *It's About Time* teams, as well as environmental resources developed as part of the OTF Going Green program to support teachers with environmental education.

In addition, the OTF *Website Resources* will have listed a large number of Internet sites with links to valuable information on organizations and resources to assist teachers in their planning and professional development.

### PD Calendar

The PD Calendar was recently updated and improved making it more user-friendly. It continues to provide teachers with a current, searchable data bank of the wide array of professional learning opportunities available across Ontario and beyond. Thousands of teachers use the OTF PD Calendar to assist them with planning their personal professional learning. The calendar tracks subject association conferences, AQ and ABQ courses, Affiliate workshops, and events on a wide array of topics and across all grade levels. There are multiple search options and teachers can sign up for email notification of similar opportunities as they are added. Contributions to the Calendar can be made via the OTF website. We are asking the Affiliates to remind or inform members of OTF's PD Calendar found at [www.otffeo.on.ca](http://www.otffeo.on.ca)

### PD Video Series - Digital PD Videos: On-line and On Demand

OTF members can access in-depth professional development workshops from leading educational producers. These professional development programs consist of digitally streamed video, print, and web components that can be used in group sessions or individually. These programs are available 24 hours a day from the OTF website. This program will continue until the end of December 2011.

## Student Vote

Student Vote hosted a two-day *Democracy Bootcamp* conference April 14-15, 2011 in Toronto. The purpose of the conference was to increase the capacity and commitment among educators to deliver democratic engagement exercises and instill the skills and responsibilities of citizenship. A total of 334 educators attended Democracy Bootcamp with representation from 54 school boards across the Province. Approximately 57% of attendees came from elementary schools and 43% came from secondary schools.

## **POLICY AND LEGISLATION**

### **Student Achievement Division - Working Table**

This working table, previously two groups - the Literacy and Numeracy Working Table and the Student Success Working Table, is meeting this year on a more regular basis. Unhappily, the focus of the working table and, indeed of the division, remains the results of EQAO tests, most notably the Grade 3 and Grade 6 tests. This year the division is putting emphasis on improving the Math scores through initiatives around the teaching of numeracy. A number of years ago OTF and the Affiliates participated with the Government and others in a task force on this topic. Many of the recommendations have not yet been implemented. Federation representatives encourage the Government to revisit these recommendations and consider their implementation now.

### **Curriculum Advisory Committee**

Following the format from the two previous years, the Curriculum Advisory Committee (CAC) had one face-to-face meeting in November and two Adobe Connect meetings in January and April.

As I reported to Governors at the Winter Board, there was very little in the way of new information or progress on the many Ministry initiatives currently underway. A member participating in the Adobe Connect session in April asked, again, about the release of the Report and Recommendations from the Curriculum Council on the Elementary Curriculum Review and how it may impact future curriculum revisions. The standard answer was provided: There will be information released in the fall.

Some questions were asked about other Ministry initiatives including:

- Learning for All: Will there be any professional development or training for teachers?
- Financial Literacy (FL): Will there be a scope and sequence for FL as there was for Environmental Education? Will there be any professional development provided for boards and/or teachers?
- Healthy Schools: With the new elementary Health & Physical Education curriculum and its focus on reinforcing the messages about healthy living, are there supports for elementary teachers? When will the secondary curriculum be released?
- Full-Day Early Learning Kindergarten: Have the concerns raised by some Kindergarten teachers and parents been addressed before expanding the current program to even more schools?

- Growing Success: Will there be a common message about the variations in the interpretations of the policy?
- Ministry web-based resources: With so many good resources on so many different web sites, will there be some consolidation so that everything is available in one place?

The Ministry was vague with time lines for the release of new documents, information on further training for teachers and new initiatives.

## **Teacher Education**

Teacher Education continues to be an area of high priority for OTF. Whether through our Teacher Education Liaison Committees (TELCs) that operate at the 15 publicly-funded faculties and schools of education across the province, the policy work undertaken by the Teacher Education Staff Work Group, our ongoing meetings with the Ontario Association of Deans of Education (OADE), our extensive work with the Teaching Policy and Standards Branch of the Ministry of Education, or our frequent input into consultations by the College of Teachers, OTF's influence in the area of teacher education is well established and maintained.

### Faculty of Education Liaison

Our liaison activities this year began in earnest when we learned in late August that a number of bargaining units representing faculty, support staff and other workers at universities across Ontario were beginning negotiations, and were either already in legal strike positions, or would soon be so. Strikes by full- and/or part-time faculty at Western, Trent and Windsor were narrowly averted during the fall and early winter. In all cases, OTF worked diligently with the pertinent faculty associations, Deans, student associations and the Affiliates to ensure that all parties were made aware of OTF's Policy VIII. A. 6, which calls for the suspension of practicum in the event of a strike by faculty members.

As I reported to you in the spring, OTF participated in a total of 20 Federation Days across the province this year. Our Teacher Education Liaison Committee members also ran highly successful workshops, social issues days and conferences for teacher candidates at the faculties. The local TELCs met frequently – most commonly once every second month, but in some cases monthly – throughout the course of the university academic year. OTF's Director of Professional Affairs also continued to attend the monthly meetings of the OADE.

There were new Deans this year at OISE/UT, Brock and Laurentian (English), plus an Interim Dean at Western. We worked to welcome the new Deans and to engage them in productive dialogue with the Federation, positioning OTF and its Affiliates as partners in teacher preparation. As the year came to an end, we were sad to bid farewell to Pat Rogers, a longtime Federation friend, who has been the Dean at Windsor's Faculty of Education for many years. A search for a new Dean to replace Pat is still ongoing. We recently learned that Vicky Schwean from the University of Calgary has been appointed the new Dean of Education at Western, and we look forward to working with her in the year ahead.

### Teacher Education Policy

Both the Staff Work Group and the provincial Liaison Committee met four times this year. The main areas considered by the two groups included: faculty admissions and teacher supply and demand; funding cuts to the faculties of education that will decrease enrollment provincially by approximately 880 places; co-operation with the Ministry of Education to develop an online

survey on the topic of associate teaching; possible contravention of the Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT) by four provinces who have begun issuing sub-par teaching certificates to Ontario teachers; discussions with the OADE to revitalize the annual OTF/OADE Conference; input into the fifth phase of the Teachers' Qualifications Review (TQR) of the College of Teachers, and participation in the extensive review by the College of Additional Qualifications (AQ) course guidelines.

As was the case last year, the issue of funding to the faculties of education was once again a major policy focus area for the Federation. The Governors will recall that in the latter part of the 2009-10 school year, the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities (TCU), John Milloy, announced his intent to discontinue funding to the faculties of education of the so-called "1,000 spaces" (an amount of money that covers 882 spaces by today's funding allocations). These were the additional spaces that were added on a temporary basis in 2001 to address the teacher shortage of that time. True to his word, the Minister announced this spring that funding to the faculties of education will be cut by \$5 million in 2011-12 and by the full \$7.5 million in 2012-13 and beyond. At the request of the Executive, the President wrote in mid-April to the Minister to express our concern that the announced funding allocation had not been carried out in an equitable and transparent way, nor with due regard to the protection of high needs subjects and programs.

In the spring I reported to you on OTF's involvement in the development of an online survey on associate teaching, undertaken in cooperation with the Ministry of Education (EDU). The link to the survey went live on March 28, and remained accessible to members until April 15. In total, 4,313 responses in English and 594 responses in French were received. This was considered by all as a very healthy response rate. We now await the data analysis from the Ministry of Education. From our preliminary discussions with Ministry staff, it appears the findings are very much in keeping with earlier surveys run by the Federation, and there is nothing unexpected in teachers' assessment of the factors that make or break a successful associate teaching experience.

In terms of Labour Mobility and the AIT, we recently became aware that four jurisdictions – British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia – have introduced mechanisms for issuing lower categories of teaching certificates to teachers from out of province who are considered not to have met equivalent academic standards. Because of Ontario's shorter teacher preparation program, teachers from here are often deemed to be "less qualified" than those whose teacher education was undertaken in one of the above provinces. We have urged the Ontario Ministry of Education to pursue this matter, since the practice of issuing different categories of teaching certificates runs counter to the spirit of the AIT. The Deputy Minister has been in discussions with his counterparts in the four provinces. From what we understand, Saskatchewan has indicated some willingness to shift from its current position, BC a little less, and Alberta none at all. We have no information regarding the stance taken by Nova Scotia at the present time. Should any of these jurisdictions remain unwilling to change their current practice, EDU will ask the Government of Ontario to file a formal complaint through the process stipulated in the AIT.

### **Ministry of Education/Faculties of Education Forum 2011**

The Ministry/Faculty Forum was held at OISE on May 10-11, 2011 and involved 270 participants from the Faculties, the Ministry and Subject/Division Associations. The annual Forum is an opportunity for the Ministry to provide updates to Faculties of Education staff on current initiatives and policies; for the Faculties to share innovative and successful practices through

inter-faculty dialogue; and for Faculties of Education staff, Ministry staff and representatives from the subject and division associations to network. The theme for this year was: *Working together to support assessment for, as and of learning.*

The format for the two days is seven workshops of 50 minutes each, all based on the theme of assessment. At the end of the first day is an hour of subject-specific sessions, during which the subject association representatives provide updates from their organizations and participants are engaged in round-table discussions about the theme. This always provides rich networking and sharing of classroom practices.

The keynote speaker on the first day was Damian Cooper, an independent education consultant and retired English teacher, who specializes in helping schools and districts improve their instructional and assessment skills. His work is based on two principles:

1. Assessment must be good for students
2. Assessment must be manageable and efficient for teachers

The basis of his address was the "*Eight Big Ideas to Support Learning for All Students*", including detailed descriptors of assessment "for" and "of" learning.

The feedback from an online survey following the two-day Forum highlighted the keynote address and several of the sessions throughout the Forum.

### **Ontario College of Teachers (OCT)**

Overall, this has been one of the most collegial years of interaction between Federation and the College of Teachers since the College first began operating in 1997. Since the Spring Board, we have continued our regular meetings with College Councillors and staff. OTF and Affiliate staff officers met with the elected members of the College Governing Council, who are also OTF members, a total of four times this year, and the Executive also met with Council members in early September. Federation staff met with staff from the Investigations and Hearings, Standards of Practice and Accreditation, and Member Services Departments three times during the year. In addition to these meetings, the Registrar and Deputy Registrar continued to attend the regularly scheduled meetings of the Committee of General Secretaries whenever possible.

Over the course of the year, OTF and the Affiliates provided input to the College on a large number of consultations. This included feedback on seven Additional Qualifications (AQ) Course Guidelines, including AQs on Special Education, Science and Technology Grades 7 – 8, Associate Teaching and Teaching in a French Immersion Setting. The Federation also participated in a face-to-face consultation held in November exploring the possibility of creating a new three-part Additional Qualification on "Professional Leadership Practice". Another major consultation requiring our input occurred this spring, when the College launched the fifth phase of its extensive Teachers' Qualifications Review (TQR). OTF and Affiliate staff participated in two Adobe Connect briefing sessions and the Federation provided a formal position on the items under examination. Most significantly this year, OTF and the Affiliates were invited in the fall to name individuals to serve as "critical readers" for the College, as it developed its third ever professional advisory to members, this one addressing the use of electronic and social media. The finalized member advisory was made public in the spring, and it contained much of the advice provided by us on this topic.

In spite of a year marked mostly by agreement and accord, there were two main issues of contention between ourselves and the College. In January the Federation articulated its opposition to a set of legislative amendments that had been recommended by the Governing Council, and also communicated our concerns on these proposed amendments to the Ministry of Education. The amendments concerned the following Discipline issues:

- Publication bans
- Stays pending appeals
- Reinstatement hearings
- Disclosure of information
- Providing a member's response to the complainant
- The reporting process regarding Teacher Performance appraisals (TPAs)

More recently, the OTF Executive considered the issue of politically motivated complaints that are brought against members of the profession, when acting in their role as Federation leaders. We continue to investigate potential solutions to this issue.

### **Student Success/Learning to 18**

Very little has changed since I last reported to Governors. The Student Achievement Division (SAD), under the direction of Assistant Deputy Minister Mary Jean Gallagher, theoretically includes both the Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat (LNS) and the Student Success/Learning to 18 (SS/L18) divisions. However, the focus of the last few meetings has been mainly on improving the EQAO results in Mathematics for the Grades 3 and 6 Assessments.

It is almost certain that the current government will not meet its target of the 85% graduation rate before the next election. Normally, in June, there is an email to the members about a fall meeting date. This year there was nothing.

It is a sad comment on the system that after all of the positive changes and the re-alignment of education from K-12 over the last eight years, the gap between those on the ground (in the classroom) who are trying desperately to implement the changes and those who are creating the changes has only grown wider.

### **Student Assessment and Evaluation**

#### Growing Success

It has been almost one year since the implementation of the new assessment, evaluation and reporting document *Growing Success* (GS) First Edition, Grades 1-12. In that time, there have been countless problems encountered by teachers, administrators, students and parents. The biggest obstacle to its smooth implementation appears to be the differences in interpretation from board to board, from Principal to Principal and within school boards.

OTF and Affiliate staff responsible for assessment and evaluation met with assessment staff at the Ministry twice to discuss some of the issues arising from the implementation of GS. Requests were made to produce a directive explaining the entire policy, sent from the Deputy Minister to all Directors, Supervisory Officers and Principals. Part of the request was that the

message be made very clear to all education stakeholders: GS is policy and is not open to interpretation. Other issues that require clarification include:

- Solving the problems arising from the huge variations in technology across the province
- Explicit instructions about the completion of Progress Reports and the Provincial Report Cards
- The nature and intent of Progress Reports – being formative in nature and not evaluative
- The meaning of ‘professional judgment’, perhaps with examples of what is deemed professional judgment and what is not
- Differentiation between guidelines (suggestions) and requirements
- Positioning GS with the many other initiatives coming from the Ministry: Learning for All, the School Effectiveness Framework, etc.

To date, this request has not been met. Ministry officials predict that there will be more regional training sessions in the fall, when the Second Edition is supposed to be available for implementation. The Second Edition will include a section for the Full-Day Early Learning Kindergarten Program.

#### Education Quality and Accountability Office

In 2003, Dalton McGuinty made an election promise: that 75% of the 12-year-olds in Ontario would meet the Provincial Standard on Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) assessments by 2007. During the next election campaign, he was noticeably silent on this promise. When asked, however, he would repeat the 75% target with an extended time line of 2011. With the 2010 results in Reading and Writing at 72% and 70% respectively, and Mathematics at a much lower 62%, it is highly unlikely that the 2011 results will reach the 75% target.

With the new method of reporting on all four provincial assessments, in one report in mid-September and complete with co-hort tracking from Grade 3, it is much easier to use the results simply as an accountability measure. Unfortunately, the province continues to invest millions of dollars on the EQAO program, to the detriment of classroom instruction and real learning. Additionally, despite its clear mandate, EQAO continues to expand into areas that directly affect teaching and learning in the classroom.

As governors are likely aware, EQAO released the results from the 2011 Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) in mid-June. This year, 83% of first-time eligible English students were successful, indicating a drop by 1% from last year and another 1% from the previous year. The EQAO does not consider this decrease to be statistically significant. For French-language students writing for the first-time, 86% were successful. This is a 4% increase from the 2010 results.

Feedback from some parents about the new Individual Student Report (ISR), that includes the raw score on the OSSLT (between 200 and 400) and the student’s results on both the Primary and Junior Assessments of Reading, Writing and Mathematics, continues to indicate some confusion when they compare Achievement Levels (1, 2, 3 or 4) with a raw score.

## **PENSIONS**

As usual, the Pension Director's remarks on the events of the past year tell the tale of a year which was very eventful. Written as a continuation of the "ten chapter" 2010 report to the Annual Board of Governors, what follows is the year that was.

Chapter 11 – No! not the bankruptcy one.

As the OTPP story continues, we find the actuaries plying their craft in the preparation of a January 1, 2011, preliminary valuation. Rarely would one be excited about seeing a \$17.2 Billion shortfall emerge from their calculations, but when presented with the likelihood of a ≈\$30 Billion projection for 2012, it might not seem so bad. That was the case as Malcolm Hamilton and Scott Clausen presented the preliminary numbers to the Partners on February 17, 2011.

Even the presentation is probably worth a mention. When Jeff Holmes began this portfolio some eight years ago, he reports that Malcolm did his presentation with about nine people in the room - the OTF pension committee, two or three from the government, and a couple from the Plan. By this year, the crowd had grown to nearly 50 people.

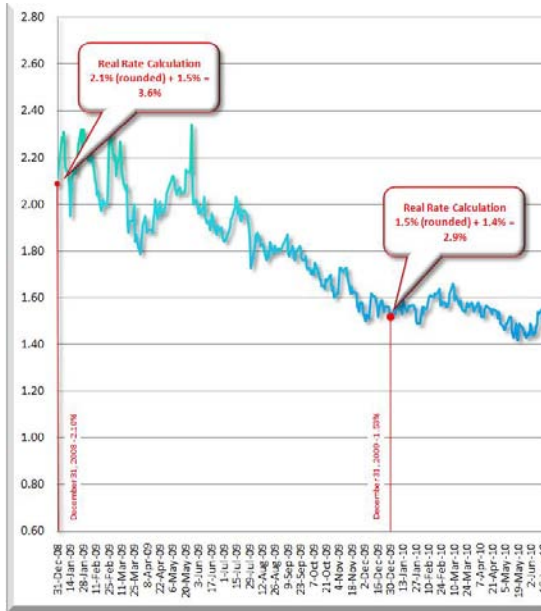
Governors will know that Ontario uses two different valuation bases. The first, the so-called Distribution Basis, values the Plan on the Real Return Bond (RRB) rate at December 31 of the valuation year plus a margin of 0.5%. The margin comes from the traditional spread between Ontario long bonds and their federal counterparts. If the fund is balanced at RRB +0.5%, everyone goes away happy. If not, the valuation moves to the Restoration Basis which, as of the September 2008 MOU, was set at RRB +1.4%. Those of you with long memories will recall that the Restoration Basis add-on used to be 1%, but the OTPPB agreed to move the add-on to RRB + 1.4% on a permanent basis in exchange for the de-risking of the Plan by the addition of Conditional Inflation Protection as part of the 2008 valuation.

At any rate, armed with the preliminary valuation, the Partners decided that it was worth considering filing and so, work began on the filing.

Chapter 12 – A Refresher on the Sustainability Working Group, Valuation Rates, and the FMP

Governors are well aware of the Sustainability Working Group (SWG), which met throughout 2009-10 under the help and guidance of Harry Arthurs and comprised senior folk from OTF, the government, and the Plan.

In its report, the SWG proposed a revamped process leading to a valuation. Among the processes was the option for the Partners to ask for an independent expert to consider the Plan's proposed valuation interest rate if that fell below the 3.575% used for the 2009 filing.



The chart to the left shows the progress of the RRB rate beginning with valuation day, 2008. The sharp-eyed among you will have little trouble discerning a drop from December 31, 2008 to December 31, 2009.

It's the former upon which we'll focus, since that's where the 3.575% begins.

One of the difficulties identified by the SWG, the Pension Committee, the Government, was the movable nature of the add-on for the valuation rate. Remember, in Chapter 11, I refreshed your memories about how the two valuation rates work. In point of fact, it has *never* worked that way.

The original Funding Management Policy that holds this rule said:

Distribution Basis      RRB +0.5%  
 Restoration Basis      RRB +1.0%

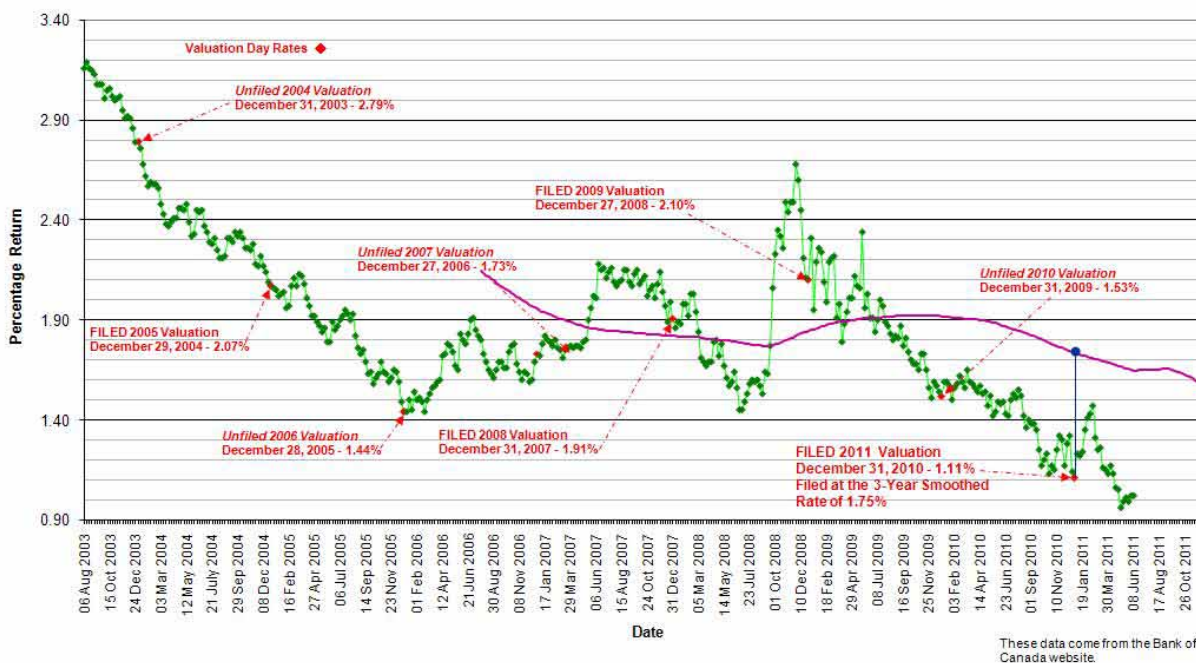
A little delving into the valuation history of the Plan will show that there's always been a Restoration add-on, but that it's never been 1.0%. It has been 1.625% and 1.5% and 1.4%, but it has always been a moving target.

### Chapter 13 – Another Helping of Smoothing, Anyone?

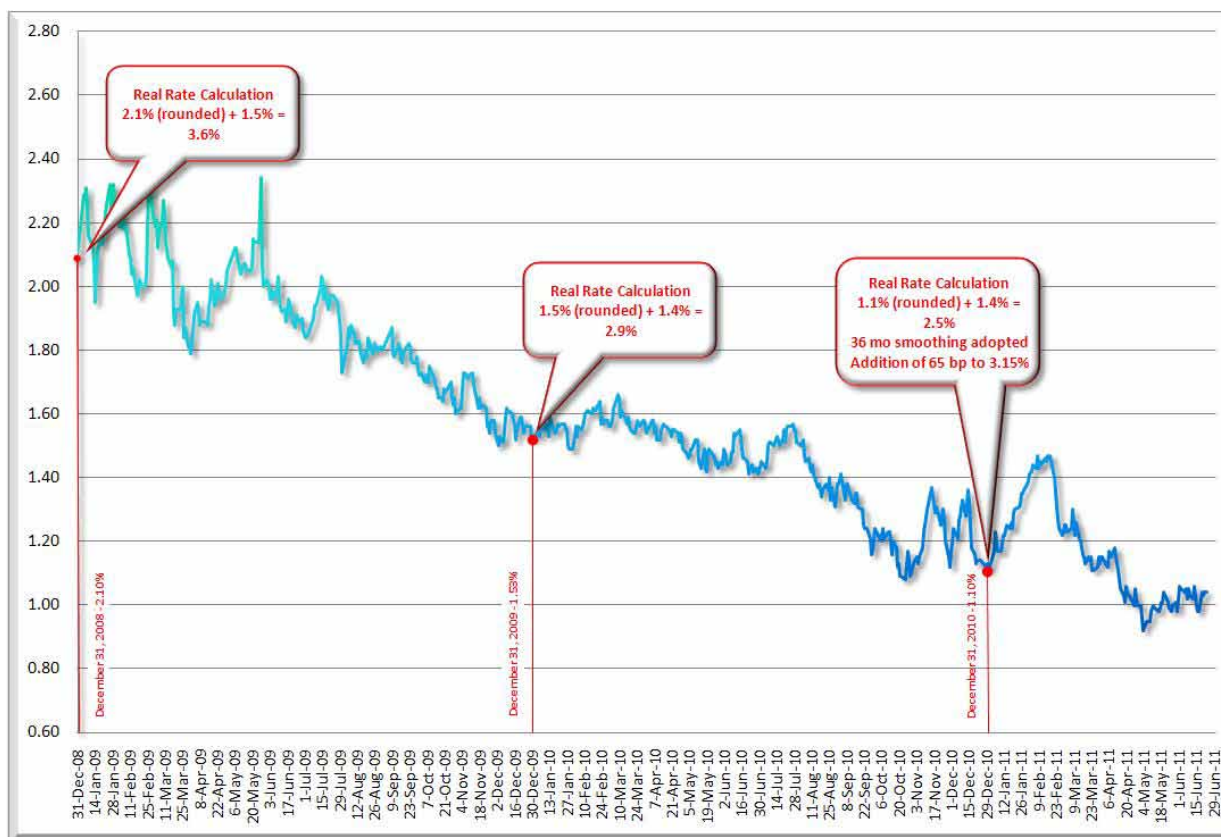
For several years, the Partners have been trying to persuade the OTPP that since the asset side of the balance sheet is smoothed, there would be merit in considering smoothing of the liability side as well. Just before the preliminary valuation was presented this year, the Plan announced its intention to smooth the RRB rate over three years.

As the chart on the following page shows, the RRB rate apparently knows no other direction but down, so by the time the preliminary valuation was done this year, the December 31, 2010 rate was 1.1%. Simply adding the 1.4% from the FMP would have yielded a valuation rate of 2.5%, which by anyone's measure would simply have been ludicrous. Even the OTPP Board acknowledged that valuing at that rate would have been catastrophic.

Real Return Bond Rate by Week - From August 2003



You can see from the chart above the effect that the three-year smoothing has on the RRB rate. The smooth line shows what the rate would have been if smoothed through the last several valuation days. Clearly the technique is quite helpful as the rate descends: when it's rising, not so much. The end result of the smoothing exercise was that it added 65bp to the 1.1% RRB number, so the starting point for our discussions was a preliminary valuation rate of 3.15%



## Chapter 14 – Enter the Hearing Officer (HO)

In an effort to pin the number down, the Partners agreed that it would be prudent to launch the Hearing Officer process. You'll recall from previous pages that the HO could be invoked when the valuation rate dipped below 3.575%. At that rate, the \$17.2 B deficiency virtually disappears, so the Partners had a particular interest in seeing how high the rate could legitimately and reasonably go.

The HO appointed was Jean-Pierre Provencher. Jean Pierre was once OTF's consulting actuary and is the former chairman of AON Consulting Inc. He was engaged to study the Plan's discount rate and to answer two direct questions: Is the proposed discount rate sound and reasonable? What is the reasonable range within which discount rates for the Plan could lie?

While the entire HO report is confidential to the Partners and Plan, Jean-Pierre did conclude that the OTPP's 3.15% starting point was reasonable as stated at [http://fundingyourpension.com/discount\\_rate\\_review.php](http://fundingyourpension.com/discount_rate_review.php).

## Chapter 15 – To the Climax, Then!

Thus began several weeks of intense activity. Among the other wrinkles, the normal September 30 deadline for a filing simply did not apply. We have a provincial election coming in October, so our government partner really needed to complete the valuation mid-June and OTF wanted to do so as well to allow time to communicate with teachers.

The weeks which followed were all consuming. In the end, an agreement was reached. As a result of the filing, the basic contribution rate becomes the rate that has been in effect since the 2006 filing, namely 10.4% below the YMPE/12.0% above it and there will be a three stage contribution increase of:

0.4% January 1, 2012  
0.35% January 1, 2013  
0.35% January 1, 2014, as well as the

Invocation of conditional inflation protection at 60%

In Ontario, all accrual after December 31, 2009 attracts indexation at a guaranteed 50%. Service prior to that date remains protected at 100% inflation.

## Chapter 16 – And How Did We Share This News?

Last year, in Chapter 2, we reported about sharing the message and the cooperative efforts of the Pension Communication Working Group. We jointly (OTF, the Government and, the Plan) have a website colloquially known as Switzerland because of its neutral nature. It is definitely

worth a look for all of the information found there. (<http://fundingyourpension.com/news.php> & [http://capitaliservotrrente.com/news\\_fr.php](http://capitaliservotrrente.com/news_fr.php) )



The use of the logo set above is one of the most powerful tools in our communications arsenal. When they appear on a document, the content becomes indisputable – agreed by OTF and all Affiliates, the Plan and the Government.

**FUNDING UPDATE** **JUNE 2011**

**2011 shortfall addressed with rate increases and change in inflation protection**

June 3, 2011 – The Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF) and the Ontario government have agreed to a tentative three-part plan to address the projected \$17.2 billion funding shortfall in the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan.

**The plan, which is subject to final approval by OTF and the government, includes:**

- A 1.1% contribution rate increase, phased in over the next three years
- Slightly smaller annual cost-of-living increases for teachers who retired after 2009
- Recognizing the current contribution rate as the permanent base rate

**Plan to address 2011 shortfall**

**CONTRIBUTION RATES TO INCREASE**  
Members will contribute an additional 1.1% of their salary to the Teachers' pension plan to help cover the 2011 funding shortfall. The increase will be phased in over three years, with members contributing 0.4% more in 2012 and 0.3% more in each of 2013 and 2014. All rate increases go into effect Jan. 1.

The 0.4% increase translates into an extra \$222 in contributions in 2012 for an average teacher earning \$55,000. This increase will be partially offset by lower taxes because pension contributions are tax deductible.

The Ontario government and other employers that participate in the pension plan will continue to match total contributions from their employees at the new higher rates.

**CONDITIONAL INFLATION PROTECTION REVOKED**  
This action only affects pensioners who retired after 2009. It has no immediate impact on working teachers because annual inflation adjustments (also called cost-of-living adjustments) are calculated only when a member retires, based on the plan's financial health at that time.

For the next three years, pensioners who retired after 2009 will receive 60% of the annual cost of living increase on the portion of their pension credits earned after 2009.

Increases for the portion of their pension credits earned before 2010 continue to match 100% of the annual change in the cost of living.

Because only a small portion of pension credits is affected, a typical pensioner who retired after 2009 will lose about \$2 in monthly inflation increases for three years.

The Ontario government and other employers that participate in the Teachers' plan will make extra contributions to the pension plan equal to the total cost of annual inflation increases that retirees forgo.

**CURRENT CONTRIBUTION RATE TO BE RECOGNIZED AS BASE RATE**  
The current contribution rate is now recognized as the permanent base contribution rate. Changing the base rate has no impact on what members contribute to the Teachers' plan. The base rate is used to project the value of future contributions in a funding valuation. The base contribution rate, to which the rate increases are being applied, is now:

- 15.8% of a member's annual salary up to the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) contributions and benefits limit plus
- 11.0% of any salary above the CPP limit.

Page 1

The funding announcements were created by the Communications Work Group (CWG) and posted there. In addition, the documents, one version for active members and one for pensioners, were sent to all plan members according to members' preferences. Some prefer to receive everything by email. For others, they still want the paper copies of notices, magazines, etc.

Notices also went into every school in the province both through a fax blast by the Plan and through the Affiliates.

On the same day that the communication began, June 3, all local presidents from around the province were brought to the Doubletree on Toronto's airport strip for a full information meeting.

The first half of the day was in joint session: the second, in Affiliate sessions. Each Affiliate has its own protocols,

including the requirement for members of OSSTF to have an all-member vote on pension valuations.

## Chapter 17 – But Wait, That's Not All

All of this valuation stuff might make you think that nothing else was happening in Pension World, but you would be wrong. As June wound down, we were served with yet another Human Rights Tribunal (HRT). This one involves over 80 complainants and comes from something called The Ontario Teachers' Survivor Benefits Group.

The basis of the complaint lies with how Ontario deals with survivor pensions. The Pension Benefits Act specifies that your spouse of record on the date of your first pension payment is entitled to a survivor pension. The OTPP duly notes those spouses and life (or death) goes on. For those spouses, their right to a survivor pension cannot be waived.

However, should you acquire a spouse, never having had one previously, having divorced prior to retiring and holding a waiver of the joint and survivor post-retirement death benefit, or through being widowed and remarrying, you can get a survivor pension for your spouse by taking an actuarial reduction.

The members of the Ontario Teacher Survivor Benefits Group (OTSBG) contend that that is discriminatory and all members should be entitled to a “free” survivor pension whenever they wish it. The Plan believes that it should have a right to prevent the Anna Nicole Smith situation in which a dewy-eyed twenty something marries a 96 year old member, and a year later becomes entitled to a 60% pension for life.

While that sounds a little improbable, I would point to the principal who, having retired in 1972 on a \$17 000 pension, died a year or so ago with his pension having escalated to \$93 000. Had he been so fortunate as to find love in his 106<sup>th</sup> year, the widow he left at 107 would have collected a not insubstantial \$55 800 pension for the rest of her life.

Given the speed at which the HRT operates in Ontario, stay tuned for an answer within a couple of years.

#### Chapter 18 – Recognition Comes to Him Who Waits

As a happier note to this somewhat doleful epistle, we are pleased to report that Murray Gold, our long serving pension counsel will be created a Fellow of the Ontario Teachers’ Federation at the annual meeting in a few weeks. It is difficult to imagine what we would do without Murray and his brain. He has provided invaluable counsel and continuity to OTF for almost two decades now.

#### Chapter 19 – Acknowledging another individual

We would be completely remiss if we did not report that Scott Perkin, Director, Plan Policy and Corporate Privacy Officer, no longer works at the OTPP. Scott has always been a good friend to the teacher pension world in general and OTF in particular. He is known across Canada for the role he has played in reciprocal agreements among teacher pension plans and he is missed by those who worked most directly with him – we at OTF and the pension committee in particular.

#### Chapter 20 – A Cloudy Crystal

Last year, the pension report ended on a fairly upbeat tone. Heading into this year, Ontario faces a provincial election in October and if the pollsters are correct, we may see a change in government. The last several years have seen a strong working relationship in our pension partnership. Combine the election with the RRB’s foray into uncharted territory, and it promises to be another fascinating year.

### **OTHER**

#### **International Assistance**

Later in this meeting, you will hear a report from the International Assistance Committee, and see a short visual presentation of the work it has accomplished this year. OTF received 354 requests for assistance; our largest number to date. We were able to fund (albeit partially), half

of these. As was the case last year, the growing number of requests we received put pressure on the amounts that could be allocated to each project once again this year. Nevertheless, we were able to fund projects across 22 developing countries, including India, the Philippines, South Africa, the Congo, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Togo, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, the Dominican Republic, Sri Lanka, Guatemala, Guyana, Jamaica, Nepal, Nicaragua and Romania.

As part of its work, the Committee continues to serve as the trustee of the Blanche Snell and Lesotho Educational Sustaining Funds.

### **Art for AIDS**

OTF supported this program this year. It involves the twinning of an Ontario school with a school in South Africa. Student art work is created by students from both countries and all students get the opportunity for arts workshops. After the art work is finished, copies are provided to the hosting organization and also sold to raise funds for non-governmental agencies in South Africa.

The Ontario school chosen for twinning was in Moosenee. The island school was also included. Hendrikus Bervoets indicates that the experience was very successful. We expect to see art work soon and to receive a report on other aspects of the program including the fundraising and students sponsorship in South Africa.

### **Aboriginal Literacy Camp**

OTF, once again, sponsored an Aboriginal Literacy Camp at Fort Hope and renewed our commitment to this program. Unfortunately, due to raging fires in the north which were threatening the communities, all the camp counselors were evacuated after the completion of the first session based on requests from the Ministry of Natural Resources.

### **Parry Sound Campground**

All seems relatively quiet on the Parry Sound front this summer. The registrar, Heather, reports that bookings during the early part of the summer were down considerably, likely because of wet conditions and poor weather. The heat of July, however, brought the campers out in droves, so year over year, utilization is up slightly. Our caretaker, Dave, says that the summer has gone well from his point of view. The water system is functioning well and the Ministry of the Environment is being provided with the required readings of water usage.

The only controversy seems to turn on Dave's decision not to allow "monster" trailers to block views of the water by taking waterside sites. It's a coin with two sides. The owners of the big rigs don't like the decision – everyone else is quite pleased.

Finally, trailer storage has become an issue. Trailers have been left – in some cases, for as long as eight years – with neither word nor payment from their owners. After numerous attempts to contact owners, Heather has been looking into the Repair and Storage Liens Act for a remedy. Before next summer, we will have revised the trailer storage policy to flush out the deadbeats.

## **CONCLUSION**

I would be remiss if I did not take this opportunity to thank those members of the Executive and Board who are leaving OTF for their service. Likewise, welcome to those of you new to OTF; we look forward to working with you and supporting you in your role as Governor.

You will undoubtedly have an interesting year.

Rhonda Kimberley-Young  
Secretary-Treasurer