

A message from the president

Well being and professional collaboration were two of the big topics at the Ministry of Education's Partners in Dialogue event held in early November. The event got me thinking about this time of year in the classroom: the long dark days between Thanksgiving and the Winter Break with the joy of Halloween on a Monday and report cards being due.

How are you managing your own well-being? We all know that our profession can be challenging to maintaining personal well-being. To the outsider, our work may seem easy but the mentally draining task of simply managing a classroom can be enough to leave you exhausted at the end of the school day. Not to mention the marking... always the marking!

OTF has several supports for teachers as you struggle through the doldrum days. Survive and Thrive 2.0 is a resource targeted to beginning teachers that has hands-on resources useful in the classroom, in dealing with colleagues, parents and others, and in managing your work-life balance. In my opinion, the resources are useful for any teacher.

I encourage you to manage your work-life balance. No one looks back on their life and thinks "I wish I had marked that essay quicker." Our students deserve your absolute best and you need to be at your best to deliver.

Professional collaboration, as outlined in PPM 159, states: "Recent studies have shown that collaborative professionalism

has the potential to improve learning and working conditions. Research and evidence demonstrate that networks and communities of professionals are necessary to move systems from great to excellent." OTF has always supported the notion that teachers, as the true experts in Ontario's education system, should be listened to. The Ministry and OTF have modeled professional collaboration through the Teacher Learning and Leadership Program (TLLP), the Teacher Learning Co-op (TLC), and many other professional learning opportunities for teachers. TLLP has become a model for professional learning for education systems around the world. This is an example of what professional



collaboration can produce. The next step is to encourage boards and schools to implement the PPM in meaningful ways.

I want to wish you all a wonderful Winter Break. May it leave you refreshed and well.

Mike Foulds
President

Lest we forget

A time of remembrance and gratitude

On November 11, teachers joined millions in remembrance of those who have given their lives so that Canadians can live in freedom and peace.

Mike Foulds, OTF President, was proud to lay a wreath on behalf of teachers in public education at the Ceremony of Remembrance at Queen's Park.



Excellence of three Ontario teachers recognized



OTIP Teaching Awards 2016

On September 27, the following educators received the OTIP Teaching Award:

- Lee Martin, Central Public School, Grimsby - Beginning Teacher Category
- Thomas Doherty, St. John School, Red Lake - Elementary Teacher Category
- Hilary Masemann, Marc Garneau Collegiate Institute, Toronto - Secondary Teacher Category

"These winners are representative of the excellent teachers in our publicly funded schools," stated Mike Foulds, OTF President. "OTF is proud to be part of these awards which recognize the contributions teachers make daily in our schools."

OTIP and OTF co-sponsor the OTIP Teaching Awards for excellence in teaching in the publicly funded school system.

At the same ceremony, Groupe Média TFO presented the Prix IDELLO 2016 to Catherine Girard, École élémentaire Jeanne-Lajoie, Toronto.

More information on the awards can be found at teachingawards.ca.



L to R: Mike Foulds, OTF President; Lee Martin, Beginning Teacher Category; Hilary Masemann, Secondary Teacher Category; Thomas Doherty, Elementary Teacher Category; Vic Medland, Chief Executive Officer, OTIP

Indspire: OTF's charity for 2016-17



Several years ago, the Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF) made the decision to choose annually an organization or charity to support in lieu of mailing festive cards. That charity this year is Indspire.

Indspire is an Indigenous-led registered charity that invests in the education of Indigenous people. It serves First Nation, Inuit, and Métis students in remote communities and urban centres across Canada. The organization provides scholarships, programs, and resources with the goal of closing the gap in Indigenous education.

Indspire's K-12 Institute is a virtual resource centre that serves educators, communities, and other stakeholders in improving Kindergarten to Grade 12 success for Indigenous youth. As well, there are numerous supports for educators and students.
<http://indspire.ca/>

Good things come to those who wait?

Well, yes and no in this case. Ontario's teachers are probably aware of the recent Supreme Court decision (7-2) in favour of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation (BCTF) and the record time it took the Court to decide (only 20 minutes).

But, you may not know that this started 15 years ago in 2002 when the BC Government stripped provisions from the teachers' collective agreement and legislated that these issues could not be bargained. BCTF fought and won in the courts. The Government appealed and the original decision was overturned. Now the Supreme Court has restored the original decision bringing finality to a more than decade-long legal battle. Although the path to justice was long, it was the steadfast resolution and conviction of BCTF to hold the BC Government legally accountable – not just its patience – which ultimately won the day.

The decision restores clauses from the 2002 collective agreement and now requires the hiring of hundreds of teachers to restore the workload and class size provisions in existence before the Government stripped the agreement. While this is a victory for the union and one for which we wholeheartedly congratulated the BCTF representatives



Rhonda Kimberley-Young
Secretary-Treasurer

at the November Canadian Teachers' Federation Board meeting, it has meant that, for over a decade, teachers taught and students learned in an educational environment which had been compromised by underfunding by the BC Government. Students who have already graduated experienced these conditions for their entire education.

Our thanks and support go out to our BC teacher colleagues for their defence of collective bargaining rights for teachers and access to quality education for students.



On December 6, the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women, Canadians remember the 1989 École Polytechnique massacre, in which armed student Marc Lépine murdered 14 women and injured 10 others, because they were women.

The staff at the OTF office will have observed a minute's silence on December 6 to remember all women who have died or suffered from gender-based violence.

Japanese delegation to OTF

On November 11, 2016 OTF was honoured to host a visiting educational delegation from Japan. The Japanese joined us for our Remembrance Day service.





Survive & THRIVE 2.0

www.survivethrive.on.ca



New
AND improved!

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

OTFFEO Planboard



Organize, Collaborate and Share: Lesson Planning Simplified

With free access to all OTF members, OTF Planboard enables you to get organized with their lesson plans online.

Teachers can create, edit and share in one seamless experience. Ontario curriculum expectations are all built into OTF Planboard.

You can embed curriculum expectations, images or videos, and attach documents to your lessons.

To set up your free OTF Planboard account, go to www.planboardapp.com/otf/.



The OTF Curriculum Forum provides a unique avenue for professional learning and networking opportunities among the Subject, Division and Special Interest Associations (SDAs) as well as between the SDAs and OTF.

The Forum also provides an active and important liaison between the SDAs and the Ministry of Education. Members of the Forum are OTF, the four OTF Affiliates and over 50 SDAs.

To learn more, go to www.otffeo.on.ca/en/services/curriculum-forum/.



ONTARIO TEACHERS' FEDERATION

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SEARCH



PARENT ENGAGEMENT

A resource to support elementary and secondary teachers and educators working with parents and guardians

A website to promote teacher-parent relationships

The website is a complete guide to working with parents and guardians. It includes short vignettes, podcasts and practical tips and other helpful resources for teachers.

www.parentengagement.ca/

OTF CONNECTS webinars

Developed by teachers for teachers, OTF's free professional learning webinar program provides OTF members easy-to-access PD at home or on a mobile device.

The 90-minute sessions are offered from 7:30 to 9:00 pm during the week. This year, OTF Connects webinars focus on mathematics, technology, revised curriculum, Kindergarten and financial literacy. www.otffeo.on.ca/en/learning/otf-connects/calendar/.

OTF Connects archived webinars focus on a wide variety of topics such as curriculum, environmental education, exploring inquiry, media and digital literacy and violence prevention. All are available at www.otffeo.on.ca/en/learning/otf-connects/resources/.

