



interaction

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A message from the president

Colleagues,

Wow, what a start to the school year! We had heat waves, bus shortages, math scores, and a pension valuation filed—just to name a few events. And through it all, you were there—on the front lines of Ontario's education system.

"The key to raising achievement is to recognize that teaching and learning is a relationship." Ken Robinson, *Creative Schools: Revolutionizing Education from the Ground Up*. This is just one "gem" I gathered when I represented Ontario teachers at the founding summit of the Atlantic Rim Collaboratory (ARC). ARC aims to establish a global group of educational systems that advances values such as equity, excellence, wellbeing, inclusion, democracy and human rights for all students within high-quality, professionally-run systems. OTF, along with teacher association representatives from other systems, participated in this Summit to ensure that the voice of the teaching profession was present.

Together, we made the point that the primary drivers of change in any system of education are the teachers.

They must be involved in the discussion leading to change and respected as professionals. We also ensured that the next ARC will include the teacher associations as equal partners.

My first public duty after being elected was to welcome over 200 educators to the Pedagogy b4 Technology Conference in August. It was inspiring

The reason we are lauded as one of the best public education systems in the world is you. You make it all possible.

to see so many professionals engaging in interactive professional development during their 'summer off'. And they weren't the only ones. This summer, OTF, with the support of the Ministry of Education, offered a variety of professional learning events, Summer Institutes, that focused on the revised curriculum, financial literacy, mathematics, and using information and communication technology (ICT). You too can participate in the professional learning offered by educators for educators through OTF by perusing the resources on the Learning page of the OTF [website](#).

Looking forward to a great school year,

Mike Foulds
President



Social Media



[otffeo.on.ca](http://www.otffeo.on.ca)



@otffeo
@otf_pd



otffeo



[youtube.com/
OntarioTeachers'
Federation](http://youtube.com/OntarioTeachers'Federation)



Tech conference a great success!

Over 200 teachers attended this OTF conference in August. The conference intended to be a professional interactive learning conference for teachers by teachers and it was.

The conference opened with a keynote address by US-educator Alan November and closed with a keynote address by Avon-Maitland DSB teacher Leigh Cassell. Minds on Media and other break-out sessions focused on the following topics, among others: creating Makerspaces; harnessing social media; promoting digital citizenship; supporting global projects; and teaching media literacy.

The reviews of the conference were overwhelmingly positive. Here are a few:

Thank you @otffeo for great PD this summer. #PB4T & Summer Institute with @OHASSTA - both brilliant! Excited to get to work with my classes!

Still buzzing about all my learnings at #pb4t, EXCITED to start the year instead of scared! Thanks for all the #edspiration!

Final day of some of the best teaching PD #pd4t @otf_pd Thanks @otffeo Great meeting amazing & innovation teachers.

I am having a terrible horrible no good very bad day. The only good part of my day has been attending the #pb4t conference.

Learning locally, sharing globally

At the OTF AGM in August, Governors heard four Ontario teachers share their successes in using technology in the classroom to connect students with others across the world.

Leigh Cassell described the amazing "Human Library" project which she initiated. She has moved from teacher-directed learning to connection-based learning. In 2017, she is launching the project, "A kids' guide to Canada" which will invite students across Canada to connect and share their Canada.

Peter Beens outlined his philosophy of sharing resources and knowledge with other educators. To Peter, shared networked learning is critical.

Joe Grabowski started 'inside the book' and moved outside to the benefit of his students and himself. Through his program, "Exploring by the Seat of your

Pants," students connect with real people in the real world; for example, a shark expert who explained the inhumanity of killing sharks for their fins. The students subsequently launched a campaign and realized the power their actions can have.

Mario Blouin, the robotics king, videotapes his lessons and posts them for students to review later. He has had prize winning robotics teams many times. He shared his strategies for using technology to teach and to engage students.

These teachers are examples of the positive uses of technology in the classroom—not only in connecting students with the world but also encouraging kids to develop empathy for others.



Federation Days - pinning ceremonies begin in earnest



Every fall, the OTF President and senior staff visit faculties of education across the province to meet teacher candidates. At these sessions, candidates, who are associate members of OTF, learn about the meaning of being an associate member, the services and resources OTF offers them, and their legal and ethical responsibilities.

In recent years, a growing number of faculties wish to include a 'pinning ceremony' at Federation Days.

Originally proposed by Western's Faculty of Education, the pinning ceremony is an official welcome to the profession. Teacher candidates take an oath and receive a pin with the university and OTF logos on it. While the oaths taken have slightly



different formats at each participating faculty, most include the following wording, directly excerpted from the *Teaching Profession Act*:

I will strive at all times to achieve and maintain the highest degree of professional competence and to uphold the honour, dignity and ethical standards of the teaching profession.

OTF anticipates that more faculties will institute this practice as part of their orientation activities in the years ahead.

A message from the secretary-treasurer



Rhonda Kimberley-Young
Secretary-Treasurer

It's the first day of autumn, sun blazing and the air warm. If it weren't for the fact that school was back, I'd swear it was still summer! But, the cycle of activity for OTF is already well underway. Summer at OTF was all about professional learning. Over 650 teachers participated in the 32 summer institutes held across the province and the OTF Campground at Quinn Lake was the hot place to be—literally!

We know that teachers are very busy the first couple weeks of school so OTF doesn't start online webinars or other PD programs right away. Have a look in this issue for upcoming fall events which may appeal to you. OTF's website, Facebook, email blasts and Twitter accounts will keep you in the loop. Please sign up to get news from OTF and updates about OTF professional learning—it's the best kind—by teachers for teachers. Just go to the OTF website and click on the banner on the home page.

Another reason to follow OTF is the pension. You should know from OTF's recent *Communiqué*, press release and social media that the OTFP partners have just filed a valuation. Check out the *Communiqué* on the pension page of the OTF website for more information.

At the time of writing, OTF is preparing for the Word on the Street festival and the OTIP Teaching Awards presentation being held in the next few days. The OTIP Teaching Awards are a part of our celebration of World Teachers' Day in early October. We're already out on the road meeting teacher candidates at the faculties across Ontario. We'll be hosting a financial literacy conference and the TLLP in November. Stay tuned and hope you can join us for some of these events.

Surplus funds further restore inflation protection for retired teachers

OTF and the Ontario Government will use a portion of the \$13.2 billion surplus in the Plan (as of January 1, 2016) to partially restore inflation protection for teachers who retired after 2009.

The remainder of the surplus will be kept in reserve to provide benefit and contribution rate stability against future funding challenges such as low interest rates and increasing longevity, both of which increase the Plan's liabilities.

Pensioners who retired after 2009 will receive a one-time increase in January 2017 to restore their pensions to the levels they would have been at, had full inflation

protection been provided each year since they retired. They will also receive a slightly higher inflation increase next year for the portion of their pensions earned after 2009. Cost-of-living increases for this portion of pension credit will equal 90% of the annual increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI), up from the current level of 70%.



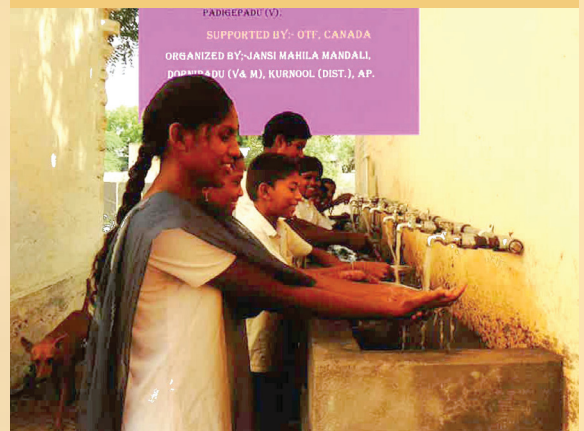
Pension credits earned before 2010 remain fully inflation-protected. Pensioners who retired before 2010 are

unaffected by these latest changes because pension credits earned before 2010 receive full inflation protection. Working members are also unaffected because annual inflation adjustments are determined after retirement.

Did you know that...

the OTF International Assistance Committee approved funding for 159 projects and an additional five solar projects last year. Priorities for project approval were water purification or sanitation projects in schools; school construction; projects benefitting women and children; funding for special needs students; and projects involving the purchase of bicycles as a means of transportation to school.

For more information on the International Assistance program, check out the Advocacy page of the OTF [website](#).



Sharing beyond borders

OTF is an active participant in the Teacher Learning and Leadership Program (TLLP), an initiative of the Ministry of Education.

Since 2007, the TLLP has funded over 900 project proposals from experienced classroom teachers seeking a peer leadership role in curriculum, instructional practice and supporting

other teachers. Once a TLLP project is complete, the Provincial Knowledge Exchange (PKE) provides school boards with the opportunity to mobilize the knowledge and experience of the TLLP teacher leaders across schools, boards and the province.

The learning of the teacher leaders involved in these TLLP and PKE projects represents a tremendous reserve of educational

knowledge. You can explore their projects on the TeachOntario website.

These teams welcome your input, ideas and collaboration as they continue to deepen their learning journeys.

<https://www.teachontario.ca/community/explore/tllppe/pages/main>

OTF Connects webinars up and running again

OTF offers teachers opportunities for self-directed teacher learning through *OTF Connects*. Developed by teachers for teachers, our free professional learning webinar program provides you with easy-to-access PD at your home computer or on your mobile device.

All OTF members can participate in these live 90-minute sessions. This year, *OTF Connects* webinars will focus on mathematics, technology, revised curriculum, Kindergarten and financial literacy.

To register, visit www.otffeo.on.ca, click on Learning, then **OTF Connects**.



Making more than Cents out of financial literacy



November 25-26, 2016
Crowne Plaza Toronto Airport
33 Carlson Court, Toronto

A conference which explores creative, authentic and engaging ways to make financial literacy come alive in the classroom!

Speakers include James Cunningham, *Funny Money* and Jane Rooney, Canada's financial literacy leader.



To apply or for more information, go to www.otffeo.on.ca.

Joining the circle




OTF is eagerly anticipating the release of a new and timely educational resource for Ontario teachers and educators.

OTF's long-time partner, COPA (the Ontario Assault Prevention Centre), has been funded by the Aboriginal Education Office to adapt their unique resource designed for use by Indigenous families—*A Circle of Caring*. The adapted resource, *Joining the Circle*, which will be released in 2017, will include a range of multimedia

tools, including a series of closed-captioned short animated films available in six Indigenous languages, French and English. Each film is accompanied by a discussion guide and related tools to enhance understanding of Indigenous history, culture and reality, along with strategies to help indigenize our schools.

COPA is currently booking professional development sessions for 2017. Contact the project's Lead Consultant at meeminik@yahoo.ca



Survive & THRIVE

Just go to survivethrive.on.ca to see this new and improved resource for beginning teachers, occasional teachers, mentors and teacher candidates.

You'll find hands-on information that will be of value in the classroom; in dealing with colleagues, parents and others; and in managing your work-life balance.

The website contains hundreds of practical resources on useful topics such as classroom management, special needs students, working with parents, occasional teaching, assessment and reporting.

www.survivethrive.on.ca