

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



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My Irish grandmother always said that uncertain weather was a sign of unsettled things in the world. Indeed, the spring of 2015 with its blustery winds and hesitant temperatures seems to have proven her to be correct. Many things in the world of education have yet to settle and we offer our solidarity with our Affiliates in their work to secure collective agreements for their respective members.

In this issue, we will highlight our ongoing work on your pension. We will also share information from some of our other partners that may be of interest to you; for instance, the Ontario Teachers Insurance Plan (OTIP) offers the Edvantage Discount Program free to all OTF members. Campaign VOX (Hear My Voice) provides resources and supports for teachers across Canada for the 2015 federal election. The Canadian Teachers' Federation developed and coordinates this campaign.

Reflecting on this past year, I will always be appreciative of the opportunity to have represented Ontario's teaching profession at many, varied events. Early in March, I attended the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women in NYC to promote gender equality

and universal education for girls. Later this spring, I was honoured to be a delegate to the International Summit on the Teaching Profession held for the first time on Canadian soil. And soon, I will be attending the National Presidents' Conference in Yellowknife, NWT. Wherever I have had the privilege to go, you can rest assured that the teachers of Ontario are highly-regarded and respected for not only their professionalism, but also their work in social justice.

The winds of change continue to shape our landscape as my second and final term at OTF comes to an end in August, but I wish to humbly thank you for graciously allowing me the exceptional opportunity to work on behalf of our profession. I will always hold this work and these times dear. We never know for certain what lies ahead, but I remain determined, nonetheless, to hope all OTF members will dedicate the summer ahead to rejuvenation and the building of good memories with family and friends.

Yours in education,
Rian McLaughlin

From the Secretary-Treasurer



Rhonda Kimberley-Young
Secretary-Treasurer

Colleagues

It is said that “nothing is constant but change.” This past year has once again proven that adage.

In April, members heard the good news about the Ontario Teachers’ Pension Plan (OTPP)—another surplus based on current benefits and contribution rates. On May 27, OTF issued a media release and *Communiqué* detailing the decision of the two plan sponsors—OTF and the Ontario Government—to file a valuation. This not only allows for improvements to payment for inflation protection, but also leaves some surplus to mitigate against potential funding challenges in years ahead.

As for politics, where to start? Trustee and municipal elections last fall brought new leaders to office across the province. The Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) held elections this spring; voter turnout dipped to 2.45% of eligible voters. We understand

that OCT will be soliciting nominees for the two Council positions which remain vacant.

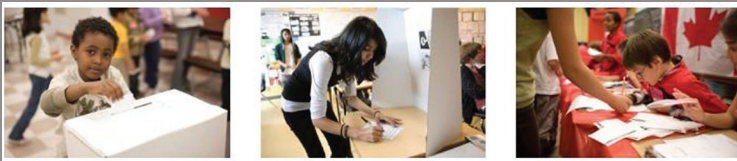
Provincial politics right now are anything but stable. OTF has no role in collective bargaining but we truly wish all the Affiliates success in their efforts to reach fair settlements for teachers and closure to a challenging and stressful bargaining process.

Finally, there’s a federal election on the horizon. The ads are being ramped up daily. It is important for members of our profession to fully participate in this federal election. OTF, the Affiliates, CTF and labour organizations all share serious concerns with the Harper Government’s attack on labour and with many of their policies.

And, as for education developments, OTF and the Affiliates continue to promote the professional autonomy of teachers

and to support teacher self-directed learning. This not only matters to you but also is the most effective way to improve teacher capacity. Frankly, it works. Ontario is recognized as a leader for the professionalism of its teachers. OTF is proud to play a role in building teachers’ capacity. As the jury for the OTIP Teaching Awards recently reviewed the finalists and selected the winning teachers, I was reminded of the talent, dedication and expertise among Ontario’s teachers. It is truly something to celebrate.

May summer bring you much needed rest and rejuvenation!



Involving students in the election process

Student Vote works to build the capacity and commitment of young Canadians to participate in Canada’s democracy. The program is open to all elementary, intermediate and secondary schools and there is no cost to participate.

The scheduled date for the federal election is October 19, 2015. The tentative Student Vote days are October 13-16, 2015.

Register now at http://studentvote.ca/federal_registration/.
Student Vote website: <http://www.studentvote.ca/home.php>.



Hear My Voice (VOX)

The Canadian Teachers’ Federation has launched this campaign to encourage teachers across Canada to get involved in the federal election in October 2015.

The website has a toolkit for teachers to use to become involved.

Check it out at *Hear My Voice*:
<http://vox.ctf-fce.ca/>.

DIFFERENT APPROACHES

GREAT RESULTS!



During Education Week, OTF President Rian McLaughlin had the pleasure of visiting two of the 2014 OTIP Teaching Award winners, Josh Tellier and Nancy Rawlinson, both elementary school teachers.

Josh Tellier, winner of the OTIP Teaching Award for Beginning Teacher, teaches at Holy Family Catholic French Immersion School in Woodstock. Holy Family, the only French Immersion school in Oxford County, has about 200 pupils in JK to Grade 8. These pupils often travel 1.5 hours on a bus to school.

Josh's Grade 6 pupils were totally engrossed in a geometry lesson taught with the aid of a Smart Board. The culminating activity was provided by the app, Kahoot, which offered up a timed quiz contest. Each student used a personal tablet, smart phone or other device to participate in the quiz. Ensuring equity of access, Josh provided a device for those without one of their own. Throughout the lesson, it was abundantly clear that the class was thoroughly enjoying their learning. Teachers make learning fun for these 'digital natives!'

A complete contrast was the visit to Nancy Rawlinson's Grade 3 class. Nancy was the OTIP Teaching Award winner for Elementary Teacher.

Davisville Public School, in the heart of Toronto, has approximately 460 pupils. It is a dual track school offering English (regular program) and Early French Immersion from JK to Grade 6.

Nancy's classroom had been transformed for the students who were re-living the life of pioneers in 1815. Nancy and her class were dressed in 1815 wardrobes, were cooking baked beans and cornmeal pancakes and making their own butter! They were also writing and drawing with quill pens (lots of Mother's Day greetings and Star Wars figures) and designing and

building a miniature 1815 village. Everyone took pride in measuring the latest growth spurt of their bean plants as well as monitoring the development of their live caterpillars housed in individual caterpillar condos!

"Both visits were a testament to the excellence of teachers in public education in Ontario," stated Rian McLaughlin. "Both teachers created atmospheres where students were engaged and motivated to learn. Both teachers brought their own special skills to the classroom environment and used techniques appropriate for the topics being taught. Both showed their enthusiasm for learning and shared it with their students. I am proud of these teachers!"

For more information on the OTIP Award winners, go to www.teachingawards.ca.

GRUPE MÉDIA TFO RECEIVES 2015 GREER AWARD

At the Spring Board of Governors' meeting, Rian McLaughlin, OTF President and Carol Jolin, AEFO President presented the Greer Award for Outstanding Contribution to Publicly Funded Education to Groupe Média TFO. Julie Caron, Director of TFO Éducation, accepted the award on the company's behalf.

Since 1987, TFO has played an essential role in the development and growth of the Ontario francophone community. It has become the hub for the French-language public, cultural and educational television network

in Ontario. Not only does it offer content through television for francophone and francophile audiences, but it also produces and broadcasts digital content for the web and mobile devices.

For the educational community, TFO's educational content is designed for children attending French schools and French immersion schools. The TFO Éducation website is a multimedia platform which responds to the specific needs of the school community, the classrooms and beyond. It offers teachers rich and current French educational resources, in accordance with Ontario's curriculum guidelines, as well as a work space to share with colleagues and students.

As AEFO stated in the nomination, "AEFO truly believes that, in order to grow, the francophone community in Ontario needs to count on organizations that will respond to their particular needs. TFO is recognized as an invaluable organization for Ontario's francophones that stimulates the French reality within Ontario and elsewhere."



L to R: Julie Caron, Director of TFO Éducation; Rian McLaughlin, OTF President; and Carol Jolin, AEFO President