

A message from the OTF President

Colleagues:

We are off and running on a new school year. Like me, you probably look at the calendar and wonder where the time goes. During the last few months, OTF has continued to be actively promoting professional learning for our teachers, defending their interests and ensuring the voice of teachers is heard on the many issues of importance to our profession.

OTF is always at the forefront of effective and timely professional development that is recognized nationally and internationally. In November, OTF's financial literacy conference, attended by over 100 teachers, was a perfect example of professional learning created by teachers for teachers. The timing of the conference made it an ideal fit with the Ministry of Education's new push to bring financial literacy into the curriculum. As I write this, I am attending the Teacher Learning and Leadership (TLLP) summit where teachers create and share ideas that help to ignite the love of learning in our students. Truly inspiring!

We have also been active with issues concerning the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT). As you may have heard, OCT is considering a fee increase of 11-19% that it says will help deal with "increasing costs" at the College.

The reason its costs are increasing is because OCT has expanded its mandate into areas that go far beyond that of a regulator. OTF has learned that this fee increase will primarily help pay down the OCT mortgage... a mortgage on a building located at Bay and Bloor in Toronto, the location of some of Canada's most expensive real estate. I believe that rank and file teachers should not be left on the hook for OCT's financial decisions.

This is unacceptable to Ontario's teachers.

Thankfully, there is a College election just around the corner. Teachers should take interest in their local candidates and pose tough questions on how they will represent us on the College Council.



Chris Cowley

The holiday season is one of the busiest times for teachers. I know that each of you work to make this a special time for your students. But be sure to take the time you need with your family and friends to recharge.

2018 will be a new year with new opportunities and challenges. OTF will be there... defending your interests and speaking on your behalf.

Happy holidays,

Chris Cowley



An act of remembrance

On November 11, Chris Cowley, OTF President, laid a wreath at the Ontario Veterans' War Memorial at Queen's Park on behalf of Ontario's teachers in publicly funded education.

Heather McEwen, Registrar, OTF Parry Sound Campground, retires

Her caring and thoughtfulness will be missed

Heather McEwen, a familiar and welcoming face at the OTF campground, retired earlier this year after many years of service. Janet Clevely, a perennial camper with her husband, Blair, wrote the following tribute to Heather.



Heather has been such a friendly and helpful greeter to everyone. So much concern and thoughtfulness for the people here. Heather always went above and beyond her duties, working many hours more than she had to: checking the camp in the evening, delivering messages from family to campers, keeping track of campers in case of an emergency, settling accounts, looking after all the funds for campers, and maintaining the office library. Any job that needed doing she did willingly. Every September, campers celebrated the beginning of the school year with the "To Hell with The Bell" breakfast provided by Heather.

On behalf of the campers, OTF thanks Heather for her many years of dedication in keeping the campground running smoothly and wishes her a long and happy retirement.



OTPP pension enhancements January 1, 2018

The contribution rate for the Plan's active members will be reduced by 1.1%.

Full inflation protection will be restored for those who retired after 2009.

Also, the reduction factor has been lowered for members who cease employment in education in 2018 or later and who elect a reduced pension on a deferred basis.

"All of this comes as good news for our members," stated Chris Cowley, OTF President. "We are restoring benefits and reducing contribution rates while ensuring the Plan remains fully funded."

For more information on these changes, please go to www.otpp.com.

New member appointed to the OTPP Board of Directors

The Executive and Board of Governors of the Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF) have announced the appointment of Gene Lewis to the Board of the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan (OTPP) for a two-year term commencing January 1, 2018.

Gene served as General Secretary of the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) from 1998 until his retirement in 2013. During his career, he was an active participant on the OTF Executive and Board of Governors. He gained extensive experience and expertise in OTPP through serving on committees such as the Ontario Teachers' Sustainability Workgroup and the Partners' Consultative Committee.

OTF also thanks Rod Albert, who completed eight years of service on the Board, for his contributions and wishes him well in his future endeavours.

Congratulations to three excellent Ontario teachers

OTIP Teaching Awards 2017



Left to right: Vic Medland, OTIP CEO; Victor Barker, Secondary Teacher Category, Port Colborne Secondary School, Port Colborne; Helen Wolfe, Elementary Teacher Category, Nelson Mandela Park Public School, Toronto; Chris Cowley, OTF President; and Colleen Shaw, Beginning Teacher Category, North Bendale Junior Public School, Scarborough

A message from the OTF Secretary-Treasurer

Since the last issue of *Interaction*, OTF has been busy working with and for Ontario's teachers.

In late September, OTF and the Ontario Teachers Insurance Plan (OTIP) recognized three Ontario teachers with the OTIP Teaching Award for Excellence. You can learn more at teachingawards.ca. Also, consider nominating a colleague when the awards nominations open on January 9, 2018.

OTF staff hosted a booth at Word on the Street, a literacy festival held annually in Toronto. We provide giveaways to students and teachers alike. It's a great way to celebrate literacy, meet and support many OTF members and chat with parents about the great work teachers are doing.

Once again, OTF and the Affiliates have partnered with the Ministry of Education to provide professional learning for teachers, particularly in the areas of Kindergarten, mathematics and wellbeing. OTF delivers professional

learning following our tried and true approach of voluntary, self-directed learning by teachers for teachers. Be sure to check the OTF website or follow @otf_pd for information on upcoming programs.

Through the fall, the OTF President and staff visited faculties of education across Ontario to meet teacher candidates to the profession, welcome them to the profession and inform them of their rights and responsibilities as OTF members.

OTF will soon release an updated position paper on assessment. Since the Ministry is also launching a province-wide assessment review, this paper is very timely and will inform our advice to the Government. Once completed, you will find the paper on the OTF website.

The OTF President will present to the Ontario College of Teachers'



Rhonda Kimberley-Young
Secretary-Treasurer

(OCT) Governing Council on December 7, before they vote on their budget and proposed fee increase. During its 20 years of operation, OCT has increased its fee by 67%. In that same period, OTF's full time equivalent member fee of \$30.40 has stayed constant.

While OCT owns real estate in the expensive Bay and Bloor area, OTF leases office space near Yonge and St. Clair. We are busy preparing to move next month. OTF has reached an agreement with QECO (Qualifications Evaluation Council of Ontario) to share leased office space, one block south of our current location. This allows both organizations to reduce their footprint to keep costs (paid by members) under control.

Happy holidays and a wish for a great 2018!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rhonda Kimberley-Young'.

December 6

**National Day of Remembrance
and Action on Violence
Against Women**

The Ontario Teachers' Federation honours the memory of the 14 female students killed on December 6, 1989 at L'École Polytechnique in Montreal.



we're MOVING

As of January 15, 2018,
OTF's new address is

Suite 100
10 Alcorn Avenue
Toronto, ON M4V 3A9



SickKids®

OTF's charity for 2018

Annually, the OTF President chooses an organization or charity to support in lieu of mailing festive cards. That charity this year is SickKids.

SickKids, the Hospital for Sick Children, is entering its 143rd year in 2018. The hospital's reputation for advances in child health care, research and learning is well-known in Canada and around the world.

Their vision says it all: *Healthier Children. A Better World.*

"What better charity than SickKids, a hospital which cares about the health of the children and young people we teach," stated Chris Cowley, OTF President. "As teachers, we want nothing more for our students than to be healthy, active learners. The staff at SickKids Hospital help to achieve that goal every day. The teachers of Ontario are proud to support their work."

OTF Connects webinars

Developed by teachers for teachers, OTF's free webinars provide OTF members easy-to-access PD at home or on a mobile device. The 90-minute webinars focus on the areas of mathematics, technology, curriculum, Kindergarten, and financial literacy.

www.otffeo.on.ca/en/learning/otf-connects/calendar/

The 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/.



A free online teacher resource for the education of human rights (Grades 6-12)

Open the door to human rights for your students as they discover the lived experiences and accomplishments of the renowned Canadian defenders through teacher-approved lesson plans and activities.

Each Canadian defender profile has multimedia materials, biographies, interviews, learning targets, lessons and activities, real-world information, general background documents and much more. Although the profiles are not grade-specific, resources are labeled for grade appropriateness, where applicable.

The site was developed by the Canadian Teachers' Federation in partnership with the Canadian Museum for Human Rights and in collaboration with the Assembly of First Nations, the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights.

sttpcanada.ctf-fce.ca



Delegation from the Netherlands

In November, Chris Cowley, OTF President and Rhonda Kimberley-Young, OTF Secretary-Treasurer welcomed a delegation of educators from the Netherlands. They shared information on the structure, goals and work of the teacher unions in Ontario.