

A message from the OTF President – April 2018

When I last wrote my *Interaction* message in December, I mentioned that I would be giving a presentation to the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) about their proposed fee increase, which we discovered was primarily to pay off their mortgage at Bay and Bloor Streets in Toronto. Here at OTF, we mobilized our resources and the resources of our Affiliates to use social media, members and frank discussion with OCT councillors to send a message that teachers were absolutely opposed to this fee hike.

I asked you to get involved and let OCT know how you feel about their fee proposal. Your response was overwhelming. Thousands of teachers from across the province emailed, tweeted and voted in our poll to send a clear message that we pay enough to OCT.

On December 7, 2017, I addressed the College Council armed with your clear mandate to oppose the fee increase. After discussion, the Council voted down the fee increase and chose to keep fees frozen for 2018.

And as it turns out, the final OCT budget numbers were recently released with a surplus of over \$700,000. Even without the fee increase, OCT is in a very healthy financial state!

By the time you read this, the election for the OCT Council will already have closed. I hope you had the opportunity to cast your ballot. But a more important ballot is coming in June with the provincial election. The political landscape in Ontario has shifted considerably in recent months and teachers need to be aware of the importance of their vote to ensure an education-friendly government is elected. Teachers need to speak through their ballot for not only our profession, but also for our students.

As we enter the home stretch of the school year, I'd like to thank all of you for your professionalism and dedication to our students and our publicly funded education system. Teachers are the heart and soul of our schools and OTF will always be standing behind you as you teach the love of learning every day.

Yours in education,

Chris Cowley
President