

A message from the President

December 2016

Wellbeing 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 modelled 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.