

Report of the Secretary-Treasurer to the Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Ontario Teachers' Federation, August 23, 2016

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Governors, welcome to the 2016 ABG.

This report summarizes activities of OTF over the past year. Greater detail is provided on activities which have taken place since the OTF Spring Board meeting in April.

As Governors are aware, the Annual Meeting is a time for OTF to do its necessary business, but it is also a time to say farewells, to welcome those new to OTF and to hear reports from, and interact with, other partners and stakeholders in OTF's work and in education.

Francine LeBlanc-Lebel served as OTF President for a second time this year. Her term comes to a close with this meeting but I wish to thank her, on behalf of OTF and its staff, for her advocacy on behalf of the profession and for her support and friendship on a day-to-day basis at the OTF office. We also want to congratulate Francine on her recent election as Vice-President of CTF!

Francine selected Autism as an area of focus this year for OTF. We had a speaker from Autism Ontario at our Spring Board and will hear from a retired teacher at lunch about a book she has written on the founding of an organization to support autistic adults. We were also invited, for the first time this year, to participate in the Remembrance Day service at Queens' Park. Francine had the honour and privilege of representing Ontario's teachers on November 11<sup>th</sup>.

Mike Foulds will begin as President at the conclusion of today's meeting. We look forward to working with Mike and wish him a successful year here at OTF. His term will be starting as we begin a school year with a new Minister of Education, Minister Mitzie Hunter.

We will also be saying goodbye to Carol Jolin (AEFO) and Victoria Reaume (ETFO). We will miss Francine, Carol and Victoria at the OTF Executive table and wish to thank all of them for their able representation of Ontario's teachers. We wish them well. We look forward to working with Remi Sabourin (AEFO), Anne Vinet-Roy (AEFO) and Sharon O'Halloran (ETFO) over the coming year.

Although there are changes on the OTF Board of Governors as well, most Governors are returning. New Governors will be presented their OTF pins and those who are leaving the Board will be toasted and roasted at dinner tonight, in that order.

Although there are fewer changes in membership on the OTF Executive and Board this year, we will arrange an orientation session to both OTF and the OTPP for those who are joining the Executive or Board and for any Governors unable to attend the event last year. This will help new Governors better understand their role as a decision maker within OTF and with respect to the Teachers' Pension Plan.

During this meeting, we will hear from some guests and partners including RTO, CTF and the OTPP. We will have a panel of teachers who are experts at integrating technology in their classrooms and speak with them about the risks and opportunities of teaching and learning in an evolving digital world.

The OTF budget and fee were set at the spring board for the upcoming year; at this meeting we will review the year-end audited statements. Once again, OTF kept to its overall budget and is finishing the year with a surplus.

The budget and finance committee and OTF Executive supported OTF's purchase of a condominium for relocation of the OTF President. This will save OTF money and also adds to OTF's assets at the same time. It will also make relocation of the President easier for both the President and OTF's staff. The purchase and some minor renovations (covering lemon yellow, orange-orange, raspberry red and bright blue paint!) went relatively quickly and smoothly, thanks in large part to the work of OTF's Office / HR Manager and OTF staff.

Throughout the summer, teachers have been very engaged with OTF's Summer Institute program. Many others have completed Additional Qualification courses and were eligible for subsidies administered by OTF and funded by the Ministry of Education. Other teachers took advantage of OTF's campground on Quinn Lake. OTF will hold a technology conference here in the hotel over the next two days and play host to teachers from across Ontario. These varied activities kept the staff at OTF busy over the summer months. Now, staff are busily preparing for the normal fall activities and for the lineup of OTF Connects programs and collaborative learning projects (TLCs and TLLP).

There was also important pension news over the past year. Our Plan reported a surplus; this was excellent news! The Ontario government was taking steps toward the implementation of the ORPP before the recent federal announcements about CPP enhancement. As more is learned about the proposed implementation of CPP, Governors will be apprised. We also recently congratulated OTF's consulting actuary, Scott Simpson, on his retirement. As a result of Scott leaving, we met with several actuaries before recommending a replacement to the OTF Executive at our meeting yesterday.

A recent decision by the Plan has caused concern among OTF and the Affiliates; we'll have further opportunities to discuss this labour relations matter at our meeting.

Many visitors came to OTF over the past year. We often note these visits in OTF's newsletter, *Interaction*, but such visits are becoming increasingly frequent. These are very pleasant opportunities to engage with teachers, administrators, and government representatives from different jurisdictions and to learn from them and share our experiences.

We acknowledged Fellowship recipients at the banquet last night. Congratulations to all of OTF's newest Fellows. It is always wonderful to take part in these recognitions, just as it is to see returning Fellows join us for the annual OTF President's banquet.

Some of our programs started later this year due to labour actions as a result of very difficult negotiations between the Government of Ontario and the Affiliates. This meant that more activities were held in a shorter period of time than usual once things returned to normal. I wish to thank the OTF staff – secretariat, managers and support staff – for pulling together to meet the day to day needs and the many deadlines and additional requirements in the busiest times this past year. We also count on several contract staff and expert teachers to help us with our professional development programs and communication services. Thank you to all of OTF's staff for a busy, and successful, year.

## **ADVOCACY**

### **Word on the Street (WOTS)**

Word on the Street, an annual literacy festival traditionally held on the lawn of Queens' Park, was held at Harbourfront (for the first time) on Sunday September 27. The weather was beautiful and our booth was very busy, even busier than in the past. Bags were given to OTF members who visited and we had materials for parents and children as well. We appreciate the support from OTF staff and volunteers. We hope some OTF Governors will be able to join us this year and help out at the OTF table on Sunday, September 25th, 2016.

### **World Teachers' Day**

October 5, 2016 marked World Teachers' Day. OTF distributed the CTF posters. We issued a press release. The timing of this day near the OTIP Teaching Awards also allows us to celebrate the excellence of Ontario's teachers and is a public relations opportunity to inform the public about the importance of education and the contributions of the teaching profession. We noted the day in *Interaction*, via twitter, facebook, mailchimp and the OTF website as well.

### **OTF Website / *Interaction* / Communications**

This year, OTF's official Twitter handle (@otffeo) reached a new threshold of over 2,300 followers, up almost 400 over this time last year. The OTF PD twitter is also much appreciated by teachers following opportunities for professional learning.

OTF's facebook page is up to 1573 likes as of early August. We get many positive and appreciative comments for our page. It is another venue for teachers to interact directly with OTF (aside from calling or using the OTF web comments vehicle) and allows teachers to provide input or to ask questions of OTF about its programs and services.

Although the website has not had major changes over the past year, the usual content updates were made and it continues to prove a valuable communication tool.

Four issues of *Interaction* were published and distributed, primarily via email. We send 10 hard copies to each local Affiliate office and act upon requests for any additional copies. We also distribute copies if we are setting up a display table at a specific event and we have done several such events over the past year, including display tables at Affiliate AGMs. We also

continue to use OTF's pamphlet "Who Does What? Qui fait quoi?" at such events and get very positive feedback.

To support OTF's other programs, we are currently working to replace the Survive and Thrive website. Additionally, with a provider, we significantly enhanced the online data base tool used for online applications for additional qualification subsidies. Some initial glitches were resolved and this new tool makes the processing of applications easier, especially for the applicant.

We have developed and distributed several pamphlets, flyers and posters specific to OTF events and programs. Our voluntary email list, OTFNews and OTFLearning, developed using mail chimp now have over 10,000 subscribers each.

OTF issued a limited number of press releases (World Teacher Day, OTIP Awards, new Minister of Education, response to the Auditor General report etc.) but more frequently, we share information via the mailchimp vehicle to our self-selected audience.

### **Support and Coalitions / Political Parties**

The longest ever federal election came to an end in November with the election of a Liberal Government. OTF did not host any suites at political conventions this past year and attendance at any political fundraising events was minimal.

We meet regularly with Ministry staff from various departments as well as the Minister herself. Much of the political action and public relations in which OTF engages is with other partners and stakeholders. We have offered some support over the past year to the Broadbent Institute, CIVIX, the Coalition for Better Childcare, Canada without Poverty, World Festival of Children, Keep the Promise, Autism Ontario, and Indspire among others.

Ongoing relations and interactions take place with many Ontario-based education organizations such as Frontier College (who administer the Aboriginal Literacy Camps initiated by former Lieutenant Governor James Bartleman), the Retired Teachers' of Ontario, subject associations, Learning for a Sustainable Future, principals' organizations, faculties of education, the OCT, trustee and board administrative organizations, the Workers' Health and Safety Centre and, of course, the Canadian Teachers' Federation.

### **OTIP Teaching Awards**

On September 29, 2015, three outstanding teachers were recognized in three categories with OTF/OTIP Teaching Awards. The full report of the Awards Committee is found under separate cover. OTF wishes to acknowledge the generous contribution of OTIP in sponsoring the awards and providing an excellent venue at the banquet during their annual benefits conference. At that same ceremony, TFO awarded its prix d'enseignement to Brian St. Pierre, a theatre and music teacher at l'école secondaire catholique l'Escale de Rockland.

The following educators received the OTIP Teaching Award:

- Sandra Dubreuil, W.H. Morden Public School, Oakville - Beginning Teacher Category
- Melanie Brown-Robson, Lakeview Public School, Grimsby - Elementary Teacher Category
- Jim Magwood, Lisgar Collegiate Institute, Ottawa - Secondary Teacher Category

This year's honourees will be announced at the time of the OTIP banquet on September 27, 2016. Nominations for the upcoming year will open on January 1, 2017.

### **Greer Award**

The Greer Award was presented to Taylor Gunn at the Spring Board of Governors. It was OSSTF's turn to nominate the winner this year. Taylor Gunn's project, Student Vote, and the organization he founded (CIVIX), have provided excellent and valuable student engagements programs since their inception. Every year, more students take part in mock elections and similar civic engagement programs in schools. It was OTF's pleasure and honour to recognize Taylor for this work.

### **International Visitors**

We had a number of international visitors this year. We met with educators from the Netherlands, Sweden (two separate visits), Denmark, the United Kingdom (including representatives from each of England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales). Additionally, OTF is partnered with the Alberta Teachers' Federation and the Norway Teachers' Union through the NORCAN project. Plans are underway to meet with a Japanese delegation in November 2016.

### **TVO TeachOntario**

As the Governors are aware, OTF has been a partner with TVO since the 2013-14 school year in the broadcaster's online resource for teachers, *TeachOntario*. The project was developed by TVO, under the direction of Karen Grose (Vice President of Digital Education), in partnership with OTF, its Affiliates and the Ministry of Education, and in consultation with teachers (predominantly TLLP participants) from a variety of districts across the province. The model followed has been very much focused on a "for teachers by teachers" approach, and Karen and her team have remained completely committed to this principle throughout the process.

TVO has positioned *TeachOntario* as a central part of the organization's strategy to be the Government of Ontario's partner for digital learning, inside and outside the classroom. Created to support sharing, collaboration and knowledge exchange amongst educators across Ontario, *TeachOntario's* collaborative format allows teachers to share ideas and to stay up-to-date on the latest teaching and learning, digital tools, and professional development. The success of this online community, which now has over 5,000 users, is touted by TVO as further proof that collaboration among teachers for teachers leads to successful initiatives such as this.

In early February, *TeachOntario* was awarded the prestigious Deloitte IPAC Public Sector Leadership Award for 2015. The news release from TVO acknowledged the partnership with OTF and its Affiliates, as well as the work done by our members across the province.

It therefore came as no surprise to us that, when TVO decided it would hold a formal launch of the *TeachOntario* platform on March 31, 2016, it chose to do so at a publicly-funded school, and to include the OTF President in both its media release and as a formal speaker at the event. The OTF President did a stellar job of representing the teachers of Ontario. According to sources close to the scene, Francine was “inspirational”. Karen Grose wrote and told us: “Her remarks were so eloquent – and really focused in on the remarkable job teachers do every day to guide and inform the lives of students!!!!” It is very gratifying that our President and several of our teacher members were spotlighted at this event, celebrating the work of Ontario’s teachers.

TVO is hoping to unveil a new feature on *TeachOntario* on August 31 that will highlight 10 TLLP projects in the Explore section of the site. Inspiring, creative, multimedia blogs, detailing the TLLP teachers’ learning journeys, will be showcased, with two new TLLP projects added each month. As is clearly evident, the partnership with TVO has not only yielded positive impacts for our members, it has also helped further cement Federation’s longstanding relationship with the broadcaster.

### **Aboriginal Education**

The lion’s share of OTF’s work in Aboriginal Education is conducted through our representation on the Minister’s Advisory Council (MAC) on First Nation, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) Education, and on the sub-Working Group that meets on a more frequent basis, in between the meetings of the main Advisory Council. This year, we attended a full eight meetings of the Council and Working Group! The increased activity of this school year no doubt reflects the renewed commitment by the Ministry to consult extensively with Indigenous groups on the Ministry’s FNMI Policy Framework and Implementation Plan.

As mentioned elsewhere in this report, OTF has also collaborated with COPA on a project to adapt COPA’s *Circle of Caring* toolkit for First Nations, Métis and Inuit parents to create a resource to support teachers and education workers in our work with Aboriginal students.

Lastly, through the funding we received for Revised Curriculum, OTF was able to offer several Summer Institutes addressing critical Aboriginal Education themes and issues this summer. These included a session entitled *Revitalizing Our Classrooms with Indigenous Thinking*, our first ever Summer Institute to be offered on reserve (New Credit and Six Nations)! Also offered in July by the First Nations, Metis and Inuit Education Association of Ontario (FNMIEAO) were sessions in Sudbury and Windsor: *Supporting Nishinabemwin Teaching Proficiency (Nishinabemwin Language Teachers)* and *Decolonizing Our Elementary Classrooms: Focusing on Mathematics and Social Justice Issues (Grades 1-8)*. In August, FNMIEAO offered a further workshop in Ottawa, entitled *Kakina ni Dodem (“All My Relations”) A Workshop on Culturally Responsive Indigenous Education (ECE and JK-12)*. Finally, we were thrilled to be able to include in our Summer Institute offerings a workshop on the residential school system, offered by the organization Facing History and Ourselves in early August at Algonquin College in

Ottawa and entitled *Stolen Lives*. A CBC reporter out of Ottawa got wind of the seminar, and it was consequently covered extensively on radio, TV and internet news media.

### **OPSBA Children and Youth Mental Health Coalition**

This broad-based coalition was established by, and continues to be coordinated by, the Ontario Public School Boards' Association. The Summit, "Moving from Policy to Practice through Collaboration" was held on April 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> at the Allstream Centre in Toronto. Normally, OTF would attend and have some involvement in the Summit but this year it conflicted with the OTF Pension Forum and the Spring Board of Governors' meeting. We continue to be members of the coalition.

### **WHSC – Workers' Health and Safety Centre**

The OTF Secretary-Treasurer is a member of the Board of the Workers' Health and Safety Centre. The WHSC offers training to employers and employees on workplace health and safety. OTF has played a key role in supporting programs like the Young Workers' Awareness Program (YWAP). Last year the Ministry of Labour denied funding for this program. Since that time, the YWAP has not been offered. The WHSC, with the support of OTF, teachers who used the program and many unions, would like to see the program reinstated and have been requesting a resumption of funding.

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS**

### **Teacher Learning and Leadership Program (TLLP)**

This year, we had the pleasure of celebrating the entry of the 10<sup>th</sup> cohort of the Teacher Learning and Leadership Program (TLLP). Ten years is a long time, and as Government-funded initiatives go, a *very* long time! Not only has the TLLP endured over a decade, it has literally soared to become recognized locally, nationally and internationally as an exemplary model for teacher professional learning, leadership development and knowledge mobilization.

As in previous years, the main pieces of our involvement in the TLLP this year included the following:

*Sharing the Learning Summit*, where TLLP participants who have run their projects in the previous school year gather together to share their leanings and accomplishments through the program. Due to the labour challenges of the Fall, this year's Summit was postponed from its usual November date and held instead on February 18 - 19, 2016. The event brought together a total of 228 TLLP participants who presented 111 projects, and also included 47 guests and speakers. For the first time since its inception, the Summit was held on two weekdays rather than overlapping with a weekend, owing to additional release time funding provided by the Ministry.

*Selection of the next TLLP cohort*, accomplished by a joint Ministry-Federation committee, known as the provincial Teacher Learning and Leadership Committee (TLLC). The TLLC considers up to two applications per school board, selected by joint board-Federation teams from across the province. This year, the TLLC met on January 28 to consider how it would proceed with the selection of the TLLP projects that will run in 2016-17.

*Leadership Skills for Classroom Teachers Training Session*, which is the beginning point of every approved TLLP project, as it provides the teachers whose proposals have been selected to participate in the TLLP with the specific skills they will need to effectively manage their projects and to share their learning with others. The content of the session includes practical project management, TLLP networking expectations, data gathering and reporting, conflict management, workshop and presentation skills, to name just a few areas. This year, the Training Session was held on May 4 – 6, 2016 and included 232 participants in 112 projects, plus 32 speakers and guests.

We continue to work with Rosemary Clark and Mike Budd, who coordinate and facilitate the Summit and the Training Session, resulting in events that are highly successful. Feedback from participants continues to be overwhelmingly positive and we are very gratified by the accomplishments of the program. We also continue to work with our lead researchers, Carol Campbell (OISE), Ann Lieberman (Stanford) and Anna Yashkina (OISE), who are engaged in a longitudinal study that to date has consistently attested to the tremendous impacts and accomplishments of the program. Carol and Ann write profusively about the TLLP, publishing many articles in key academic journals and presenting about it at conferences everywhere. This spring, we were invited to present with them at a prestigious “Presidential Session” of the American Education Research Association (AERA) Annual Conference. We have also been invited to present the project with Carol this coming January at the International Congress for School effectiveness and Improvement (ICSEI) to be held in Ottawa. We are eagerly awaiting the publication of a book by the three researchers, dedicated entirely to the TLLP, and scheduled to be released at the end of the summer.

### **NORCAN project**

As an offshoot of the TLLP, OTF has been engaged since the fall of 2014 in a pilot partnership initiative with the Alberta Teachers’ Association (ATA) and the Union of Education Norway (Utdannings-forbundet), called NORCAN. The question guiding the NORCAN partnership is: how can an international network of schools and educators committed to mindful leadership help to identify obstacles to students’ mathematics learning and develop strategies for attaining success? By collaborating across jurisdictions, educators and students involved in NORCAN are investigating diverse approaches to improving student learning in Mathematics, and are simultaneously developing teacher, principal and student leadership in their respective schools. The project also includes an explicit focus on equity, since Math is often used as a mechanism for sorting and ranking students in both developed and developing countries.

In early May, OTF and the Ministry jointly hosted the first meeting of the NORCAN project involving students, teachers and administrators. While previous meetings have been held in Norway and Alberta, the meeting of this May was the first hosted in Ontario and was also the first time students were included in the proceedings. In total, 36 students and 49 adults from four schools in Alberta, three schools in Norway and two schools in Ontario (Monsignor Pereyma in Oshawa and Tecumseh Vista Academy in Windsor) came together over the course of the week-long event.

The strongest themes to emerge from the gathering were in the areas of growth mindset, Math Councils and student work study projects. Student voice was also a particularly large focus of the meeting.

Four students and two teachers from Fort McMurray were among the participants. It was extremely moving to witness the emotional and practical support offered to them by the students and adults from all of the NORCAN schools in the wake of the tragedy that struck their home community. Teachers at Monsignor Pereyma volunteered each day to do the laundry of the Fort McMurray participants, and the entire school community took up a donation to provide care packages and money for them. Not a single detail was overlooked, including making available social workers and counselors from the board office.

UOIT hosted a special student Math and Leadership camp and fed the entire group for a day and a half, all at no cost to us.

Overall, the meeting was a huge success, and we are confident that the research findings that will be forthcoming from the two lead researchers, Dennis Shirley of Boston College and Mona Rosseland of Universitetet i Agder, will point to the tremendous value and potential of such cross jurisdictional, networked learning communities.

### **Professional Development Projects for Math, Kindergarten and Technology-Enabled Teaching and Learning**

As Governors will recall, in the spring of 2015, OTF halted all new PD activities funded under this initiative, as well as the AQ subsidy program during the course of collective bargaining. Once the labour situation was resolved, OTF and Affiliate staff worked over the winter months to renegotiate the pending professional development agreements with the Ministry. These included contracts using new funding as well as the expending of residual funds that were left over from our extensive PD work of last year. All of the timelines from the initial proposals had to be shifted, and in some cases, activities had to be re-conceptualized or withdrawn.

While it took some time, we were able to successfully finalize agreements with the Ministry in the areas of Revised Curriculum, Math, Kindergarten and Technology-Enabled Teaching and Learning.

As was the case last year, the main activities covered under the new contracts signed by the Federation with the Ministry include four main approaches:

1. face-to-face, intensive summer learning institutes, offered over three consecutive days;
2. face-to-face, intensive professional learning conferences and symposia, offered centrally or regionally over one to two days, both during the summer and the school year;
3. ongoing learning experiences, guided by teacher leaders with expertise in the various subject areas, offered predominantly through distance (online) education; and
4. teacher-developed and self-directed collaborative inquiry projects, through which teachers can work together, reflect on and share their learnings over the course of the school year.

### **AQ Subsidies – Mathematics, Technology and Kindergarten**

From April 1, 2014 to April 30, 2015, and again from February 1, 2016 to the present, OTF and OECTA have administered a subsidy program for teachers who enroll in and complete Math AQ, ABQ or prerequisite courses. Additionally, from February 1, 2016 onwards, OTF has also administered subsidies for Kindergarten Aqs and Technology Aqs. Through the Ministry-funded program, members are eligible to receive a subsidy of up to \$450 per course.

Since beginning the subsidy program, more than 6,000 subsidies have been issued to teachers who have successfully completed Math Aqs, ABqs and prerequisite undergraduate courses. At the time of writing this report, OTF had so far also received 738 applications for Technology AQ subsidies and 1,126 applications for Kindergarten AQ subsidies.

As part of our contract deliverables, OTF agreed to create and administer a simple survey to ascertain the impact of the Math subsidy program. An online survey was designed with extensive input from OTF and Affiliate staff, and administered over a three-week period in March/April 2016. Of the 5,240 emails sent, 1,489 responses were received, including 1,471 in English and 18 in French – a 28% response rate, which is high enough for drawing conclusions of statistical significance.

The survey results are extremely encouraging and provide a solid basis for the continuation of the subsidy program. The main highlights include:

- Close to 50% of respondents learned about the subsidy program through OTF and Affiliate communications.
- A full 96% said that the subsidy influenced their decision to take the Math course(s) they did, with 32% saying that they would not have taken the course(s) without the subsidy.
- Close to 60% said the primary reason they took the course(s) was to improve instructional and assessment practices or to improve confidence in Math.
- 92% felt the course(s) improved their confidence in Math content/concept knowledge, with 61% citing considerable or large increases in confidence.
- 94% felt the course(s) improved their confidence in instructing Math, with 64% citing considerable or large increases in confidence.
- 96% felt they had changed their instructional and assessment practices, with 62% saying they changed their practices considerably or completely overhauled their teaching.
- 94% attested to having shared ideas/experiences/knowledge from the course(s) with colleagues.

## **Safe@School**

Throughout this year, we have continued our successful partnership with the Centre ontarien de prévention des agressions (COPA) on our highly successful bullying prevention, equity and inclusive education project, Safe@School. The main activities of the current year's work have included teacher professional learning and mentorship in prevention education, as well as targeted outreach and training for at-risk students, parents, guardians and caregivers. The project has enabled us, in particular, to reach individuals from marginalized groups and to offer adapted training to meet their specific needs. An additional component of our most recent Safe@School project entails the creation of resources for teachers and school staff in the area of character development and leadership.

Safe@School continues to garner attention and praise from all corners of the province and even internationally. This year the Flemish Ministry of Education in Belgium chose to translate and adapt our *Creating Safe Schools* guide book for teachers in their jurisdiction.

OTF and the Affiliate staff have also worked with COPA this year to adapt COPA's highly successful *Circle of Caring* toolkit for First Nations, Métis and Inuit parents. The adapted resource, entitled *Joining the Circle*, is intended to support teachers and education workers in our work with Aboriginal students. The adapted resource will be released into the field in the early fall, and will include a web-based professional learning module, with a series of animated films provided in English, French and six native languages.

## **Survive and Thrive/Surmonter les défis**

Work on rebuilding OTF's successful website for beginning teachers, occasional teachers, mentors and teacher candidates, Survive and Thrive, began in earnest last summer and through the early fall, but was temporarily put on hold in the winter months due to other priorities faced by staff. In the spring, we were able to return to the task of re-populating the re-conceptualized website, and we now hope to be able to launch the revitalized Survive and Thrive online portal in time for the beginning of the new school year. We are confident that the new and improved site will engage a new generation of socially-connected young teachers, leveraging social networks such as Facebook and Twitter.

## **OTF Summer, 2016 Professional Learning Opportunities (Revised Curriculum)**

Harnessing funding from the Ministry of Education, OTF worked with Subject/Division Associations and other third parties and individuals to offer 20 three-day revised curricula summer institutes. These summer institutes, hosted regionally across Ontario, helped build the capacity of our members to implement recently revised and released curricula (2013-2016) including:

- Grades 1-8: Social Studies, History and Geography;
- Grades 9-12: Canadian and World Studies; First Nation, Métis and Inuit Studies; Social Sciences and Humanities;
- Grades 1-12: French as a Second Language.

Response rates for many of the summer institutes was strong although overall registration and participation rates were lower than they were in 2014.

### Summer Institutes 2016

After a one-year hiatus, the summer of 2016 saw a return to the OTF Summer Institutes professional learning opportunities for teachers across the province. In total, 657 teachers registered for the 32 Institutes which were offered from July 4<sup>th</sup> to August 12<sup>th</sup> with an average of 20 participants. OTF exceeded its mandate in providing 10 IC Technology, 3 Mathematics and 20 Revised Curriculum Summer Institutes. The hard work of OTF staff, our site co-ordinators and our facilitators was exemplary throughout. Specifically, Amy Mailhot and Diana Wilson contributed beyond expectations.

The specific courses which OTF presented are charted below:

Workshop date	Location	Presenter/Workshop title	Focus	# of Registrants
July 5-7	Niagara	Derrick Schellenberg - Edtech Camp for Ontario Educators (Grades 1-12)	Technology	29
July 5-7	Oakville	Maria Vamvalis - Caring Deeply for the World: Engaging Students in Inspiring Geographic Inquiry (Grades 7-8)	Revised Curriculum	6
July 5-7	Oakville	Multiple SD/As - Full STEAM Ahead	Revised Curriculum	27
July 6-8	London	OAJE - Integrating IT: How Google Apps for Education Can Drive Learning in Your Classroom (Grades 2-6)	Technology	8
July 6-8	London	OAPT - Teaching Inquiry through Science and Physics! Exploring STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) (Grades 9-12)	Revised Curriculum	19
July 11-13	New Credit	FNMIÉAO - Revitalizing Our Classrooms with Indigenous Thinking (Grades 9-12)	Revised Curriculum	20
July 13-15	Toronto	Derrick Schellenberg - Edtech Camp for Ontario Educators (Grades 1-12)	Technology	22
July 13-15	Toronto	Kyle Pearce - Sparking curiosity to promote inquiry and Productive Struggle (Grades 4-12)	Technology	15
July 18-20	Toronto	Brian Aspinall - Computational thinking & Coding in Math and Literacy (K-8)	Technology	27

July 18-20	Toronto	Mali Bickley/Jim Carleton - Lights, Camera, Action: Using iPads, Mobile Devices and Computers for Digital Storytelling to Support Curriculum (K-8)	Revised Curriculum	25
July 19-21	London	Jackie Calder - Technology Enabled Learning to Support Deep Learning Experiences (Grades 6-12)	Revised Curriculum	10
July 19-21	London	Maria Vamvalis - Caring Deeply for the World: Engaging Students in Inspiring Geographic Inquiry (Grades 7-8) -	Revised Curriculum	10
July 20-22	Niagara	Susan Watt/Trish Morgan - Empowering Learners Using Technology in the Classroom (Grades 1-8)	Technology	27
July 20-22	Niagara	Garfield Gini-Newman - Inspiring Awe and Wonder Through Sustained Inquiry (Grades 1-12)	Revised Curriculum	27
July 20-22	Niagara	Laura Gini-Newman - Creating a Thinking Mathematics Classroom: Transforming Learning in Mathematics through Critical Inquiry (K-12)	Mathematics	27
July 20-22	Sudbury	FNMIEAO - Supporting Nishinabemwin Teaching Proficiency (Nishinabemwin Language Teachers)	Revised Curriculum	11
July 25-27	Niagara	Brian Aspinall - Computational thinking & Coding in Math and Literacy (K-8)	Technology	27
July 25-27	Niagara	OAJE - Integrating IT: How Google Apps for Education Can Drive Learning in Your Classroom (Grades 2-6)	Technology	27
July 25-27	Niagara	OMLTA- Supporting the Revised FSL Curriculum at the Secondary Level (Grades 9-12)	Revised Curriculum	15
July 25-27	Windsor	FNMIEAO - Decolonizing Our Elementary Classrooms: Focusing on Mathematics and Social Justice Issues (Grades 1-8)	Revised Curriculum	19
July 27-29	Toronto	OESSTA - Implementing the Social Studies, History and Geography (SSHG) Curriculum in Ontario Classrooms (Grades 1-8)	Revised Curriculum	17
July 27-29	Toronto	Mary-Kay Goindi - Teaching Elementary Math in 2016: A Play-Based, Problem-Solving, Makerspace Approach (Grades 1-8)	Mathematics	24
Aug 2-4	Ottawa	FHO - Stolen Lives: The Indigenous Peoples of Canada and the Indian	Revised Curriculum	25

		Residential Schools (Grades: 6-12)		
Aug 2-4	Ottawa	Multiple SD/As – Full S.T.E.A.M. Ahead	Revised Curriculum	28
Aug 3-5	London	Garfield Gini-Newman - Inspiring Awe and Wonder Through Sustained Inquiry (Grades 1-12)	Revised Curriculum	30
Aug 3-5	London	Laura Gini-Newman - Creating a Thinking Mathematics Classroom: Transforming Learning in Mathematics through Critical Inquiry (K-12)	Mathematics	24
Aug 3-5	London	OHASSTA - HELP - Engaging Critically in revised History, Economics, Law and Politics curriculum. (Grades 10-12)	Revised Curriculum	12
Aug 8-10	Toronto	Mike Clare - iBookHack (K-12)	Technology	19
Aug 8-10	London	LSF - Learning to be Engaged Citizens: Applying Authentic Inquiry in Social Studies (Grades 1-8)	Revised Curriculum	16
Aug 10-12	Ottawa	FNMIEAO - Kakina ni Dodem ("All My Relations") A workshop on Culturally Responsive Indigenous Education (ECE and JK-12)	Revised Curriculum	25
Aug 10-12	Ottawa	OSLA - Canadian and World Studies - Journey to Canada: The Learning Commons Approach (Grades 7-12)	Revised Curriculum	16
Aug 10-12	Ottawa	OFSHEEA - Family Studies 2.0: Googlify Your Courses (Grades 9-12)	Revised Curriculum	10

As always, we are most encouraged by the feedback of the participants. To date, the participants have been rating the Summer Institutes favourably at more than 90%. Below you will find a sampling of the comments which have been consistently repeated on the evaluation forms.

*"Instructors were knowledgeable, passionate, engaging, and very empowering!"*

*"Materials were excellent, overall fantastic experience!"*

*"Excellent institute! Well-organized, relevant materials, authentic information, and excellent facilitators."*

*"Institutes were excellent and went well beyond expectations."*

*"Continue to offer high quality professional development institutes with authentic experiences."*

*"Fantastic opportunities to have engaging discussions with colleagues and being able to meet teachers across all school boards."*

*"Provided authentic and practical ideas to use in the classroom."*

*"Practice and exposure to new technology/knowledge about teaching was extremely beneficial."*

**Subject/Division Association Conference Subsidies for OTF Members**

OTF earmarked \$20,000 worth of funding from the Ministry of Education to offer select Subject/Division Associations (SDA) with an opportunity to apply for funding to subsidize conference costs for select OTF members in their first 5 years of teaching. This funding was used in an effort to increase access to SDA conferences which help to build the capacity of OTF members to implement recently revised and released curricula (2013-2016). SDAs had to filter requests for subsidies through some specific eligibility criteria. Final reports to OTF from these SDAs were submitted in June. Uptake by SDAs was rapid and all funds have been used or committed.

**ICT Conference : *Pedagogy b4 Technology: Supporting learning with digital tools***

The ICT Conference is being held from August 24 to 26<sup>th</sup> at the Hilton Toronto/Markham Suites. Currently, registration is over subscribed at 209 Members. This is a heavily interactive conference meant to serve teachers at all levels of professional learning where ICT is involved. Under the careful control of Brenda Sherry and Peter Skillen a cadre of 17 expert teachers will provide exciting and meaningful passages into the world of enhancing teaching and learning through digital tools.

A draft outline of the agenda is provided below:

Day 1: Wednesday, August 24, 2016

Welcome and Introductions 12:00 - 12:30 p.m.

Alan November Opening Keynote 12:30 -1:30 p.m.

Transforming Learning: Six Questions

This presentation is based on Alan’s New York Times best selling book, “Who Owns the Learning” and a powerful new 6 step model of designing transformational learning experiences.

Breakout Sessions A 1:45 - 3:00 p.m.

A**	Students as Contributors: The Digital Learning Farm
A1	Maker Space (Beginner)
A2	TLLP: one acronym you need to know about!
A3	Building Parent Engagement Through Blogs, Twitter and Websites
A4	Twitter for You, and Twitter with your Students
A5	Critical Thinking by Design: How Teachers are Creating Contexts to Enhance Student Thinking
A6	Assessing and Analyzing Primary Sources to Support Social Studies and Historical Inquiry
A7	Cross-class Digital Collaboration
A8	Getting Started with Global Projects

## Breakout Sessions B 3:15 - 4:30 p.m.

B1	Teach Ontario K-12
B2	Classroom Management in a Digital Age
B3	Office 365 (Introductory)
B4	3D Design and Printing in the Elementary Classroom
B5	Digital Citizenship - Where to start?
B6	Media Literacy & Critical Thinking
B7	OneNote Class Notebooks & Learning Tools with limited devices (A)
B8	The ABCs of Gen Z

Day 2: Thursday, August 25

MoM (Beginner) and The Interplay Keynote 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

## Minds On Media (Beginner)

Imagine a room full of teachers who are experts in the effective integration of technologies into their classrooms. What could you learn from them? Join Jaclyn Calder as she hosts this fabulous OTF event! Minds On Media is a half day BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) workshop with a variety of hands-on learning centres focusing on teaching and learning with technology.

## The Interplay: Pedagogy, Learning &amp; Technology (1)

An interactive large group session led by Brenda and Peter. We will discuss, and participate in, deeper learning and powerful practices leveraged by the affordances of technologies. Also, we will question and reimagine the roles of teachers and students as we move collectively towards an understanding of global competencies.

Lunch 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

The Interplay Keynote & MoM (Advanced) 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Day 3: Friday, August 26

## Breakout Sessions C – Friday 9:00 - 10:45 a.m.

C1	Coding and Math for Elementary
C2	Mindomo: More Than Just Mindmapping!
C3	Blogging: Moving your class writing online
C4	Integrating Technology into Writing Workshop
C5	Media Literacy & Privacy
C6	Coding in the Elementary Classroom
C7	Using GIS Mapping and Interactive Timelines to enhance Social Studies, History, and Geography
C8	Using Digital Tools for Formative Feedback

Break 10:45 - 11:00 a.m.  
 Session D: Breakout Sessions – Friday 11:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

D1	M-Power K-6
D2	Blogging in Elementary Schools
D3	Provincially Licensed Digital Tools (VLE and more)
D4	Coding with Scratch
D5	Office 365 (Experienced)
D6	GAFE: Collaborative Documents
D7	Leveraging Tools for Student Media Creation
D8	OneNote Class Notebooks & Learning Tools with limited devices (B)

Lunch 12:15 - 1:00 p.m.

Leigh Cassell's Closing Keynote,

Smackdown and Final Remarks

1:00 - 3:30 p.m.

### Teacher Learning Co-operative (TLC)

The TLC call for proposals went out in the late spring and resulted in 171 applications from teacher teams across the province. Three areas of focus were identified in the call out:

- Using information and communication technologies (ICT) to enhance teaching and learning
- Supporting capacity building in Kindergarten
- Supporting teachers in implementing revised curricula:
  - Grades 1-8 History and Geography; Social Studies
  - Grades 9-12 Canadian and World Studies; Classical and International Languages; First nation, Métis and Inuit Studies; Social Studies and Humanities
  - Grades 1-12 French as a Second Language; Health and Physical Education

(We must note that there was concern and disappointment on the part of OTF that the Ministry did not provide funding for projects in Mathematics this year, however, we continue to be hopeful that this will be rectified soon and that another call out for proposals in Mathematics can go out at the beginning of the school year.)

The projects were then adjudicated by a panel of expert teachers who ranked them according to a set list of criteria. In general the 171 submissions were exemplary this year. As a result OTF has approved and will be funding 51 projects focused on I. C. Technology, 36 projects focused on Kindergarten and 24 projects focused on Revised Curriculum.

These collaborative inquiry projects are supported with \$4000.00 each in funding and involve approximately 390 members from more than twenty School Boards. The TLC Teams cover both panels and all levels of instruction. They are very diverse in that the Teams come from across the province.

In order to provide support for the TLC Teams in the field OTF has engaged a panel of 9 Mentors, who are expert teachers. Their job will be to keep the TLC Teams on course and help them manage their project to its completion.

Final reporting on the projects will be done on-line once again this round. They are due on or before May 19, 2017. You can find the TLC project reports in IC Technology and Mathematics from 2015 on the OTF web site under "Learning". All of the reports are active in that they contain resources, videos, pictures and an option for on-going interaction between the membership at large and the TLC Team Members themselves. We look forward to receiving superlative reports at the end of the reporting process.

### **Financial Literacy Education - F.L.A.G. Financial Literacy Roundtable**

OTF was invited to send a representative to the F.L.A.G. Financial Literacy Roundtable (Roundtable) in Toronto which occurred on November 9 and 10, 2015, during Credit Education Week. The Canadian Foundation for Economic Education and Credit Canada Debt Solutions, along with other Financial Literacy Action Group (FLAG) member organizations (ABC Life Literacy, Financial Planning Standards Council, Junior Achievement, Office of the Investor at the OSC, Prosper Canada), hosted this two-day Roundtable. The Roundtable was sponsored by TD Bank Group, Scotiabank, VISA, Capital One, and the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada. Ian Pettigrew attended on behalf of OTF.

The overarching goal of the Roundtable was to provide an opportunity among various stakeholders to generate creative and feasible opportunities and strategies to help improve financial literacy education in Canada.

These table group discussions were facilitated by a representative of a F.L.A.G. member organization, focused on a specific element of financial literacy. Each small-group discussion was followed by a report-out of consensus points or ideas that had emerged at each table.

The variety of perspectives represented and articulated in small groups and, by extension, in the larger group discussions ensured that a narrow view of financial literacy education did not take root. Moreover, for-profit entities, such as banks did not dominate the discourse or confine the emerging narrative since there were 67 stakeholders in the room. Reaching consensus proved challenging given the often stark differences in the priorities of participating agencies and organizations. What became clear, however, is that no single organizations could shoulder the full responsibility for the financial literacy education of Canadians; instead, this needed to be a shared ownership and responsibility that appreciated and responded to the realities of different contexts and demographic groups.

### **OTF Financial Literacy - Summer Writing Project**

Following on the heels of last year's successful bid by OTF to assume ownership of the two financial literacy domains [www.inspirefinanciallearning.ca](http://www.inspirefinanciallearning.ca) and [www.inspirezlesavoirfinancier.ca](http://www.inspirezlesavoirfinancier.ca) and their contents, OTF coordinated a summer project, with active and retired teachers, to

complete an update of contents of the websites. As part of that work, members of the summer writing team conducted an environmental scan and gap analysis to determine elements that needed to be removed or revised. Following the scan and gap analysis, the writing team developed additional curriculum-based lesson plans / resources for posting and sharing. These will be available in early fall after they have been translated.

Plans are also afoot to host a financial literacy-focused conference in the fall of 2016, possibly in November since it is Financial Literacy Month. The conference may also be used as a formal launch for the [www.inspirefinanciallearning.ca](http://www.inspirefinanciallearning.ca) and [www.inspirezlesavoirfinancier.ca](http://www.inspirezlesavoirfinancier.ca) websites.

### **Economic Club of Canada Panel Discussion on the *Closing the Numeracy Gap: An Urgent Assignment for Ontario* Report**

At the request of the OTF Executive Ian Pettigrew attended the panel discussion/luncheon focused on the *Closing the Numeracy Gap: An Urgent Assignment for Ontario* (October 2015) report (Report), hosted by the Economic Club of Canada (ECC) at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel on April 12, 2016.

The panel discussion was moderated by ECC CEO Rhiannon Traill and the three invited panelists were:

- Don Drummond, Stauffer-Dunning Fellow, Global Public Policy, Queens University
- Gerry Connelly, Director of Policy and Research, The Learning Partnership
- Anne Sado, President, George Brown College

Throughout the 90-minute event, panelists were invited to share their thinking guided by the following series of questions:

- What are the broad economic implications of a numeracy gap?
- What are the implications of a numeracy gap for post-secondary education and institutions?
- As an educator, what impact does this have on children and families?
- Of the two, “back-to-basics” approach or the “discovery” (inquiry-based) approach, which should have prominence?
- What role might experiential learning play in supporting students' numeracy? Do we call this a numeracy curriculum?
- How do we make sure that teachers are empowered and supported in teaching math?
- How can information and communications technologies be a part of the solution to the numeracy gap?
- What is the ONE thing that you think a Provincial Numeracy Roundtable should tackle?

In sum, Rhiannon Traill offered some constructive editorial comments throughout the discussion, including the following two: “Teachers should be valued as much as doctors/lawyers. Somehow, society doesn’t seem to value them at the same level” and “We have to make sure that resources are in the hands of teachers in schools. They are best placed to help students learn math”. To be sure, members of the larger audience offered both affirmations of the panelists’ perspectives and surfaced competing narratives. In particular,

teachers in the audience were able to reinforce some key challenges they continue to face in terms of numeracy and math instruction. Overall, while the event attracted some interest across stakeholder groups, there was little subsequent high-profile traction or uptake in the public arena.

### **PD Calendar**

OTF continues to update the PD calendar which is accessible through the OTF website. We do our best to post all events, AQ courses, Affiliate professional learning opportunities, conferences etc. to the site. Please remind your fellow teachers that this site is available to them to help them find the learning opportunities that are right for them at a time which suits their needs.

### **OTF Planboard**

OTF renewed its agreement with Chalk.com to provide free access for members to this online planning tool during the 2015-2016 school year. OTF continues to monitor the usage of *OTF Planboard* to gauge its use among members. Interest in *OTF Planboard* has continued to increase. As of early March, 9,929 of our members had registered for *OTF Planboard*. By June, that number stood at nearly 11,500 registered teachers. This figure represents a four-fold increase since this time last year. Those members accounted for a total of over a million uploaded lesson plans. For more information about *OTF Planboard* or to sign up, members can visit the OTF website under the *Learning* tab (<http://www.otffeo.on.ca/en/learning/planboard/>).

### **OTF Parent Engagement Project**

Requests for additional copies of the *Parent Engagement / Engagements des parents* print resource continue to come in periodically. The website versions of the resources can be accessed at [www.parentengagement.ca](http://www.parentengagement.ca) (English) and [www.engagementdesparents.ca](http://www.engagementdesparents.ca) (French).

### **OTF Connects**

OTF Connects is OTF's webinar program for teachers. In addition, teachers who are not able to participate in live sessions can access recorded webinars at their convenience by visiting the OTF Connects section of the OTF website, [www.otffeo.on.ca](http://www.otffeo.on.ca).

When this webinar program began in 2011/12, 32 sessions were offered to 555 registrants. Over time the program has grown and has included webinars offered specifically to meet Ministry-funded projects as well. The webinars are entirely voluntary for teachers and on a wide-range of topics. In the 2015/16 year, despite the later than normal start, OTF offered 74 webinars attracting 4,801 registrants, an increase in registration numbers of 38%.

In the 2015-2016 school year, OTF used Ministry funding allocated for technology, mathematics and the new and revised curricula to offer sessions that were specific to these areas. This funding allowed OTF to expand our program and scaffold the learning opportunities for teachers. A number of the technology and mathematics sessions were offered as a series or in

parts. For example, the GAFE series allowed teachers to learn the basic and then build their knowledge and skills with the many Google tools and applications presented. Also, the math sessions that were offered as two and three part series, allowed participants to learn, practice, and gain confidence in the math processes and their problem solving skills.

We were again able to reach out to many experienced and educators from across the province to develop and facilitate the OTF Connects webinars. We also expanded our moderator team to four educators including a French language moderator who was able to support our FSL webinars so they could be offered in French and so that multiple webinars could be offered simultaneously.

These sessions have proven to be popular resulting in feedback such as:

“This was a great session. It demystifies the tools we have, and inspires me to try new things.”; “Loved this. I want my colleagues to watch the recording!” ;

“This was great! It was my first webinar and everything ran smoothly. It's a great way to learn from the comfort of my own home. Thanks!”;

“I was very impressed with this session. I have been a big proponent for using media in the class. This session expanded my vision of how it can be used.”;

“It was easy to follow and entertaining!”;

“Really informative and I have revamped my lesson for tomorrow.”

“This session flew by, I hope I can remember all of the interesting sites and ideas that were presented!”

“Loved it, loved it, loved it. Thanks so much.” ;“

We appreciate the feedback, positive and constructive, from participants and we try to ensure that the topics and delivery meet the needs of teachers.

#### Fall 2015 OTF Connects program data

Type of Session	Number Sessions	of	# Registrants	Avg/session
Technology	5		220	44
Supporting Mathematics	1		67	67
New and Revised Curriculum	1		69	69
Professional Learning	1		29	29
Financial Literacy	1		16	16
<b>Totals</b>	<b>9</b>		<b>401</b>	<b>45</b>

**Winter 2016 OTF Connects program data**

Type of Session	Number Sessions	of	# Registrants	Avg/session
Technology	32		2144	67
Supporting Mathematics	22		1551	70.5
New and Revised Curriculum	7		515	73.6
Professional Learning Series	1		100	100
Financial Literacy	3		90	90
<b>Totals</b>	<b>65</b>		<b>4,400</b>	<b>67.7</b>

**Report on OTF Connects Syrian Refugee Project**

This year OTF partnered with five school boards (Lambton Kent, Bluewater and Grand Erie District School Boards and Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington and Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Boards) to offer a series of five webinars from early March to May to support teachers with strategies to welcome and support the newcomer English language learners, ELLs. These webinars were for any teacher from K-12 with a student who speaks a language other than English at home and requires additional supports to participate in age-appropriate curriculum.

The ELL webinars were developed and facilitated by ESL teachers from each of the partner Boards. They were very effective in providing teachers with the necessary skills needed to welcome, register and appropriately place Syrian newcomers in classes. The ELL webinars were also very effective in providing support for classroom teachers in schools located in more rural parts of the province which often have more limited services for newcomers and often are separated by large geographic areas.

Date	Title/Focus of Webinar	Facilitated by
Tuesday March 8	Welcoming: The ELL arrives	Christine Ignas; SMCD SB
Tuesday March 22	Instructional Strategies	Laurie Brownless; Lambton-Kent DSB
Tuesday April 5	Adaptations and Assessment	Avis Dalgarno; BWDSB
Tuesday April 19	ELD programming needs	Atala Andratis; Grand Erie DSB
Tuesday May 3	Technology for ELLs	Christina Maschas-Hammond; Lambton-Kent DSB

The average registration for each webinar was 78 and they were very well attended. All the ELL webinars were extremely well received by teacher participants. Teachers particularly liked the strategies and hands-on ideas that were shared and that they could implement right away in their classrooms. They also found the students' background stories and the sharing of real experiences to be very helpful and useful. The recordings of the ELL webinars are available to all OTF members and can be accessed at:

<http://www.otffeo.on.ca/en/learning/otf-connects/resources>

## **POLICY AND LEGISLATION**

### **TEACHER EDUCATION**

#### **Teacher Education – Liaison with Faculties of Education**

OTF's involvement in teacher education continued in fervour once again this year. Members of the Teacher Education Liaison Committee ran successful Federation Days, workshops and programs for teacher candidates at the fifteen pre-service programs across the province, and worked diligently to monitor developments at the faculties during what was the first year of implementation of the new, expanded Initial Teacher Education program. In addition, the liaison officers worked to strengthen our ties with Faculty staff and the Deans of Education. A full report on the main activities of the provincial Teacher Education Committee will be presented to the Governors later in this meeting, and from this you will be able to gauge the huge amount of work undertaken, on an entirely voluntary basis, by the members of the OTF/Affiliate Liaison Committees (TELCs) that operate at the teacher preparation institutes across the province.

OTF also continued to liaise with the Faculties of Education this year through attendance at meetings of the Ontario Association of Deans of Education (OADE). This year, we were invited to attend four meetings of the OADE, including one meeting in late January that was specifically allocated to OTF alone. As reported to the Governors in the spring, OTF and Affiliate staff took time at that meeting to highlight the positive partnership between the Federations and the Faculties of Education that, for so many years, characterize, and drove progress at the province's pre-service teacher education programs. We offered to support the Deans and their Faculty members in their work, outlining a variety of ways we might assist them. Staff also emphasized our shared goal of providing the best possible professional preparation experience for teacher candidates, so that they can be appropriately equipped and feel competent in their responsibilities as future members of the profession.

#### **Teacher Education – Policy**

Teacher Education continued to be a key area of policy engagement for OTF yet again this year. Our involvement in this area is primarily through our OTF/Affiliate Teacher Education Staff Work Group, with input from OTF's provincial Teacher Education Committee. By far the main area of focus of the Staff Work Group this year has been the development of a strategic vision and action plan on the matter of associate teaching and the practicum. The Work Group is on

schedule to complete this work in the early fall and will bring a report to the Executive in this regard. Other key pieces considered by the Work Group this year included:

- criminal records checks for teacher candidates;
- planning for the TED Table meetings;
- feedback to the College of Teachers on OCT's *Professional Learning Framework*
- impact of strikes on practicum placements;
- teacher candidate admissions' numbers and trends at Faculties of Education and implications for teacher supply and demand;
- hiring by school boards of teacher candidates as unqualified OTs in May and June;
- differences in salaries paid to on-reserve and off-reserve teachers; and
- future plans for a conference on teacher education in the absence of an annual OTF/OADE Conference.

### **Teacher Education Discussion (TED) Table**

For the second year in a row, OTF convened three meetings of the Teacher Education Discussion (TED) Table / *Table de discussion sur la formation initiale (Table de DFI)*. Representatives from provincial stakeholder organizations and Faculties of Education attended the meetings on November 26, 2015, January 28, 2016 and April 14, 2016. The consistently high attendance at the TED Table meetings throughout the two years since its inception allows us to conclude that stakeholder organizations view both the Table itself and the discussions taking place there as being of great value.

Most of the work accomplished by the TED Table this year centered on the deliberations, findings and conclusions of the four work groups of the Table, namely:

- Access: Focus on Aboriginal Educators and Aboriginal Programs;
- Francophone Issues;
- Technological Education; and
- Teachables

Marilies Rettig once again did an excellent job of facilitating the meetings and, from the outset, set a positive and trusting tone for the discussions. It was evident from the tenor of the discussions that there was a much greater willingness to share ideas and to report on challenges encountered in the new Initial Teacher Education programs this year than last.

The consolidated recommendations put forward by each of the work groups were collated and sent out to the participating organizations in late April, with a request for feedback by June 15, 2016. We were very pleased by the feedback we received from stakeholders on the recommendations, as there was largely consensus on all of them. The recommendations were also shared with the OTF Executive and received its support. In terms of next steps, we will communicate with the TED Table members in early fall to let them know what we received in terms of feedback and provide them with any proposed modifications to the recommendations.

At the completion of the third meeting, facilitator Marilies Rettig provided a report to the Executive, tracing the accomplishments of the TED Table over the past two years, and stressing the gains for the Federation in having convened and managed the only forum where all stakeholders could gather to discuss issues pertaining to pre-service teacher education in the wake of the expanded programs legislated by the Government. She also identified six main challenges which she believes OTF and the Affiliates will need to continue monitoring and addressing in the future:

Monitoring the impact of very low TC enrollment in key areas – Tech, French language, some teachables such as the sciences – both in the context of program availability, program quality (the move from specialized programs to general study programs), and the supply issue based upon accurate statistics relative to retirements and retention in the profession.

Monitoring access issues, particularly as it relates to underrepresented groups, including visible minorities, candidates with low socio-economic status, males and second career teachers. There is a very real risk that the burden of an extended, two-year program and the costs associated with it for potential teacher candidates will lead to the further homogenization of the teaching profession in Ontario.

Monitoring access to prospective Aboriginal educators. Some might suggest this is merely an exercise of promoting teaching as a profession among Aboriginal students during their elementary school years – such a suggestion is an affront and disregard of the greater issues, and the negative impact of conditions of the expanded program that inhibit participation. The voice, presence and leadership of OTF and the Affiliates will be important in this discourse, which must encompass all partners.

Monitoring and responding to the use of teacher candidates and/or recent graduates from the extended program as unqualified occasional teachers. This appears to be an immediate and serious issue with Francophone TCs, but it will be a growing trend over the years, particularly in light of the low number of TCs in certain subject areas.

Monitoring the use and trends relative to LOPs in targeted subject areas over the short term and the long term.

Addressing the issue of program quality and evaluation. Faculties cannot sustain offering a specialized program to a cohort of four or five students, and have already moved to providing a generalized program with little instruction in the specialized area or cancelling the program altogether. Beyond the focus of those programs, the Ministry should be considering a mechanism to monitor and evaluate the current model across the province – and ensure changes are considered based upon research and best practice.

## **Teacher Supply and Demand**

In mid-April, OTF participated in a meeting of the Ministry of Education's Teacher Supply and Demand Working Group, held almost a year to the day since its last meeting. The updated 2015-16 teacher supply and demand forecasting model shared at the meeting shows a current excess of 37,577 qualified teachers. While there are many weaknesses inherent in the model – including the use of mixed headcount and FTE numbers to generate the supply and demand data, and whether unemployed qualified teachers actually continue to search for jobs in teaching five to ten years after graduation – there is general agreement that the over-supply has finally reached its peak and that we will now see the figures start to decline. Once again this year, OTF and other education stakeholders at the table made suggestions regarding how the Ministry could more accurately assess the numbers and thereby get a clearer view of the effective excess supply of teachers. We also requested that we not wait a full year to meet again. The Ministry has accordingly agreed to hold the next meeting of the Working Group in October 2016, and has committed to making every effort to re-run the total supply and total demand numbers using the best gauge of head count figures.

An additional source of information regarding teacher supply and demand in Ontario is derived from the annual *Transition to Teaching (T2T)* study, released each year in late February by the Ontario College of Teachers. For the second year in a row, the study has reported evidence of a slight increase in employment opportunities for beginning teachers in Ontario. Overall, in 2015 just under half of all new graduates reported finding full employment in teaching in the first or second year, and one in three graduates reported that it took them four years to do so. Although the prospects of finding permanent positions quickly are still not that promising, they are greatly improved over the findings of two years ago.

## **ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TEACHERS**

### **OCT Review of Professional Learning Framework**

As Governors will recall, during the 2014-15 school year, OTF and the Affiliates participated in a large-scale and far-reaching initiative by the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) to review the *Professional Learning Framework for the Teaching Profession*. OTF's response conveyed the following clear positions of the Federation with regard to the ongoing professional learning of our members:

- that OTF stands opposed to any attempt by the Ontario College of Teachers to introduce a system of mandatory professional learning and/or recertification of teachers;
- that OTF continues to support the principle of self-directed professional learning as the critical element of any professional learning framework for teachers; and
- that OTF stands opposed to any tracking of teacher professional learning by the Ontario College of Teachers.

In fall of 2015, we provided both verbal and written feedback to OCT on the draft revised *Framework* and in early June 2016, we received a final version of the document which had been

approved by the Governing Council of OCT. Most of the Federation's input was included in both the draft and final versions of the document, and we were pleased with the overarching tenor and direction of the revised *Framework*. The document acknowledges the importance of self-directed professional learning and of teacher autonomy in decisions regarding ongoing professional learning. Moreover, there is no reference to mandatory professional learning and/or recertification of teachers, nor any suggestion of intent by OCT to track teacher professional learning.

### **Public Interest Committee (PIC)**

Governors may recall that last year, in June of 2015, the PIC issued a final report to Council that dealt with a wide range of matters: temporary letters of approval (TLAs), letters of permission (LOPs), teacher performance appraisal, ongoing professional learning and currency and the publishing of discipline decisions.

Based on a review of other professional self-regulators in Ontario, the OCT's Public Interest Committee has suggested that reprimands issued by the College's Discipline Committee (DC) might be: delivered in a public forum, transcribed by a court reporter, and included in the text of a DC panel's written reasons for decision. This matter has been referred to the DC for study and report back to the College's Governing Council.

### **Discipline Matters**

As part of his most recent (June 2016) Report to Council, the College Registrar included statistics regarding Investigations and Hearings (I&H) for Q1 2016.

Compared to Q1 2015, there was an increase in the number of complaints originating from members of the public (19.6% / 67 v. 56) and from the Registrar (incl. employer notifications) (58% / 84 v. 53), but a decrease in the number of complaints originating from members of the College (24% / 19 v. 25).

### **Governing Council Meeting – June 2016**

Other items of note from the most recent Governing Council meeting are as follows:

In his Report to Council, the Registrar referenced the CBC Marketplace story (in April) that focused on how various jurisdictions across the country handle complaints about teachers, noting that:

“The program's assessment of measures taken by regulators of the teaching profession across Canada revealed that Ontario, and specifically the Ontario College of Teachers as the independent regulating body, received the highest overall rating of its practices relating to transparency and accountability when dealing with professional misconduct.”

Interestingly enough, the Registrar's Report to Council made no mention of the March 2016 decision of the Ontario Superior Court in *Novick v. Ontario College of Teachers*, in which the College was severely criticized for the way in which this case was adjudicated.

Council spent considerable time debating issues arising from the report of the Governance Committee regarding the next Council elections (in 2018), including possible realignment of regions and the targeting of potential candidates.

Other matters arising from OCT Governing Council meetings in November (2015) and March (2016) were previously reported to Governors at the Winter and Spring Board meetings including:

- last year's Council elections
- 2015 financial results and the College's 2016 budget
- ongoing statistics regarding discipline matters before the College, and
- the work of the Public Interest Committee (PIC)

### **OCT Mandate Issue**

At the start of the year, in meetings with the Deputy Minister, progress was made related to member perks. The OCT has undertaken to terminate the program by November of 2016.

Other matters are likely to remain under consideration and may be revisited when a new Deputy Minister is appointed and we have had an opportunity to brief him or her on the topic.

### **Canadian Teachers' Federation's (CTF) National Staff Meeting**

Lindy Amato and Ian Pettigrew attended CTF's annual national staff meeting in Ottawa, November 11-13, 2015. The theme of this year's annual meeting was "The Impact of Our Voice." The program included a keynote address by Alex Himelfarb, Former Clerk of the Privy Council, who discussed the political landscape in the wake of the 2015 federal election with a particular focus on the implications of the change in government for the new government, the Canadian electorate and teacher unions. Later in the program, Phil McRae (ATA) and Charlie Naylor (BCTF) conducted an interactive plenary focused on exploring the topic of *Teacher Unions in Public Education: Politics, History and the Future*. This session focused on addressing the changing face, internationally and domestically, of teacher unions and their reactions to a shifting political and socio-economic landscape.

Over the course of the two days, OTF staff members participated in workshops that included:

- The Every Teacher Mobilization Project on LGBTQ – Inclusive Education (Part 1);
- Politics, Power and Privatization: Labour Relations of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century;
- Networked Technologies in the Classroom: Survey Results;
- Panel – Women in Leadership Positions;
- Redressing the Legacy of Residential Schools;
- Roundtable Discussion – Social Media and Teacher Organizations;
- Social Justice in Canadian Schools.

During a sharing carousel for member organizations, called the Idea Market, small groups of participants circulated through a series of six-minute sessions to learn about the activities of, and resources available from, various federations across Canada. Ian Pettigrew shared the new OTF suite of Parent Engagement resources. Members who attended his session were provided with one copy each of the *Parent Engagement* print resource in English or French, as appropriate.

### **Ministry of Education – Revised Curricula**

On June 30, 2016, the Ministry finally released the revised English-language document *The Kindergarten Program*, on the EDUGAINS site at <http://www.edugains.ca>. The revised French-language document has been posted to the EDUSOURCE site at <http://edusourceontario.com>. No additional details about implementation, including training for teachers, has been provided.

### **Student Achievement Division (SAD) Working Table**

The SAD Working Table did not meet this year and OTF received notification in late May that the SAD Working Table was being dissolved as it was seen to be redundant given the consultations occurring at the newly created series of partnership tables.

### **Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO)**

#### *2014-2015 Provincial Assessment Results Reports*

EQAO indicated that the release of the 2014-2015 EQAO assessment results was significantly different from previous years for two key reasons: labour action and online scoring. First, it noted that labour action by Ontario teacher unions in the spring of 2015 had affected the administration of the primary- and junior-division assessments and the Grade 9 math assessment in the English-language system. Second, 2014-2015 marked the first time EQAO used an online scoring model and it noted that it had encountered some challenges as a result of:

- Reduced teacher participation in the scoring activity and revisions to data analysis and reporting systems due to labour action;
- Delays processing data from students whose work, in special response formats, could not be scanned and;
- Further steps that were required to ensure the quality and accuracy of data from the new online scoring process.

More specifically, since not all schools participated in the Grades 3 and 6 reading, writing and mathematics assessments, EQAO released reports in November, 2015 only for those schools and boards who students fully participated in the 2015 assessments. Individual Student Reports (ISRs) were released for those students who participated in the 2015 assessments. Furthermore, since not all schools participated in the Grade 9 math assessment, EQAO released a report on October 28, 2015 only for those schools and boards who students fully participated in the 2015 assessments. No report on provincial results was published for the assessments in Grades 3, 6 or 9. However, as usual, EQAO released school, board results and a full provincial report for the OSSLT.

On August 26, 2015, EQAO released highlights of the 2015 Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT). Overall, of the 137, 620 first-time eligible students who wrote the 2015 OSSLT, 127, 867 (82%) were successful. Overall results have been stable over the past five years (2011-2015). Results also indicated that most students, who were not successful on the test in Grade 10, also had not met the provincial reading and writing standards when they were in Grade 6. Five years ago, 59% of those students who had not met the reading standard in Grade 6 were successful on the Grade 10 OSSLT. In 2015, that percentage dropped to 48%.

On November 4, 2015, EQAO released 2014-2015 provincial results for the French-language system in Reading, Writing and Mathematics at the Primary and Junior Divisions. Results showed that at the Grade 3 level in reading, 82% of eligible students met the provincial standard, up 11% over a five-year period (2009-2014). In writing, 80% of eligible students met the provincial standard which represented a dip of 3% over a five-year period (2009-2014). In mathematics, 81% of eligible students met the provincial standard, up 8% over a five-year period (2009-2014). At the Grade 6 level, results indicated that in reading, 90% of eligible students met the provincial standard, up 8% over a five-year period (2009-2014). In writing, 85% of eligible students met the provincial standard up 3% over a five-year period (2009-2014). In mathematics, 85% of eligible students met the provincial standard, up 5% over a five-year period (2009-2014).

In early December, EQAO issued a release stating that it would not be proceeding with a planned implementation of a fully online OSSLT in 2016 citing the fact that while its platform had met many of its benchmarks for accuracy and performance, it had not yet met all of them.

### **EQAO Assessment Advisory Committee (AAC)**

EQAO scheduled two AAC meetings for the 2015-2016 school year.

At the first meeting on January 21, 2016, Lisa Walsh was introduced as its new Chief Assessment Officer, replacing Deborah Rantz. At this meeting, EQAO announced that it would be conducting a series of outreach activities in the spring for board and school teams focused on improving mathematics instruction. These were facilitated by Christine Suurtamm, Associate Professor, University of Ottawa, Faculty of Education, Martine LeClerc, a member of Expert Panel for EDU's *Education for All* and Sandra Herbst, *connect2learning* facilitator.

EQAO also conducted consultations with AAC members on its *Draft Revised Literacy Construct* for Language Assessments. In addition to providing feedback at the meeting, Ian Pettigrew also coordinated meetings with the OTF-All Affiliate Staff Assessment Work Group to co-create a written response to the Literacy Construct. This official response was subsequently shared with EQAO.

More concerning was the second consultation at this meeting which focused on EQAO's potential foray into the measurement of the well-being of Ontario students. During the meeting, there was unanimous agreement in the small table group, comprised of OTF and Affiliate staff as well as representatives from CPCO and OPC, that EQAO's involvement in determining the indicators of well-being and being the agent of their measurement was troubling and constituted a loose reading of its legislated mandate. Indeed, the well-being consultation session was predicated on a presumption that EQAO *should* be implicated in this endeavour, a contention that OTF and its Affiliates do not support. In an effort to underscore its position, OTF President Francine LeBlanc-Lebel wrote a letter to EQAO CEO Bruce Rodrigues voicing OTF's vehement opposition to this possible expansion of scope. A response was recently received by OTF implying that EQAO saw such measurement within its mandate.

EQAO cancelled the final AAC meeting of the 2015-2016 school year which had been scheduled for early May.

## **Meetings with the EQAO**

### Follow-up meeting to EQAO's Strategic Planning Consultation Session

Ian Pettigrew represented OTF at one of seven follow-up meetings hosted by EQAO to share its findings from Strategic Planning Consultation Sessions conducted last school year. EQAO's Strategic Plan (2016-2019) is posted on the EQAO site in the form of an infographic (see: [http://www.eqao.com/en/about\\_eqao/media\\_room/facts\\_and\\_figures/Pages/strategic-plan-2016-2019.aspx](http://www.eqao.com/en/about_eqao/media_room/facts_and_figures/Pages/strategic-plan-2016-2019.aspx)). The session in Kitchener was sparsely attended with nearly as many EQAO staff as there were participants.

EQAO CEO Bruce Rodrigues explained that EQAO had conducted 10 multi-stakeholder consultation and focus group sessions. In the course of the consultations, all 72 school boards were represented. Other stakeholder groups included parents, students, educators, and trustees. In addition, one session was held with the Ministry of Education. The approximate percentage of the 7,400 respondents to the online survey was as follows:

- 60% teachers/educators
- 30% parents
- 3% school boards
- 3% general public
- 1% students

According to Rodrigues, survey results surfaced the following three priority areas:

1. Global Competencies (21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills)
2. Measure Student Well-Being
3. Skills beyond Math and Language

With reference to the second priority, according to Rodrigues the feedback indicated that “well-being” should be included in post-EQAO assessment questionnaires to help build knowledge among parents and students. When Rodrigues was pressed about the number of respondents who mentioned well-being, he noted that there were indeed sufficient numbers to substantiate it as a priority. In addition, 72% said EQAO should report on student learning that needs improvement and 64% said EQAO should use results to help school leaders to improve instructional programming.

Rodrigues entertained questions and comments from participants following his formal presentation of feedback results. Rodrigues was pressed on several items:

- Due in large part to right-wing think-tanks like the Fraser Institute and media outlets, the release of EQAO data continues to pit schools and boards against one another;
- Boards continue to rely too heavily – and sometimes exclusively – on EQAO data as *the* key benchmark for measuring success and evaluating the efficacy of programs designed to improve student achievement, as reflected in Board Improvement Plans and School Effectiveness Frameworks;
- EQAO’s assessment paradigms, frameworks and administration practices have not kept pace with the understandings and innovations at the classroom level (e.g. differentiation, assessment FOR and AS learning, multi-modal assessment and evaluation tools and instruments);
- EQAO relies on a census-based approach to standardized assessment when it could employ a random sampling model.

Meeting of the OTF Assessment Staff Work Group with EQAO Chief Executive Officer Bruce Rodrigues and Chief Assessment Officer Lisa Walsh

On May 24, 2016, Ian Pettigrew, along with his Affiliate colleagues, met with EQAO’s CEO Bruce Rodrigues and CAO Lisa Walsh at ETFO’s provincial office. The purpose of the meeting was to provide an opportunity to review and discuss the OTF/All-Affiliate response to EQAO’s draft *Revised Literacy Construct for Language Assessments* (Construct). However, other matters related to the EQAO testing regimen were also raised over the course of the meeting.

Rodrigues underscored the fact that the Construct is still in its infancy stages, so feedback would inform subsequent iterations. Walsh echoed many of Rodrigues’ sentiments but noted that EQAO’s approach to standardized assessment is very different from the US model. She also indicated that EQAO occupied a unique position in the assessment and evaluation landscape since its assessment instruments, unlike classroom teachers’ assessments, could measure and report results on a large scale and, therefore, allowed for provincial comparisons and year-over-year snapshots of student achievement.

On the matter of EQAO data being cited as the only data worthy of merit or attention, Rodrigues indicated that he had admonished ministry personnel, including the Minister of Education, and school board personnel when they referenced EQAO results in isolation as evidence that teachers' instructional or assessment approaches were flawed or left wanting. Rodrigues also noted that he shared the concerns raised by OTF and Affiliate staff regarding the misuse and misrepresentation of EQAO results but he suggested that, like any data, once it is published, it is difficult to control or steer the message. Rodrigues mentioned that he has contacted the Fraser Institute, reporters, real-estate agencies and trustees all in an effort to eliminate counter-productive assessment narratives. Rodrigues also expressed his chagrin that publishers were marketing EQAO test practice booklets to parents (see <http://bit.ly/28IXWWe>). On the matter of a census-based approach, Rodrigues pointed to research which EQAO feels substantiates this approach. OTF and Affiliate staff took the occasion to emphasize the amount of stress that EQAO assessments engender. They remarked on the inordinate costs (monetary and time) expended to administer the assessments and the burden they placed on teachers who are preparing students for these assessments.

### **OTF/All-Affiliate Assessment Staff Work Group**

This year, the OTF Assessment Staff Work Group (ASWG) prepared and submitted a formal response to the Education Quality and Accountability Office's draft *Literacy Construct for Language Assessments*. Members of the ASWG met in person twice, once in February and again in March, to construct a preliminary draft response. By way of subsequent email communications, the ASWG prepared a final draft of the official OTF position was communicated to EQAO in mid-March.

### **International Standardized Assessments and Surveys**

In the late spring, OTF received word from the Alberta Teachers' Association that the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) had asserted that Ontario would join Alberta, as one of only two Canadian jurisdictions, to participate in the 2018 Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS). This international, random-sample survey, administered to the teachers and administrators of participating jurisdictions, solicits their perceptions about *learning environment* and *working conditions*. President LeBlanc-Label wrote then Minister of Education Liz Sandals calling on her not to commit Ontario to participating in TALIS, 2018. To date, OTF has received no response from the new Minister of Education, Mitzie Hunter.

### **Ministry-Subject/Division Association Meeting**

The first and only Ministry-Subject/Division Association meeting of this school year occurred on Friday, May 13, 2016 at the Chestnut Residence and Conference Centre in Toronto. Because the Ministry (EDU) had not hosted a meeting with SDAs in over a year, due to ongoing collective bargaining, it was a very full agenda.

During the first part of the meeting, updates from various Ministry units and branches, including ELearning Ontario, Curriculum and Assessment Policy Branch (English Language Learning, Health and Physical Education, Implementation of recommendations stemming from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report; Renewed Math Strategy and the Financial Literacy). The bulk of the meeting consisted of a series of consultation sessions focused on the following recent Ministry draft policy documents:

*DRAFT Well-Being Strategy for Education* (discussion document)-

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/about/WBDiscussionDocument.pdf>

*DRAFT Community-Connected Experiential Learning Policy* (Fall 2016) -

[http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/job/passport/CommunityConnected\\_Experiential\\_LearningEng.pdf](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/job/passport/CommunityConnected_Experiential_LearningEng.pdf)

*DRAFT 21st Century Competencies Policy* (foundation document for discussion) -

[http://www.edugains.ca/resources21CL/About21stCentury/21CL\\_21stCenturyCompetencies.pdf](http://www.edugains.ca/resources21CL/About21stCentury/21CL_21stCenturyCompetencies.pdf)

### **OTF/All-Affiliate Staff Curriculum Work Group**

This year, the OTF Curriculum Staff Work Group (CSWG) prepared and submitted a formal response to the Education Quality and Accountability Office. This year, the CSWG prepared and submitted a formal response to the Ministry of Education's Draft *Community-Connected Experiential Learning Policy* (CCEL). OTF and the four Affiliates shared some common concerns about the contents of the draft policy. Some concerns included the absence of procedures and mechanisms to realize the vision of the CCEL. For many elementary teachers, much of the policy would feel like a force-fit. Clear guidelines, parameters, boundaries and responsibilities needed to be articulated for all those potentially involved. Caution would need to be exercised to ensure that students would not be regarded and used as a source of free or unpaid labour. Care would also need to be exercised to ensure that teachers remain free to exercise their professional judgment in the determination of final grades, one goal of which is to preserve and protect the integrity of credits. In addition, there must be reasonable expectations related to the amount of evidence and number of artefacts of learning that teachers are expected to consider either for the purposes of assessment (descriptive feedback) and/or evaluation (determination of a final grade). Finally, numerous references throughout the policy positioned educators and teachers as mentoring, guiding, supporting or supervising students at various junctures or phases throughout the experiential learning process. Such references begged the question as to whether all teachers would be expected, above and beyond their regular workload/classroom duties and demands, to assist and guide students in this sphere. In effect, there needed to be due regard for the workload of teachers and to consider possible implications of this policy on teachers who are already overburdened and experiencing "initiative fatigue". The final OTF/All-Affiliate response was submitted to the Student Success Policy Branch on May 31, 2016.

### **Ministry-Faculties of Education Liaison Committee**

This year, the committee was co-chaired by Diane Vetter, York University Faculty of Education and Jinah Kim, Education Officer, Teaching Policy and Standards Branch, EDU. Later in the year, Kim was seconded to another branch and Hanca Chang assumed the co-chair duties on the Ministry side.

Each of the four meetings was themed based on post-2014-15 committee member feedback. The established dates and themes were: Friday, October 2, 2015 (Full-Day Kindergarten); Friday, December 4, 2015 (Well-Being); Friday, February 5, 2016 (First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education) and Friday, April 22, 2016 (Assessment and Evaluation). Based on the format used in 2014-2015, each theme was explored through the diverse perspectives and expertise of Ministry staff, faculty representatives and subject/division association guests.

### **Ministry-Faculties of Education Forum**

The 2016 Ministry-Faculties of Education Forum was held in Toronto on May 10, 2016. Its theme was “Learning and Teaching for Tomorrow: Building Collaboration and Capacity. In total, the Forum attracted 285 participants and the breakdown by participant/facilitator affiliation was as follows:

- Faculties - 99 (35%)
- Federation - 2 (1%) (Rob Dubyk, OSSTF and Ian Pettigrew, OTF)
- Ministry - 72 (25%)
- Subject/Division Associations - 78 (27%)
- Other Stakeholder Groups and Organizations (including School Boards) - 34 (12%)

The opening 40-minute plenary featured live and videotaped excerpts from the culminating performance of a research project called “All ‘I’s’ on Education: Imagination, Integration, Innovation”. Researchers, teacher candidates and practicing teachers, who had been part of the *Voices of Innovative Practitioners* ([www.aioe.ca](http://www.aioe.ca)) project, contributed to live performances during the plenary. The balance of the day offered participants with three opportunities to self-select from Learning Showcases and Roundtable Sessions, facilitated by representatives of the faculties of education and/or the Ministry of Education and/or provincial subject/division associations. Some sample sessions included:

- 21<sup>st</sup> Century/Global Competencies;
- Drama, Dance and Inquiry Learning: A Roundtable Discussion on Practice and Possibilities;
- Honouring the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action in Teacher Education;
- The Kindergarten Program 2016 and *Growing Success: The Kindergarten Addendum*;
- Local to Global through International Language Programs;
- Navigating Math Issues: A Subject Association Perspective;
- Teacher Education: From Faculty to Classroom.

The final block of the day provided a space for Forum participants to network and continue to process, integrate and reflect upon what they had experienced throughout the day.

### **Prevalent Medical Conditions Committee**

Since June 2015, OTF has participated in the meetings of a sub-committee of the Ministry of Education’s Healthy Schools Working Table, the Prevalent Medical Conditions Committee

(PMCC). As its name suggests, the aim of the Committee has been to develop a comprehensive approach to address the management of four medical conditions that are prevalent in Ontario schools – asthma, diabetes, anaphylaxis and epilepsy. The PMCC is jointly led by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MHLTC) and the Ministry of Education (EDU). Most of the members of the Committee are drawn from health advocacy groups such as Diabetes Canada, the Lung Association of Ontario, Epilepsy Ontario and the Canadian Paediatric Society. The Committee’s work will result in the development of a Policy/Program Memorandum (P/PM).

At each meeting, the Committee has examined the roles and responsibilities of all parties (students, parents, teachers, administrators, health practitioners) delineated through the P/PM. The PMCC has determined that it will be essential to ensure the engagement and involvement of students and of parents as partners in preventing future tragedies associated with the four identified medical conditions. The PMCC has also considered what should be included within the policy framework and what could be pulled out and inserted into appendices, which are far easier to modify over time. As one would expect, much of the Policy Framework will align with Ryan’s Law (2015) and Sabrina’s Law (2005).

In addition to the above, the intent is that there will be a differentiated training model to support the new P/PM. It was agreed that the training provided/required for “all” (i.e., the whole school community) would not be the same as what would be put in place for “some” (i.e., school staff with direct contact with the students), or that provided/required for “few” (i.e., care allies who are identified on the ISP).

The most recent PMCC meeting was held on May 17, 2016. Ministry staff presented the updated draft of the Policy Framework and P/PM, incorporating the work accomplished over the past 10 months. Almost the entire meeting was devoted to reviewing the draft document, including some draft guidelines for school boards that have also been created.

While not all parts of the Policy Framework were shared, the main components appear to be consistent with what had previously been communicated, although the order has been slightly modified, and a separate section on Training has been added. The Committee is expected to meet just one more time in the early Fall to finalize its work. The draft outline we saw included the following components:

- Policy statement (goals)
- Awareness
- Individual Student Plan (ISP)
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Communication and documentation
- Preventing and Responding to Medical Incidents
- Training
- Safety Considerations
- Privacy and Confidentiality
- Reporting

## **PENSIONS**

### **2016 Valuation Filing**

From our last filing, Governors will recall that some of the \$6.8 billion surplus in the Plan, as of the 2015 filing, was invested towards further restoring conditional inflation protection (CIP), effective January 1, 2016, as follows:

- pensions-in-pay were restored to the levels they would have been at had CIP not been invoked (at 60%) in 2015, although there were not any retroactive payments to compensate for the inflation protection not paid in 2015; and
- the level of CIP applied to post-2009 service was increased from 60% to 70% of the CPI.

Having filed a valuation in 2015, the next mandatory filing date is not until 2018, beyond the end of the “freeze period” in the JSPP Agreement (signed in 2013), a period during which the Government has capped its contributions to the Plan.

Since the OTPP reported its 2015 results (13.0% return and a \$13.2 billion surplus in the Plan, as of January 1, 2016) however, the Partners have been discussing the possibility of filing a 2016 funding valuation for the Plan. The parameters of such a filing were discussed with Governors at the Spring Board meeting. A final decision from the Government Partner has taken longer than expected, not because of the merits of such a filing, but rather due to the changes in the Minister and Deputy Minister that occurred late in the spring. It is anticipated that Governors will be in a position to consider an endorsement of a filing at this Annual Meeting such that a filing could still occur prior to the September 30<sup>th</sup> deadline (for a 2016 filing). If this occurs, there will be a roll-out of information to members subsequently and the tripartite Communications Working Group will manage that task.

### **Plan Amendments**

As Governors were advised at the Spring Board, the OTF President had previously signed Plan amendments (in January) that would:

- reset the 50-day limit for all pensioners at the beginning of each school year, regardless of whether the pensioner had worked in the immediately prior summer months, and
- simplify and/or enhance the administration of survivor benefits.

These amendments were finally signed by the Minister just prior to her departure from the Education portfolio in June.

Other possible Plan changes (still in progress) relate to the backdating of pensions when a member's pension application is delayed.

## **Pension Plan Orientation**

Last fall, we held an orientation to OTF and to the OTPP for new Governors. The morning was spent at OTF with an overview of OTF itself and the role of a Governor. The pension decision making process was also reviewed.

Lunch and the afternoon were spent at the OTPP where new Governors and participants heard from Plan staff from various departments to better understand how the Plan operates. A similar orientation will be held in the fall of 2016.

Likewise, the President, Secretary-Treasurer and Ross Peebles (for the Government) were invited to present to the new members of the OTPP Board so that they better understand the role of the plan sponsors and how we each operate (in general terms) and specifically with respect to the pension plan. The session was very successful and all three new Directors (two OTF-appointees and one Government appointee) attended.

## **OTPP Board Appointments and Re-Appointments**

As Governors are aware, the Board ratifies appointments and re-appointments to the Plan. Yesterday, Executive met with Directors eligible for re-appointment.

In January of 2016, two new members were appointed by OTF to the Board – Lise Fournel and Patti Croft and they have both begun their terms. Additionally, a formal appointment of a Chair of the Board is required by January 2017. Executive has dealt with that process with our Government partner and an announcement will be made public near the start of the term.

## **OTHER**

### **Parry Sound Campground**

The summer camping season at Quinn Lake is quickly drawing to a close for another year. Unusually warm weather this summer has undoubtedly prompted many campers to “go jump in the lake”! Unfortunately, the extremely dry season has also resulted in a fire ban which has likely put a slight ‘damper’ on nightly activities typically enjoyed around an open campfire. After the last few years of major infrastructure projects at the Campground, staff are now settled into a more orderly pace of ongoing maintenance. A further gradual increase to storage rates and an updated storage agreement will assist with revenues and will provide staff with more authority to manage camper trailers that are not being used or properly maintained by their owners. OTF appreciates the efforts of the Campground staff: Mike Bosley (Caretaker), Heather McEwen (Registrar), Duncan McEwen (former Groundskeeper) and Mike’s wife Mary-Ellen who joined the ranks this season.

### **International Assistance / Aboriginal Literacy Camps / Urgent Action Appeals**

OTF received over 400 applications for international assistance this year. The Committee was able to give consideration for project funding to 320 of these that addressed high priority areas

identified by OTF. Governors will receive a detailed report from the International Assistance Committee later on in this meeting, and can also find a printed copy in their materials package. In total, the Committee granted funding to 159 projects, located in 19 developing countries, including Burkina Faso, the Caribbean, the Congo, Egypt, Ghana, Honduras, India, Kenya, Lesotho, Panama, the Philippines, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Particular priority was placed on funding requests for teacher training, water purification and sanitation projects for schools, school construction projects, and requests benefitting special needs students, girls and women. In addition, using the special funds awarded by the Governors for the purpose of supporting the United Nations International Year of Light in 2015, the Committee provided funding to two school solar lighting projects in India, two in Zimbabwe and one large-scale project in Tanzania.

As part of its work, the Committee also continued to serve as the trustee of the Blanche Snell and Lesotho Educational Sustaining Funds. Once again this year, we did not receive applications for the Blanche Snell Fund. The Committee has requested OTF staff to investigate whether some change to the terms of reference of the fund may be possible in order to expand the eligibility requirements and, in this way, boost the number of applicants.

At several points during the 2015-16 school year, OTF came to the aid of teachers and others who suffered as a consequence of geopolitical and humanitarian crises through urgent action appeals. As reported to you in January, OTF made a financial contribution in the Fall to Education International's *Solidarity with Dominica* fund to provide relief for Dominican schools, educators and their families in the wake of Tropical Storm Erika. We also took several steps in October to assist Syrian refugees. In addition to writing to CTF with a request that it lobby the Government of Canada to take concrete action on the Syrian refugee crisis, we made a donation to the Humanitarian Coalition to provide relief for Syrian refugees overseas. OTF also contributed to the Syrian Refugee Support Fundraising Dinner of November 25, 2015, organized by Rosario Marchese and the Scadding Court Community Centre, to help sponsor refugee families to settle in Toronto. We also hosted five webinars to assist teachers in supporting ELL and refugee children.

In early May, OTF took prompt action to support families in Fort McMurray, Alberta, who were victims of the devastating fires that forced some 30,000 residents to flee their homes. As mentioned earlier, we were hosting two teachers and four students from Fort McMurray who were here in Toronto as part of the NORCAN project when the fire broke out. Staff and students of Monsignor Pereyema Catholic School in Oshawa immediately responded with an outpouring of concrete practical, financial and emotional support. In Alberta, the ATA urged its members to donate to the Canadian Red Cross Emergency Fund and the Canadian Teachers' Federation echoed this appeal to all its Member organizations. Without delay, on May 9, 2016, an email was sent to the Executive, seeking approval to go ahead and make a donation of \$5,000 immediately to the Canadian Red Cross Emergency Fund to support families affected by the fires in Fort McMurray, Alberta, and have it formally approved at the May 19, 2016 Executive Meeting. The Executive responded favourably and a donation of \$5,000 was made by OTF on May 9, 2016.

OTF again sponsored an Aboriginal Literacy Camp this past summer. We look forward to sharing the stories from the camp later this year with Governors. We are proud to continue our support for this worthwhile program, administered by Frontier College and established by former Lieutenant Governor, James Bartleman.

## **CONCLUSION**

As we bring another OTF year to a close, we thank OTF's Executive and Board for their contributions this past year and we wish the incoming Executive and Board a successful year ahead.

The programs and activities of OTF (from administering a campground, to supporting professional learning to pension advocacy!) are varied to say the least. The success of each and every program and activity is the result of the hard work of OTF's staff team – who bring their varied talents to OTF day after day, anxious to support Ontario's teachers and one another. The support they offer me is gratefully received. To them, thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

Rhonda Kimberley-Young  
Secretary-Treasurer