

Report of the Secretary-Treasurer to the Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Ontario Teachers' Federation, August 21, 2018

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## INTRODUCTION

Welcome Governors!

While this report will primarily summarize the activities of the year which has passed, no doubt our collective thoughts are on the year ahead. Despite this report which looks “back”, it will be incredibly important that OTF and the Affiliates be effective voices for the teaching profession in the year ahead; today’s meeting launches OTF into a period of uncertainty and the teaching profession into a school year that will, no doubt, be challenging.

The 2017 / 2018 year was a busy and successful one for OTF and this report identifies the main activities of the Federation over the year.

At this meeting, we will hear the report of the Auditors and we will hear from representatives of the OTPP. Guests from other organizations such as RTO and CTF will speak at the meeting as well. Education Minister, Lisa Thompson was invited to the meeting to bring remarks. We have invited special guest speakers who will be very engaging – world renowned Canadian cave diver Jill Heinerth and Michael Adams and Derek Leebosh from Environics.

Since we are starting a new year, that means we need new pictures to update the OTF website! The Board and Executive will be asked later today to assemble for the updated photo which we will try to have done as quickly and painlessly as possible!

The past year saw no change in terms of OTF staff. Our core work continued along with many professional learning projects made possible by Ministry funding. This report outlines the many elements of OTF’s work over the period and I want to thank OTF’s staff, the contract staff we bring in to support the PD work and for special projects, along with the dozens of teacher experts we draw on for our “by teachers, for teachers” conferences, webinars and institutes. All of this work demonstrates true professional collaboration within the teaching profession and it is appreciated as much by OTF as it is by the teachers who participate willingly and eagerly in the programs.

The big change for OTF this past year was our office move and, six months in, it has proven to be very successful. Most Governors have seen our new office space, which we share with QECO, and it is meeting our needs very well. Over the long run, the cost effectiveness of shared space will prove to be an excellent decision as well. Most Governors have seen the new office, either at an orientation or during the social event in April. We also hosted an open-house for those involved in the project and for our neighbours in the building.

During a Board meeting last year, we sought input from Governors on several topics; that input was summarized and reviewed by senior staff and the OTF table officers. There were several tangible and practical suggestions from that input which we will make every effort to adopt and incorporate. Several related to communications and outreach are already in the works. A

suggestion that fiduciary training for the Board ought to be done once every two years was also made and we will make that a regular feature at the Winter Board meetings every two years. Governors, on average, would appreciate a chance for an OTPP orientation (or a refresher) every three years and they also appreciated the OTF orientation / office tour at the same time. There were suggestions for orienting new governors and for how information for meetings is shared with Governors. Governor feedback about the OTPP orientation content will be shared with OTPP and we will get to work on arranging the next orientation session with them for this year. Governors told us they would like to see more attendance at the Pension Forum. Governors were keen to hear interesting speakers at Board meetings on timely topics and we kept that in mind for this meeting as well.

Although it is not ready for this meeting, we are changing the Executive / Governor secure log-in on the OTFFEO website to make it more user-friendly and much easier for those Executive members or Governors who prefer to go paperless for meetings. Our intent is that it will be functional for the Winter Board this year.

Each year, we see turnover in the Executive and Board but this year is unusual with very little change. We will be saying goodbye to Théophile Rwigimba and François Boudrias from AEFO and we will welcome two new AEFO Governors, Gabrielle Lemieux and Francis Bourgon. People will be taking on new roles, however, and this meeting represents Chris Cowley's final meeting as President. Chris's dry wit and ability to respond to office emails in the form of a pun is unparalleled - and will be missed. It was a year with good news in terms of the pension valuation and Chris, representing Ontario's teachers, ensured that OCT fees did not increase with his compelling presentation to Council. Since OTF is not involved in collective bargaining, Chris maximized teachers' interests in the only "pocketbook" issues that arose through OTF.

Of course, Diane Dewing will step into the role of President at the conclusion of this meeting and we look forward to welcoming her to OTF. Diane also gets to take over the OTFPres twitter handle; Chris has built up a good following Diane and we're sure you won't disappoint! Diane will be President in a year a new Government, a new Minister of Education and likely some other challenges, but remember that proverb Diane - "May you live in interesting times."

The coming year represents an important milestone for OTF; OTF turns 75 in April 2019. As a result, starting with our Winter Board in January and running to our Annual next year, we will acknowledge that with a 75<sup>th</sup> logo, some special mementos and we hope to have a recognition event to coincide with our Spring Board so stay tuned for our plans to celebrate.

## **ADVOCACY**

### **Word on the Street**

OTF hosted a booth at the Word on the Street (WOTS) literacy festival again this year on Sunday, September 24, 2017. The booth was well attended on a beautiful sunny day at the Harbourfront and we ran out of many giveaway items due to demand!

We will be looking for volunteers for WOTS to be held on Sunday, September 23, 2018.

## **World Teachers' Day**

This year's theme for World Teachers' Day on October 5, 2017 was "Addressing Violence, Building Success". OTF issued a press release and social media messages. We also noted World Teachers' Day in our communications about the OTIP teaching award winners.

## **OTIP Teaching Awards**

On Tuesday, September 26, 2017, Victor Barker (secondary), Helen Wolfe (elementary) and Colleen Shaw (beginning) were awarded this year's prizes. Gaelle Dussault-Bacon received the TFO teaching prize. As usual, the awards were presented at the OTIP banquet and TVO and TFO produced video vignettes of the winners which have since been aired and may also be accessed through the teaching awards website.

Posters were sent to schools to solicit nominations for the 2018 awards with a deadline of March 31, 2018. The response was excellent (about 150 nominations) making it a challenge for the Awards Committee to shortlist six teachers in each category and for the Awards Jury to choose the three winners. The 2018 award winners will receive their recognition at the OTIP banquet on September 25, 2018.

## **Visiting Delegations**

A small delegation from the Netherlands visited OTF in November. They were particularly keen to understand the role and operation of the federations/ unions in education in Ontario and we had a very interesting and productive exchange with them.

We hosted delegations from Sweden in February and May, 2018 and from South Africa in March 2018. Representatives from both countries were keen to learn about teacher professional development and our Federation(s) structure and role. The Swedish delegation had many questions about our equity practices and support for newcomers.

Immediately following this AGM, we will meet with an education delegation from South Korea.

## **OTF Website & *Interaction***

The OTF website was "refreshed" to reflect the new colours on the logo. Along with the website, many other documents and templates were updated as well, necessitated by the change in address.

Four issues of *Interaction* were issued over the year. Our other external communications consisted of press releases, tweets, facebook and website posts and communiques and messages through our email blast lists.

## Social Media and Communications

Our reach through our OTF Learning list is at 14,598 and our OTF News list has 14,298 subscribers. Our facebook followers number 2,145 and twitter “likes” reached 9,165 through our three twitter accounts – OTF, OTF PD and the OTF President. We had 648 new followers on twitter over the three-month period ending June 30, 2018. User statistics for OTF’s websites shows that the sites continue to be popular:

Metric	OTF	safe@sch	Par eng	Fin learn	Spec ed	Sur & thr	awards
Users	34,845	20,129	831	1,894	39,867	1,815	760
Sessions	91,050	23,343	1,037	2,692	53,912	2,136	903
Pg views	310,167	51,398	2,500	6,052	138,391	2,930	2,270

Also interesting is that users are not just from Ontario. For the OTF main site, the top ten country-of-origin users list is as follows: Canada, France, China, India, Australia, United Kingdom, Phillipines, South Africa, Malaysia, and the United Arab Emirates.

## The Greer Award

For over 70 years, the Greer Award has annually recognized an individual or organization for outstanding contributions to publicly funded education in Ontario. We have had many outstanding and deserving recipients and this year is certainly no exception.

OTF and the Affiliates proudly presented the Greer Award to Frontier College, our partner in the promotion of literacy for many years. Frontier College, founded in 1899, is Canada’s oldest and most respected literacy organization. The organization recruits and trains volunteers to deliver literacy programs to children, youth, and adults in communities across the country.

In 2005, Frontier College launched the Lieutenant Governor’s Indigenous Summer Literacy Camp program in Ontario, a pilot partnership between the former Lieutenant Governor, the Honourable James Bartleman and five fly-in First Nations in northern Ontario. To date, more than 50,000 children and youth have attended as the number of communities served has soared.

As stated in the nomination by OECTA, “Especially in the wake of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, it is crucial that we recognize and support the efforts of organizations that are striving to promote Indigenous perspectives and bridge the education gap between Indigenous and nonindigenous students. It is telling that the Indigenous communities themselves are consistently receptive to Frontier College’s involvement, positive about the contributions made by counsellors and staff, and excited to have the camps return the following summer.”

## Remembrance Day

The OTF President laid a wreath at the Ontario Veterans’ War Memorial at Queens’ Park on Saturday, November 11 on behalf of Ontario’s teachers in publicly funded education.

## **Support and Coalitions**

OTF attends events by other organizations or supports them financially to the extent we are able. Among the groups we engaged with or supported financially this past year were: Frontier College, CIVIX, LEAF, Ontario Coalition for Better Childcare, Learning for a Sustainable Future, Fix our Schools, Broadbent Institute, Canada without Poverty, INDSPiRE, Media Smarts and the OTIP Charity Golf Tournament. OTF had a presence at all Affiliate AGMs. After the shocking van attack in Toronto, OTF staff donated money and OTF matched their donations.

We participate in coalition work as well with groups such as the Children and Youth Mental Health Coalition. The Secretary-Treasurer sits on the Board of the Workers' Health and Safety Centre. OTF has membership in the Canadian Education Association which is now known as EdCan. We also agreed to offer some support to the Canadian Educators Conference on Mental Health to be held in November 2018. We offered on-line registration support to the organizing committee for the FWTAO 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala Banquet to be held in September. Of course, the OTF Festive Reception always draws a large crowd of education partners and stakeholders as well.

Of note, OTF has supported CIVIX (Student Vote) for many years. Last year, CIVIX extended its reach into Columbia as they responded to a request to initiate their program during Columbian elections. Of course, last spring, the program ran successfully, once again, in Ontario as elementary and secondary students participated in a parallel provincial election.

We are also proud to continue OTF's support of the Aboriginal Summer Literacy Camp at Fort Hope. This year, we sponsored an art contest by the campers as part of a special recognition for OTF's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

## **OTF Political Action Staff Work Group**

At the direction of the OTF Executive, the OTF/All-Affiliate Political Action Staff Work Group organized and hosted two receptions this year – one for the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario and one for the Ontario Liberal Party.

The Work Group organized a three-hour reception for delegates attending the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario's Election Readiness and Policy Convention at the Delta Hotels by Marriott Toronto Airport & Conference Centre in Toronto on Friday, November 24, 2017. Attendance at the OTF/All-Affiliate reception was higher than the Work Group anticipated. Approximately 250 delegates turned up over the course of the three-hour reception and many delegates had occasion to speak with OTF and Affiliate political leaders and staff. For the most part, interactions with delegates were positive and collegial. PCPO leader Patrick Brown made a brief appearance.

The Work Group also organized a three-hour reception for delegates attending the Ontario Liberal Party's 2018 Annual General Meeting on Saturday February 3, 2018 at the Westin Harbor Castle in Toronto hosted by OTF and three Affiliates. Political leaders and staff from AEFO, OECTA and OSSTF attended as did several OTF Governors. The reception was well attended by candidates

and their staff teams with approximately 200 delegates in the room between 9:30 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. Over the course of the three hours, four sitting MPPs stopped by. Premier Kathleen Wynne did not drop in.

### **Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF)**

CTF hosted its annual National Staff Meeting on November 15 through November 17, 2017 inclusive. This year's theme was "Professional Space". Plenary panels included:

- "Organizing Teaching: Developing the Power of the Profession" with Dr. Nina Bascia, University of Toronto and Dr. Howard Stevenson, University of Nottingham
- "Protecting and Strengthening Teachers' Professional Space" with Dr. Sam Sellar, Manchester Metropolitan University, Dr. Nina Bascia, University of Toronto, and Joni Turville, Alberta Teachers Association.

In addition, throughout the course of the meeting, OTF senior staff attended Professional Issues/Development-focused break-out sessions connected to the theme. All told, CTF's National Staff meeting provided our senior staff with an excellent opportunity to network with and learn alongside our Federation colleagues from across Canada.

The OTF President attended the Canadian Teachers' Federation Forum held in July in Edmonton and the Secretary-Treasurer joined him for the CTF Board meeting and AGM held immediately following the Forum.

### **EI / CUREE Research**

The Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education (CUREE) and Education International (EI) are conducting research into teacher identity in seven case study systems: Scotland, Chile, Ontario, Berlin, Kenya, Sweden and Singapore to determine how teachers' professional identities interact with:

- Classroom practices
- Professional development
- Leadership and collaboration
- Aspects of the education system, such as accountability systems
- Wider social and cultural contexts

In doing so, they are exploring how teachers (individually and collectively) create, access, share and shape professional knowledge.

They reached out first to CTF and then directly to OTF requesting the participation of Ontario's teachers. After considerable work by an OTF and Affiliate staff committee to ensure that the survey questions aligned with Ontario's system, education lexicon and curriculum, we agreed to distribute the survey links in both English and French. The response was significantly higher than the minimum required by the researchers. In total, 2,073 teachers completed the fairly lengthy survey (1,674 in English, 399 in French). The raw data / responses were shared with the Affiliates.

The research organization has not yet written or shared further analysis of the results. A second part of the research involves case study interviews. Carol Campbell is assisting EI / CUREE with this part of the research.

## **PROFESSIONAL LEARNING PROJECTS**

### **Professional Development Projects for Math, Kindergarten and Technology-Enabled Teaching and Learning**

The fall saw OTF and Affiliate staff investing a great deal of time meeting with their counterparts at the Ministry of Education and adjusting the Federations' professional learning funding proposals for the 2017-18 school year plus summer of 2018. These deliberations ultimately yielded a contract for the delivery of a wide range of authentic and meaningful professional learning activities for our members in Math, Technology, Kindergarten and Wellbeing. Additionally, OTF also received funding once again to offer capacity-building opportunities in updated curriculum areas.

Since 2014, OTF and its Affiliates have been using a highly effective, carefully coordinated, and multi-pronged approach to professional learning, which has included summer institutes, large-scale learning institutes during the school year, mentor-supported collaborative inquiry projects, webinars, and an incentivized program supporting teacher participation in Additional Qualifications (AQ) courses.

Demand by Ontario's teachers for the rich variety of professional learning activities offered by OTF and its Affiliates has been consistently and overwhelmingly high, with most offerings being filled to capacity within a few hours of opening registration. In the case of our face-to-face learning institutes and conferences, it is not unusual for demand to outstrip the number of available spaces by 100 to 800%!

Literally tens of thousands of teachers and education workers have participated in these highly effective professional learning activities in recent years and have improved their practice as a consequence. The Federations have done extensive assessments of the impact of the activities and have research studies attesting to the tremendous, positive impact of the activities on teacher confidence levels and classroom practice.

Since demand for Federation-developed professional learning remains extremely high and the evidence of its impact has been so strong, we recently submitted a document to the Ministry of Education, urging it to fund similar activities in 2018-19.

### **2017 Financial Literacy Conference**

On Friday and Saturday, November 3 – 4, 2017, OTF hosted its second financial literacy-focused conference at the Holiday Inn Toronto International Airport. The title of the conference was "*It Still All Adds Up: Making More Than Cents of Financial Literacy*". The conference was well advertised through direct-to school poster mailings and through our social media channels and MailChimp email blast. All told, 75 teachers attended. The conference featured two keynotes: one from

Melissa Leong, a personal finance writer, on-air personality, speaker, and bestselling author and another by Robin Taub, a financial literacy consultant, professional speaker, blogger, media spokesperson, and best-selling author of *A Parent's Guide to Raising Money-Smart Kids*. In addition, participants had occasion to select from the following series of break-out sessions:

- Building a Financial Literacy Toolkit: Resources to Support Elementary and Secondary Teachers
- Developing Financial Capability in Students: A Resource Toolkit for Educators
- Financial Consumer Agency of Canada—Canada's lead Agency for financial literacy: helping you navigate financial education resource offerings in Canada
- Financial Literacy for the 99%, not the 1%
- Financial Literacy HELP (H<sup>istory</sup>/E<sup>conomics</sup>/L<sup>aw</sup>/P<sup>olitics</sup>/C<sup>ivics</sup>)
- I'll soon be graduating...will I be OK financially?
- Making Finance Meaningful: Beyond the Basics
- Making Finance Meaningful: Integrating Financial Literacy into the Elementary Classroom
- Making Financial Literacy Accessible to English Language Learners and Struggling Students
- Opting In, Not Adding on: Getting Comfortable with Financial Literacy
- The Cost of Consumerism: Do the Math and Cheque your footprint
- The RCMP and Fraud: Facing the New Frontiers

Overall, both anecdotal feedback throughout the conference and formal feedback submitted at the end, indicated that the majority of participants rated the keynotes and break-out sessions as either "very good" or "excellent". Resources from the break-out sessions are posted on the conference website - <https://event-wizard.com/ItStillAllAddsUp/0/pages/103968/>.

### **Wellbeing Conference**

The Ontario Teachers' Federation developed and implemented our first large-scale learning institute with a focus on wellbeing: *Making the Links: Promoting Wellbeing in our Schools*. It took place on April 27-28, 2018 at the Delta Hotel at Marriott Toronto East. The conference was fully subscribed at 150 teachers representing approximately 20 School Boards.

The keynote address by Susan Stewart was well received by the participants. Many even gave up their lunch time to stand in line to have Susan sign her book which she provided to every participant at no cost.

Feedback on all breakout sessions was highly complimentary and left our members asking for more of this kind of professional learning in the future. Much of the feedback provided us with reflection of the high level of expertise of our presenters throughout. We also received many verbal comments on the organization and "smoothness" of the conference. The hard work and the skills of OTF staff and the Conference Lead, Suzette Clark are greatly appreciated as they made this an outstanding event for all who participated.



## **Large-Scale Math Summer Institute**

The Ontario Teachers' Federation was mandated to provide a large-scale Summer institute focusing on Mathematics in July of 2018. The conference entitled *Teaching Math through Problem Solving 2* was held on July 4-6, 2018 at the Toronto Airport Holiday Inn. In the end we exceeded our mandate by providing placement for 122 participants and 16 staff and facilitators. The conference was fully subscribed within about 24 hours of opening registration.

Participants enjoyed the very active keynote presentation on *Making math moments that matter* which was delivered by John Orr, Math Teacher from Lambton-Kent District School Board and Kyle Pearce, K-12 Math Consultant from Greater Essex County District School Board. Many participants expressed their delight with the upbeat presentation and the excitement they felt at the prospect of taking what they learned back with them to the classroom in the fall.

A series of five breakout sessions followed over the next day and a half. Space was often at a premium in the breakout rooms and participants found themselves having to make tough choices in order to get to the sessions they wanted. Regardless, the feedback was exceptional in regard to the content and presentations of these sessions. All breakout sessions were so well organized and planned that the participants found much to value in them.

Comments were received through the feedback form and verbally. Any which were critical focused on the accommodations and/or food while praising the program itself. Again, we received comments or appreciation for the opportunity which OTF provided for Members. Much appreciation must be given the Mary Kay Goindi, the conference Lead who insight and tenacity lead to excellent planning and pulling together a great cadre of expert educators with powerful presentations. For the organization and smooth running of the entire program, OTF staff must also be commended.

## **Technology Conference**

The Ontario Teachers' Federation is now prepared for the up-coming large-scale summer institute focusing on information technology in our schools: *Pedagogy b4 Technology 3*. Registration opened on Sunday, June 14<sup>th</sup> and was fully subscribed by Monday afternoon. In all we have 175 registrants and approximately 30 educators on the waiting list.

Under the guidance of Brenda Sherry and Peter Skillen, the agenda and format have already been developed. We have arranged an exemplary cadre of expert facilitators to present at breakout sessions and participate in the Minds on Media sessions. A more upbeat format is expected from our new facilitators.

This year's keynote address: Trends, Tools and Tactics for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning will be delivered by the renowned speaker and educator, Kevin Honeycutt. He promises to deliver an inspiring and exciting program. Kevin has also offered to deliver one of our breakout sessions as well.

## Collaborative Learning Communities

The TLC (Teacher Learning Co-op) program has been completed by the 70 TLC Teams who were working in the field throughout this past school year. Two teams have received an extension due to personal issues which prevented them from completing their program within the timelines. All reporting is complete and financial statements are being received at this time by the OTF Staff. Currently, the five Mentor Leaders are reviewing the written reports on line. We anticipate that the reports will be live and open to the public by September 1, 2018.

## OTF Connects

OTF has renewed its license for the webinars with Blackboard collaborate for another year providing access for the coming year as well.

The 2017-18 year was an active one for OTF Connects. These voluntary after school webinars by teachers for teachers were an important part of our overall program supported by Ministry funding in the priority areas. A sampling of our topics this year included:

- Nurturing Habits of Minds through Intermediate Math Inquiries
- The Power of Paperless, Little Shifts Bring Big Change
- Financial Literacy in the Elementary and Secondary Classroom
- Feeling Better Now, Supporting Teachers Mental Health
- Thinking Globally and Acting Locally Through the Geo-Inquiry Process
- The Power of Relationships in Early Learning
- Project Work in Kindergarten

Overall, through the fall and spring, 108 webinars were offered using excellent teacher facilitators and supported administratively by Siria Szkurhan, OTF staff and OTF moderators.

<b>Type of Session</b>	<b>Number of Sessions</b>	<b># of Participants</b>	<b>AVG / Sessions</b>
Technology	25	399	15
Supporting Mathematics	29	617	21
New and Revised Curriculum	39	528	13
Kindergarten	10	478	47
Wellbeing	5	107	21
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>2129</b>	<b>23</b>

## **AQ and ABQ Subsidies**

We have received and have processed approximately 4504 applications for various AQ/ABQ subsidies since September 2017. Of these, 362 are at some stage of process at the time of writing while the rest have received their money.

The steering committee established rules consistent with the Ministry funding requirements and OTF administered the requests, processed the necessary documents and issued payment accordingly. This program has been a very important element of supporting teachers enhancing their capacity and their qualifications and has been much appreciated by teachers.

## **2018 OTF Summer Institutes**

Leveraging funding from the Ministry of Education, OTF again offered three-day summer institutes. These Institutes helped to build the capacity of teachers in the following areas:

- Activating global competencies
- Deepening equity and inclusive education practices
- Increasing assessment literacy (esp. for and as learning)
- Leveraging information and communication technologies to support learning
- Responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action
- Supporting English-language learners and French as a second language
- Supporting experiential learning (including, but not limited to, pathways to non-traditional occupations and vocations)
- Supporting inquiry-focused and play-based teaching and learning.

OTF reached out to partner organizations, including provincial subject/division associations, to invite submissions of proposals linked to the priority areas for this year's Institutes. The following organizations' proposals were accepted:

- Council of Ontario Drama and Dance Educators (CODE)
- The Critical Thinking Consortium (TC<sup>2</sup>)
- Educational Computing Organization of Ontario (ECOO)
- ESL/ELD Resource Group of Ontario (ERGO)
- Facing History and Ourselves, Canada (FHO)
- First Nations, Métis & Inuit Education Association of Ontario (FNMIEAO)
- Learning for a Sustainable Future (LSF)
- Ontario Art Education Association (OAEA)
- Ontario Association of Junior Educators (OAJE)
- Ontario Association of Physics Teachers (OAPT)
- Ontario Elementary Social Studies Teachers' Association (OESSTA)
- Ontario History and Social Sciences Teachers' Association (OHASSTA)
- Ontario Modern Language Teachers' Association (OMLTA)
- Ontario Music Educator's Association (OMEA)
- Science Teachers' Association of Ontario (STAO)

OTF managed all the Institute logistics which allowed the learning facilitators to focus on the design and delivery of powerful learning opportunities. To provide greater equity of access, advertised Institutes were offered in six geographic locations across the province: Brantford (Five Oaks Retreat and Conference Centre), Kingston (St. Lawrence College), London (Western University), St. Catharines (Brock University), Sudbury (Laurentian University) and Toronto (George Brown College).

Registration opened on June 1, 2018 and registration numbers were brisk right off the mark. It is worth noting that several Institutes were full in under three days of registration opening. As of the writing of this report, over 600 teachers had already registered in just over three weeks.

### **OTF Planboard**

OTF renewed its agreement with Chalk.com to provide free access for members to this online planning tool during the 2017-2018 school year. OTF continues to monitor the usage of *OTF Planboard* to gauge its use among members. Interest in *OTF Planboard* has continued to increase. The platform currently has 14,595 unique users. For more information about *OTF Planboard* or to sign up, members can visit the OTF website under the *Learning* tab (<http://www.otffeo.on.ca/en/learning/planboard/>).

### **InspireFinancialLearning / InspirezleSavoirFinancier websites**

Begun in summer 2017, the refresh of OTF's financial literacy-focused websites was completed in the fall. The websites now feature a new, cleaner user interface along with revised and new lesson content and links for teachers, with a focus on grades 4-12. The revamped websites can be viewed at [www.InspireFinancialLearning.ca](http://www.InspireFinancialLearning.ca) and [www.InspirezleSavoirFinancier.ca](http://www.InspirezleSavoirFinancier.ca)

### **OTF Parent Engagement Project**

Requests for additional copies of the *Parent Engagement / Engagements des parents* print resource continue to come in periodically. The website versions of the resources can be accessed at [www.parentengagement.ca](http://www.parentengagement.ca) and [www.engagementdesparents.ca](http://www.engagementdesparents.ca).

### **PD Calendar**

OTF continues to maintain an on-line calendar of professional learning opportunities and ABQs and AQs for Ontario teachers. OTF appreciates the work of Peter Beens in keeping the site up to date.

### **Teachers' Gateway to Special Education**

We were very pleased to undertake this year a revision of OTF's website on special needs students, the *Teachers' Gateway to Special Education - Passage à l'enseignement pour besoins spéciaux*. First created in 2009 using funding from the Ministry of Education, the *Teachers'*

*Gateway* is very popular with members as well as with parents of students with special needs. In recent years, OTF had received many calls from teachers, schools, boards, advocacy groups and others to update the site. The revisions to the site began in the fall and were completed in spring. They included both content upgrades and a refreshed look, in keeping with the new OTF logo colours. The updated website includes specific strategies and resources to help teachers address the unique needs of students from Kindergarten to Grade 12, as well as definitions of key special education terms. It can also be used as a practical guide for teachers building Individual Education Plans (IEPs), since the *Gateway* includes links to board special education plans, Ministry documents and other helpful resources.

### **Teacher Learning and Leadership Program (TLLP)**

OTF's involvement in the now internationally-celebrated Teacher Learning and Leadership Program (TLLP) continued throughout the 2017-18 school year. The main components of our involvement in the TLLP this year once again included the following:

1. Sharing the Learning Summit, where TLLP participants who have run their projects in the previous school year gather together to share their leanings and accomplishments through the program. A total of 224 TLLP participants, representing 104 projects, attended the Summit on November 23-24, 2017, in addition to 44 guests and presenters. We were very pleased that the Minister of Education and the OTF President could both be on hand to experience the excitement of the Summit and to bring formal greetings on behalf of the Ministry and OTF.
2. Selection of the next TLLP cohort, accomplished by a joint Ministry-Federation committee, known as the provincial Teacher Learning and Leadership Committee (TLLC). The TLLC considers up to two applications per school board (three for the largest boards), selected by joint board-Federation teams from across the province. This year, the TLLC met on January 25 to consider the selection of TLLP projects that will run in 2018-19. All Affiliates have representatives on the TLLC and, as always, the excellent work done by the teams of Ministry and Affiliate staff could have been used as a "textbook" example of true collaborative professionalism.
3. The Leadership Skills for Classroom Teachers Training Session is the beginning point of every approved TLLP project, as it provides the teachers whose proposals have been selected to participate in the TLLP with the specific skills they will need to effectively manage their projects and to share their learning with others. This year, the Training Session was held on May 9-11, 2018, and included 249 teachers, representing 127 new TLLP projects. Additionally, 34 presenters and guests also joined us, bringing the total participation to 283, by far our largest number of participants to date. We were grateful to have the involvement of several Affiliate staff officers in delivering this highly valued program to our members, as well as a keynote presentation by Dr. Carol Campbell, who summarized the remarkable research findings of the TLLP to date.

Due to the impending provincial election, Ministry staff were instructed that they could neither attend nor participate in the event. This was unfortunate, as we have always worked with our

Ministry counterparts to ensure that TLLP participants could experience the training session as a true partnership initiative. The Deputy Minister ultimately allowed two of his staff members to present a plenary session on Managing the TLLP Budget. The remainder of the program was delivered by OTF and Affiliate staff, as well as by staff from TVO's TeachOntario platform, and a group of excellent previous TLLP participants, drawn from all Affiliates. These "TLLP grads", as we affectionately refer to them, are proof positive of the truly remarkable impact the program is having on teacher professional learning, the development of teacher leadership and the opportunities for knowledge exchange and shared learning. They, like many of their peers, continue to tell us about their personal and professional growth as a consequence of the TLLP, as well as the recognition they have garnered by their peers, system administrators and policy makers for being teacher leaders.

The TLLP continues to receive a great deal of attention from teachers and education policy makers both locally and internationally. The Governors may recall that last year, we were invited to present at the first Sharing the Learning Summit of a prototype Teacher Leadership Program that had been introduced in Scotland by the Scottish Centre for Education Leadership (SCEL). This year, we were invited to present our work on the TLLP at the *Leadership for Learning* seminar organized by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment and the Junior Cycle for Teachers that took place in Portlaoise, Ireland on May 25, 2018.

Research and publications on the tremendous accomplishments of the TLLP also continued throughout this year. Last year our lead researchers – Carol Campbell (OISE), Ann Lieberman (Stanford) and Anna Yashkina (OISE) – published an entire book on the TLLP, entitled *Teacher Learning and Leadership: Of, By and For Teachers*. We recently received word that Routledge, the publisher of the book, has been asked to translate the book into Chinese. This is no small accomplishment, as it will mean an incredible change for Chinese teachers and universities, who will now be impacted by the TLLP.

The research team and OTF staff are currently in the process of submitting a proposal to the American Education Research Association (AERA) for a TLLP Symposium to be presented at the AERA conference, which will be held in April 2019 in Toronto. Since we are currently in the throes of completing the sixth year of research on the TLLP, we have a great deal to say about the project and our many learnings from it.

### **NORCAN project**

The final meeting involving all participants in the NORCAN partnership – students, teachers and principals – took place on April 20 – 27, 2018.

As the Governors are aware, NORCAN is a partnership initiative with the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) and the Union of Education Norway (Utdanningsforbundet), which developed out of the TLLP. The NORCAN project (literally, Norway-Canada) connects two TLLP school teams in Ontario (Monsignor Pereyma in Oshawa and Tecumseh Vista Academy in Windsor) with five schools in Alberta and three schools in Norway. By collaborating across jurisdictions, educators and students involved in NORCAN have spent the past three years investigating diverse approaches to improving student learning in mathematics, and have simultaneously

developed teacher, principal and student leadership in their respective schools. The project has also included an explicit focus on equity, since Math is often used as a mechanism for sorting and ranking students the world over.

The final meeting held in April entailed the partner schools from Ontario and Alberta visiting their counterparts in Norway, where they spent time working alongside students and educators at one of the three Norwegian schools located in Molde, Sandefjord and Drammen. In total, 24 participants from Ontario participated in the meeting. This included 11 educators and 11 students from our two schools, as well as one representative from OTF and one from the Ministry of Education. The meeting was extremely successful, and all participants came away feeling highly energized, and with a tremendous sense of accomplishment. The spread of ideas through the NORCAN project, both within and across jurisdictions, has been nothing short of remarkable. For example, the Math Council idea developed by educators at Tecumseh Vista Academy is today being used by schools across Norway and Alberta, as well as in several Ontario schools. Similarly, other NORCAN practices have been implemented in five of the seven high schools in Durham Catholic DSB. Ontario's NORCAN schools were also chosen as a focal point for the Education International research on teacher identity, autonomy, professionalism and leadership that is currently underway.

Over the coming months, we will be working with the Ontario schools to create a final Ontario report for the project. The project Steering Committee will then consolidate our individual jurisdictions' findings in a final overall project report. The learnings from the project have been enormous, and the educational gains to the schools in the three participating jurisdictions have ended up extending far beyond our initial expectations.

### **Centre ontarien de prévention des agressions (COPA)**

Our ongoing work with our longtime partner, COPA, in the important areas of bullying prevention and equity and inclusive education, through projects such as *Safe@School* and *Joining the Circle* (resource supporting the work of teachers and education workers with Indigenous students), continued throughout the school year. Late in 2016-17, COPA undertook a thorough assessment of the tremendous impact of all programs, initiatives and resources created and disseminated through the *Safe@School* initiative by OTF and COPA since its inception. The qualitative and quantitative impact and scope of all *Safe@School* activities conducted over the 10-year span of the initiative were gathered, organized, compiled and synthesized early in the 2017-18 school year. Not surprisingly, the impact assessment highlighted the successes of the initiative showing that the *Safe@School* has been highly productive, entailing the creation and dissemination of an extremely wide range of activities and products. The kaleidoscope of educational resources for educators created by COPA and OTF have been used throughout Ontario and well beyond, including other Canadian provinces and countries. In the context of S@S, we have created a myriad of unique, attractive, relevant and practical tools, in many formats – in print and online, including our growing website that has been heavily used. These tools move off the shelves extremely quickly, and have seen multiple reprints, along with additional components in response to expressed need. The variety of ways in which teachers can access resources is another unique and important ingredient in S@S's success.

*Safe@School* has been rolled out successfully in both official languages – and with an authentic research and development process for French-language materials and training – thus avoiding a lip-service approach to providing bilingual resources. COPA is Francophone and its capacity to be rooted in the French-language sector and function well in the English-language sector is a significant and unique factor.

Uptake of *Safe@School* has been exceptional, and the response from participants in various trainings – students, teachers, educators, administrators, associated professionals, parents and caregivers – has been uniformly stellar. Students have told us how their lives have been transformed. It is typical for participants to request further training and access to resources.

This year, COPA also worked with OTF to develop and implement a professional learning session for teachers and educators about cyberbullying, using COPA's specific approach to the issue. Additionally, funds were allocated to ensure that *Safe@School* and *Joining the Circle* resources developed by COPA and OTF would continue to be presented at various events and conferences.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the devastating loss of COPA's co-founder and Executive Director, Lisa Weintraub. Lisa lost her fight with cancer in mid-June. A tireless advocate for the vulnerable in society, Lisa's vision was of a world in which all children and youth can flourish, and where every human being has the right to be "safe, strong and free".

## **POLICY AND LEGISLATION**

### **Teacher Supply and Demand**

Ontario's focus on teacher supply and demand continued in earnest this year. Fueled, in no small part, by growing reports from the field attesting to teacher shortages in a number of "high needs" areas, the increasing urgency to address the undersupply of teachers in the key areas of Technological Education, French (both First Language and Second Language), Math, Chemistry, Physics, Indigenous Education and Business Studies became a priority expressed by the outgoing government. Through the year, OTF participated directly in four committees/discussion tables addressing supply and demand. These included:

1. Ministry of Education Supply and Demand Committee – In 2015-16 and 2016-17, this Committee identified deficiencies and flaws in the supply and demand forecasting model used by the province. EDU accordingly committed to procuring a new model. The procurement of the new forecasting model was contracted to the Conference Board of Canada (CBC) last August and was expected to have been completed by February 2018, but to date it has still not been finalized. Our hope is that the new tool will enable the province to more accurately predict shortage and over-supply areas in future.
2. Le Groupe de travail sur l'offre et la demande d'enseignant(e)s dans les conseils de langue français / Francophone Supply and Demand Working Group of the Ministry of Education – Since 2016-17, this Group has been working to develop an action plan to address shortage areas in the Francophone system. This year, a very high level of tension



and frustration arose due to what was viewed as a “misappropriation” of solutions from this working group by then Minister of Education Mitzie Hunter to address FSL shortages. Additionally, the stresses (financial and other) currently being experienced by the Francophone Faculties of Education, as they struggle to make their pre-service programs work, were extremely palpable. The overall consensus of the Working Group members when they met in February was that there remained a great deal to be done to address the shortage, beyond band-aid solutions. The Working Group was to have met again in mid-April, but the meeting was cancelled due to the provincial election.

3. The French Second Language - Labour Market Partnership (FSL-LMP) Committee – The FSL-LMP is a three-year project managed by OPSBA and funded through a grant from the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (MAESD). In this first year of the project, OPSBA administered surveys to FSL teachers in their first two years, school board HR personnel and teacher candidates. Using the data gathered, the Committee generated a series of recommendations addressing the recruitment, professional support and retention of FSL teachers, which were gathered into a final report, and submitted to MAESD in mid-May.
4. EDU Meeting to address Supply and Demand Concerns – Newly appointed Minister of Education Indira Naidoo-Harris invited education stakeholders to attend a meeting on March 5 to discuss teacher supply and demand concerns. The specific shortage areas identified included:
  - French First Language;
  - French Second Language (Core, extended and Immersion);
  - Indigenous Language Teachers and Self-Identified Indigenous Educators;
  - Technological Education;
  - Secondary Teachable Subjects; and
  - Diversity in the Teaching Profession.

These shortage areas align precisely with the areas that OTF and the Affiliates predicted would arise if Ontario moved to an expanded, four-semester Initial Teacher Education regime, in which only half the number of teacher candidates would be prepared each year. Despite those warnings, the Government chose to extend the pre-service program in September 2015. We are now witnessing the outcome of that decision in the form of teacher shortages in all predicted areas.

### **Letters of Permission and Temporary Letters of Approval**

OTF annually tracks the number of Letters of Permission (LOP's) and Temporary Letters of Approval (TLAs) issued by the Ministry's Field Services Branch. While a slight increase in the total number of LOPs had been noted last year, this year was the first time in 15 years that both the LOPs and TLAs showed signs of substantial increases.

This year's report from the Field Services Branch showed that for 2016-17, the total number of LOPs issued to school boards was 480 for teacher positions and 38 ECE positions. The teacher

LOPs increased by almost 26% from 381 a year earlier, while the number of ECE LOPs decreased by 45%, down from 69. Consistent with the trend in previous years, there were more LOPs granted at secondary than at elementary in the English boards. For the French boards, on the other hand, the pattern was very different, with 202 LOPs issued at the elementary level (up from 86 in 2015-16) and 112 at the secondary level (up marginally from 103 in 2015-16). These figures point to what appears to be a fast-growing shortage of qualified teachers in Francophone elementary schools.

In terms of TLAs, after a seven-year downward trend, this year we saw the first ever increase in the number of TLAs issued. In last year's report, the number of TLAs reported for 2015-16 was 647 (down progressively from a high of 1,014 in 2010-11), whereas the number reported for 2016-17 is 821. The greatest numbers of TLAs in the English boards were issued for Principal/Vice Principal (134), General Education Subject in IS (62) and for diverse Technological Education areas. FSL numbers were not provided, but we suspect these accounted for a great many of the TLAs. For the Francophone boards, the greatest number of TLAs were issued for Principal/Vice Principal (69), Other-Unspecified (65), General Education Subject in IS (22) and French Primary/Junior (13).

## **TEACHER EDUCATION**

It is said that perspective is everything. Ten years ago, the Executive met to identify priorities for the Federation and determined that teacher education was, and should be, a major area of involvement and advocacy for OTF. As follow up to the Executive planning session that year, OTF and Affiliate staff were tasked with undertaking a complete analysis of the top issues facing our work with the faculties of education. The Executive accordingly passed seven resolutions in this regard. These resolutions included:

1. lobbying the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities (TCU) to discontinue the practice of granting approvals to off-shore and private institutions;
2. reminding members of the OTF policy that those who serve as associate teachers should give priority to teacher candidates enrolled in publicly-funded Ontario universities;
3. lobbying TCU and the Ministry of Education (EDU) to review the current funding structure for the practicum;
4. lobbying the faculties to adhere more closely to OTF's policy on the practicum and associate teaching;
5. supporting continued Government funding of the 1,000 additional spaces, contingent on that funding being restricted to the preparation of teachers in subject areas of high need;
6. lobbying EDU to fund a recruitment campaign targeted at current teacher shortage areas;
7. requesting the Government's Roundtable on Teacher Preparation to consider an in-depth examination of associate teaching.

On the positive side, the anxiety relating to the proliferation of off-shore and private teacher education institutions has since subsided. Conversely, the challenges with associate teaching and the practicum, as well as the impact of admissions on teacher supply and demand, continue to persist.

As the Governors are aware, the work of the Federation in the area of teacher education is carried out primarily by our Teacher Education Liaison Committee (TELC) and by the Teacher Education Staff Work Group (TESWG). Below is a summary of our main work in teacher education in the 2017-18 school year:

### **Liaison with Faculties of Education**

This year, the Liaison Committee met three times – in the fall, winter and spring – with the meetings all held face-to-face. A report by the Chair of the Teacher Education Committee, detailing the Committee's work, can be found on pages F-12 to F-18. While the Committee members dedicated time to reviewing a number of general issues pertaining to teacher education, their focus this year in particular was on gathering information on current practices at faculties of education to support and recognize Associate Teachers (ATs). The Committee members also considered the impact of co-op student placements in Ontario host schools, as well as a draft document created by the Ministry of Education on Effective Teaching, and flagged a number of concerns in this regard.

Our liaison officers at each of the 15 publicly-funded programs continued to work successfully to strengthen our involvement in both pre-service and in-service teacher education. Along with the work done by our liaison officers who sit on the 15 local Teacher Education Liaison Committees (TELCs) across the province, OTF made presentations at a total of 21 Federation Days this year, in addition to 5 pinning ceremonies. As always, a great deal of attention was placed on ensuring the success of these Federation Days, which remain our principle means of contact and communication with teacher candidates in Ontario.

OTF also continued its ongoing liaison with the faculties through attendance at quarterly meetings of the OADE, in addition to a special meeting in September and our regularly scheduled one-on-one meeting with the Deans in March. The September meeting was held at the request of OTF, with just OTF and the Deans present. The purpose of the meeting was to present OTF's *Practical Vision on the Practicum and Associate Teaching* to the Deans. The Governors will recall that this paper was developed by OTF and Affiliate staff in 2016-17 as a vehicle for articulating the Federation's vision for the practicum and associate teaching at Ontario's faculties of education. The Deans received the paper and committed to providing feedback to us on it. Discussion about the paper continued at our meeting with the OADE on March 9, by which time we were beginning to experience challenges with getting funding for a pilot project based on the *Practical Vision*. At the March 9 meeting, we also discussed the following areas of shared concern:

- Professional Development and resources offered by the Federations
- Top issues/challenges identified by beginning teachers
- Teacher supply and demand
- Teacher education and wellbeing matters
- Associate Teachers and the Practicum

The tone of the discussions with the Deans was very positive, and we felt that our areas of mutual concern were well addressed.

This year was also marked by two strike situations at faculties of education. The first occurred on September 28, when the Laurentian University Faculty Association (LUFA), representing all faculty at Laurentian, began a legally constituted strike. As Governors are aware, OTF Policy IV Teacher Education states:

4.1.6 That in the event the faculty of a teacher education institution declares a strike in the course of collective bargaining, OTF would consider the practicum to be suspended for the duration of the strike, and OTF members would not provide associate teaching services to teachers in pre-service programs.

As a consequence of the strike action undertaken by LUFA, the practicum of all teacher candidates at Laurentian's School of Education was effectively suspended until a negotiated settlement was reached and classes resumed at Laurentian on October 16, at which point the practicum suspension was lifted.

The second strike situation occurred at York University in early March and was far more protracted. At the time of writing this report, CUPE 3903, representing Graduate Assistants, Teaching Assistants and Contract Faculty at York, is still embroiled in a legally constituted strike, with only the unit representing Teaching Assistants having reached a settlement in recent weeks.

As the academic year drew to a close, we learned that there were 476 teacher candidates at York who were in their second (final) year of the teacher education program, and who were in jeopardy of failing to meet the certification requirements to qualify as teachers. These students were essentially missing two weeks (actually 9 days) of practicum in order to meet the certification requirements legislated under the Ontario College of Teachers Act. Once CUPE 3903 became aware of the predicament of the teacher candidates, it requested the OTF Executive to consider lifting the practicum suspension for these students. This was done, and the candidates were accordingly able to complete the missing practicum days.

### **Teacher Education – Policy**

Policy work in teacher education is primarily the purview of the OTF/Affiliate Teacher Education Staff Work Group. The Work Group met six times over the course of the year, and considered a wide variety of issues, including our relationship with the Deans and faculties of education, the impact of the expanded Initial Teacher Education regime on admissions and teacher supply and demand, and the positioning of OTF's *Practical Vision on Associate Teaching and the Practicum*. The Work Group also planned this year's highly successful Teacher Education Symposium and undertook an in-depth analysis of the new pre-service programs across the province.

At the beginning of the year we were hopeful that funding would be made available by the Ministry of Education (EDU) and/or the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (MAESD) for a pilot project based on OTF's *Practical Vision* document. Buoyed by our discussions with both Ministries, we submitted a funding proposal to EDU, but were subsequently told that it was unlikely we would receive funding for the project, since EDU does not flow funding to faculties as this is the responsibility of MAESD. In light of this disappointing outcome, the Work Group will

look at how OTF might modify the proposal in the year ahead, so that our vision of supporting and recognizing Associate Teachers can become a reality.

The Staff Work Group also provided input to the Executive on the Effective Teaching initiative that emanated from the Professionalism, Teaching Policy and Standards Branch (PTPSB). The initiative arose from the Teacher Development work that began in 2016-17, the initial intent of which had been to consider a process for refreshing the New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP), Teacher Performance Appraisal (TPA) (including the Annual Learning Plan (ALP)), and Associate Teacher support. In January, staff from PTPSB shared a document on the issue of Effective Teaching, which they had generated through stakeholder input. Federation staff expressed immediate concern that the draft document could easily be misappropriated and misused to assess teacher performance, and that the descriptors included in the document could potentially lend themselves to being used as a checklist. As a consequence of the concerns, the Executive decided OTF would decline the request from the Ministry of Education to promote or distribute the Effective Teaching Survey to Federation members. A further area of policy work undertaken by the staff work group this year was on the matter of teacher supply and demand explained earlier in this report.

### **OTF / Affiliate Conference on Teacher Education**

In addition to the above, the Staff Work Group also worked extensively on planning the second annual OTF/Affiliate Symposium on Teacher Education. As reported to the Governors in the spring, the event this year was held on January 26-27, 2018 at the Radisson Admiral Toronto Harbourfront Hotel. The chosen theme of the Symposium was *Wellbeing Matters*, a highly relevant topic for the 50 Federation members in attendance, who serve as the liaison officers on our Teacher Education Liaison Committees (TELCs) at the faculties of education across the province. The keynote speakers included Dr. Tracy Vaillancourt from the University of Ottawa and Maia Aziz from the Montreal Children's Hospital (McGill University Health Centre). Both shared their excellent insights on the issues of student and educator mental health and wellbeing. The Symposium was a huge success and an excellent networking opportunity for the TELC members.

### **Wellbeing**

Another area of intense activity in Ontario's education landscape this year was Wellbeing. On the very first day of the school year, the Minister announced an investment of \$49 million over three years to support "new and expanded initiatives" to promote wellbeing in schools. As part of this announcement, staff wellbeing was explicitly acknowledged as an important aspect of the work to enhance wellbeing in Ontario's schools. We were pleased to see this formally acknowledged by the Ministry of Education.

In the months that ensued, OTF engaged in a number of work groups and committees – some pre-existing and some new – on the topic of Wellbeing. These included the Student Wellbeing Committee, the Staff Wellbeing Subcommittee of the Provincial Committee on Ministry Initiatives, and the Indigenous Student Wellbeing Subcommittee of the Minister's Advisory on FNMI Education. Additionally, OTF was invited to attend the pan-Canadian *Summit on Teacher and*

*School Staff Mental Health*, co-sponsored by the Faculty of Education at McGill University and the McConnell Foundation, which took place on November 16 – 17, 2017 in Montreal.

By the time the 2017-18 school year came to a close, the Student Wellbeing Committee, co-chaired by Dr. Bruce Ferguson (formerly of Sick Kids) and Mary Gordon (Roots of Empathy), had provided extensive input to the development of the new School Climate Survey and the Provincial Index. For its part, the Indigenous Student Wellbeing Subcommittee, with the committed participation of key First Nations, Métis and Inuit stakeholder groups and under the mindful guidance of Dr. Susan Dion, had developed a comprehensive vision and list of key factors for promoting wellbeing among Indigenous students. The Staff Wellbeing Subcommittee was not quite as far along in its work, but had begun to map out a shared viewpoint that it is essential to make sure that all voices in the system are engaged and recognized, including those of custodians, maintenance workers, administrative support, professional support personnel, and not just principals and teachers. Consensus was also reached on the importance of a shared responsibility for transforming culture and of addressing the root causes of stress and unwellness in the system. The role of work intensification and impact of school leaders were also identified as being critical factors in staff wellbeing.

## **Indigenous Education**

OTF continues to be represented on the Minister's Advisory Council (MAC) on First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) Education, and on the Working Group that meets on a more frequent basis in between the meetings of the main Advisory Council. As indicated above, we also continued to participate in the Indigenous Student Wellbeing Sub-Committee.

The major milestone of the work undertaken through these Committees and by the Government's Indigenous Education Office this year was the release in March of the Third Progress Report on the Implementation of the Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework. Entitled *Strengthening Our Learning Journey*, the Report is considered an on-the-ground assessment of the accomplishments achieved over the last 10 years on the four main strategic goals set out by the province in Indigenous education, including supporting students, engagement and awareness building, supporting educators and using data to support student achievement. While there is still much work to accomplish, the Report attests to a great deal of progress achieved in this timeframe.

OTF's engagement in Indigenous Education included other activities as well. In November, we attended the Indspire National Gathering for Indigenous Education in Montreal and hosted a table with resources from OTF, the Affiliates and COPA. Response to our presence was very positive. OTF also continued to support the Lieutenant Governor's Indigenous Summer Reading Camps, which are managed each year by Frontier College. OTF is one of several stakeholder organizations that have been brought together by EDU for a second year to create an inventory and assessment tool for appropriate Indigenous Education resources. Once again this year, OTF offered a number of Summer Institutes addressing critical Indigenous Education themes and issues. OTF also participated in the National Indigenous Education and Reconciliation Network Gathering, which this year was held in Inuvik in the late spring. The meeting was a rich and

engaging event, providing a unique opportunity to observe the life of Inuit people in Canada's far north, as well as a useful networking opportunity among educators from across the country.

## **CURRICULUM & ASSESSMENT**

### **Ministry of Education's London East Regional Training Session - Curriculum Revisions in Response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action #62 and #63**

The Ministry of Education hosted a series of regional training sessions focused on curriculum revisions in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action #62 and #63. Ian Pettigrew attended the two-day London East session on January 16 and 17, 2018 at the Marquis Gardens in Ancaster.

Both days featured traditional openings, including a land acknowledgement and teachings and table group sessions some in heterogeneous, grade-specific table groups (grades 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10) and others in homogeneous board groupings. Participants were asked to explore images as provocations for learning and catalysts for inquiry and thinking. In grade-specific groups, they linked overview pages from the pre-publication, revised curriculum document to framing questions or big ideas and identified related expectations that would help unpack the framing question or big idea. In a third activity, participants returned to their board table groups discuss and identify how they would support new learnings, respectfully engage with the Indigenous community, select and assess authentic resources and what commitments they would make to furthering their own learning focused on cultural awareness, history, and contemporary realities. In addition, they did some forward planning for their own collaborative inquiry (CI) projects. Some resources designed to support the CI projects were provided: <http://bit.ly/IndigenousCI>

It remains clear that infusing Indigenous perspectives and worldviews in the classroom is part of a much broader socio-political quest for Truth and Reconciliation. What is or isn't happening in schools and what is happening or not happening outside of school (the world) both have an impact on students. Indigenous students have recognized and articulated some of their challenges: lack of inclusion, disrespect, racism, mental health and poverty. Others have spoken about navigating the "settler schooling system" in a double blind. For example, some Indigenous students have shared the fact that they are happy and proud and to witness their schools and teachers showcasing Indigenous artwork and posters and conducting land acknowledgements, but they are hurt by the fact that sometimes why they are posted or why they are important are rarely acknowledged. Indigenous students also underscored some of the promising practices that are supporting them in schools: places of comfort such as "Native Studies rooms" and the presence of Indigenous Student Support Workers who act as sounding boards and mentors, among others.

Teachers, educators, administrators and Indigenous community members in the room all recognized the importance of conducting this work authentically and sensitively to help repair the legacy of residential schools and other past and contemporary discriminatory policies and practices. In addition, teachers and administrators underscored the importance of developing and nurturing, healthy and strong relationships with Indigenous community members was critical to their own learning and that of their students. Having permission to be the co-learners (not the

experts on everything) was also liberating. However, there was a parallel observation that teachers are anxious about making mistakes or causing more harm.

Nothing that surfaced at these sessions challenges our oft-stated observation that while there is a thirst among most teachers and educators to embrace this work, there is a concomitant need for ongoing support to allay the fears those same teachers feel in meeting the obligations of this complex work. Information from the session can be found at <http://bit.ly/TRCrevisedcurr>

### **OTF / All-Affiliate Measuring What Matters Staff Work Group**

The OTF Executive tasked the Work Group with securing the services of an external researcher to produce a research paper underscoring the challenges inherent in trying to measure the wellbeing of staff and students in Ontario schools. OTF contracted Dr. Arlo Kempf (University of Toronto). The draft paper was reviewed by the work group and the final version of the paper entitled *The Challenges of Measuring Wellbeing in Schools: A Review Prepared for the Ontario Teachers' Federation / Les défis de la mesure du bien-être dans les écoles: Étude réalisée pour la Fédération des enseignantes et des enseignants de l'Ontario* was released in February 2018. Both versions are available under Advocacy>Position Papers and Promotion de la profession>Exposé de principes on the OTF website.

### **OTF / All-Affiliate Assessment Staff Work Group**

The OTF Assessment Staff Work Group (ASWG) was tasked by the OTF Executive to produce an updated edition of its 2011 paper entitled *A New Vision for Large-Scale Testing in Ontario*. The updated papers - *More Than Dots on a Chart: Setting a New Course for Assessment in Ontario / Pas seulement des points sur un graphique : Adopter une nouvelle approche pour l'évaluation en Ontario* are both available under Advocacy>Position Papers and Promotion de la profession>Exposé de principes on the OTF website. The papers were also submitted to Dr. Carol Campbell who led the government-initiated Independent Assessment Review.

### **Independent Assessment Review**

On September 6, 2017, Premier Kathleen Wynne and then Education Minister Mitzie Hunter announced the government's and Ministry of Education's intention to conduct both a curriculum refresh and an independent assessment and review of the assessment, evaluation and reporting system [hereafter the "Review"] in Ontario. With reference to the latter, the government appointed education advisors Dr. Carol Campbell, Dr. Jean Clinton, Dr. Michael Fullan, Dr. Andy Hargreaves, Dr. Carl James and Kahontakwas Diane Longboat to undertake the independent review and to report to the government by March 31, 2018.

In November and December 2017, the Review sought input in the form of public consultations and stakeholder engagements, some face-to-face and others virtually. Furthermore, it considered local, national and international evidence with respect to a K-12 student assessment system, classroom assessments, large-scale assessments and participation in pan-Canadian and international assessments.



On April 24, 2018, recently appointed Minister of Education Indira Naidoo-Harris, announced the release of [Ontario: A Learning Province – Findings and Recommendations from the Independent Review of Assessment and Reporting](#) [hereafter the “Report”]. The Report was organized into findings in four broad areas: a K-12 system of student assessment, classroom assessments, large-scale assessments and pan-Canadian and international assessments. Its eighteen (18) recommendations covered six broad areas: First Nations, Métis and Inuit students and assessments, a K-12 system of student assessment, classroom assessments, large-scale assessments, pan-Canadian and international assessments and implementation support.

Broadly speaking, the Report encouraged changes to assessment, evaluation and reporting practices concurrent with the proposed curriculum refresh. It also recognized that developments in and changes to the K-12 student assessment framework in Ontario would require teachers having access to sustained, multi-faceted and differentiated professional resources and learning opportunities focused on effective assessment and evaluation practices, something not provided consistently across the province upon the release of the *Growing Success* policy document in 2010. The Report also recognized the need to involve education stakeholders both in moving from the recommendations phase to the implementation phase and in a follow-up review process four years after implementation.

#### 1. First Nations, Métis and Inuit Students and Assessments

The Report specifically called for greater involvement of First Nations, Métis and Inuit families, communities, and organizations in the development of authentic and culturally appropriate assessment structures and practices that could better serve Indigenous learners. The Report recommended the establishment of Assessment Working Groups for First Nations, Métis and Inuit which would consider the *First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework*, and how it intersects with a renewed K-12 System of Student Assessment.

#### 2. K-12 System of Student Assessment

The Report recognized the solid foundation of assessment, evaluation and reporting principles and practices laid out in *Growing Success* (2010) which have been the policy touchstones for nearly a decade in Ontario. Clearly, there was no desire to scrap it and start again. The other recommendations regarding “develop[ing] further a culture of assessment” with greater emphasis on equity, incorporation of more recent developments in assessment as well as greater use of criterion-referenced assessments was likely symptomatic of the dearth of sustained professional development which did not accompany the release of *Growing Success*.

#### 3. Classroom Assessments

Appropriately, the Report consistently underscored the need to prioritize the improvement of (teacher-created) classroom assessments and value the primacy of day-to-day, real time descriptive feedback in supporting students’ learning and achievement. Furthermore, the Report acknowledged throughout the importance of teachers being able to exercise their professional judgement. Of note, according to the findings, fewer than 40% of stakeholders consulted considered classroom assessments as an effective means to: ensure equity; recognize students’ culture and experience; minimize undesirable effects on students’ learning and well-being; and, provide effective feedback to parents/guardians about their

child's achievement or progress. Such findings pointed to the need to provide continuous professional learning opportunities focused on assessment.

Potentially troubling was the Report's suggestion that a bank of "quality-assured" assessments could be created to act "as part of their professional judgement and practice". In practice, this could be used as a tool, by an administrator or board to undermine or erode teachers' autonomy. For instance, school administrators or board leadership, left to practice local decision-making license, might encourage or prescribe teachers' use of ONLY those assessments on a school- or board- "approved list". The experience around the interpretation and implementation of P/PM 155 (Diagnostic Assessment in Support of Student Learning) may be instructive in this regard.

#### 4. Large-Scale Assessments

Notably, ten(10) of the Report's recommendations fell within this area of focus. The Report did underscore some of the serious issues and challenges associated with the current approach to large-scale assessment approaches in Ontario (specifically EQAO) including the misuse/abuse of assessment data and reports, the ranking of schools, the excessive number of such tests and inappropriate grade-level administration of these assessments. The Report recognized that the snapshot approach of large-scale assessment has been used as a proxy measure for aspects within the system that it was not designed to measure and that the extended lag between administration and reporting of individual results on the assessments did not afford opportunities for prompt diagnostic, descriptive feedback. The Report underscored the need for reforming the design and administration methods of EQAO assessments noting, for instance, that EQAO assessments are anachronisms that do not align with students' day-to-day learning environments and experiences. Of note, the majority of stakeholders consulted during the Review also considered EQAO assessments as ineffective means to: ensure equity; recognize students' culture and experience; and minimize undesirable indirect effects on students' learning and well-being. The Report advocated for the phasing out of EQAO's Grade 3 assessments in favour of focusing on the information provided by the Early Development Index (EDI) and classroom assessments. It also proposed the abolition of EQAO's Grade 9 mathematics assessment.

In addition, the Report called for the modernization of EQAO's Grade 6 assessment to move beyond literacy and numeracy to the standardized assessment of transferrable skills. Similarly, the Report recommended the end of the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) in its current guise, including students' successful completion as a graduation requirement. Instead, the Report suggested the development of a new Grade 10 census assessment focused on measuring students' aptitude in other key knowledge, skills and competencies, which, in all but name, appear at first blush to be synonymous with global competencies. Despite the pervasive observation throughout the Report of the importance of classroom assessments, it unfortunately did not recommend the diminishment of the role or curtail the influence of EQAO in the assessment ecosystem. Also troubling was the Report's suggestion that the Ministry might consider opting for one-off or cyclical (i.e. every 3-5 years) assessments of "priority subjects and/or competencies". This is tantamount to an expansion, not contraction, of provincial large-scale, standardized assessments. In fact, flowing out of the recommendations there is the potential to increase EQAO's reach and influence in new areas or to shore up other parts of its

mandate. More specifically, the Report did not recommend moving away from the census-based (population) approach to large-scale assessment in EQAO assessments. The recommendations in this area left intact the culture of using large-scale instruments as forms of “system accountability and public assurance” within Ontario’s assessment ecosystem in a kind of bait-and-switch approach.

#### Pan-Canadian and International Assessments:

In a positive move, the Report echoed the position of the current Council of Education Ministers of Canada, that Canada not participate in any new international assessment programs. However, the Report did recommend Ontario’s continued participation in existing pan-Canadian (e.g. Pan-Canadian Assessment Program – PCAP) and international large-scale assessments (e.g. Programme for International Student Assessment - PISA, Progress in International Reading Literacy Study - PIRLS, and Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study - TIMSS), all of which rely on random-sampling administration methods. Furthermore, it encouraged raising their profile and better communication about both the existence of these types of assessments and Ontario students’ results in them.

#### Implementation Support:

The Report offered little in terms of details but recommended the establishment of a dedicated Ministry of Education team to work collaboratively with education stakeholders and to coordinate implementation of the Report’s recommendations.

Most stakeholders, and certainly the education advisors themselves, were under no illusions about the challenges inherent in conducting a Review within the prescribed and truncated timeframe of six months. It is important to note that the analysis of the Report is subject to several important overarching considerations. First, while the Report was endorsed by cabinet, it is non-binding and any or all of its recommendations can be ignored or cherry-picked to suit political whims or agendas. Second, the analysis cannot hope to anticipate every permutation and combination of possibilities – be they positive or negative. As often occurs, what is advanced in principle can morph in practice and during implementation. Third, despite the fact that there appear to be more positive recommendations than negative ones, the latter are substantial and warrant careful consideration.

All told, the Report, completed immediately in advance of a provincial election, likely both appeased and irritated most stakeholders by advancing recommendations that were palatable to some but anathema to others. As but one example, for OTF and its Affiliates, the recommendation that EQAO’s Grade 3 assessment be abolished was a positive development; however, the recommendation that a census-based approach to EQAO assessments continue, and the suggestion that EQAO venture into different and new terrain, remains a concern. Arguably, the Report’s recognition of the primacy of classroom assessments and their positive impact on student achievement and success is incongruous with the recommendation that the regimen of provincial, national and international large-scale, high-stakes testing, to which students will be subjected, will continue almost unabated. While the Report represented an opportunity to realize bold and transformative change in Ontario, that promise – even in principle – was largely unrealized or at the very least diminished by the recommendations that reflected a “something for

everyone” approach. It remains to be seen, of course, what if anything will come of the Report with the installation of a new provincial government.

## **Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO)**

### **EQAO 2016-2017 Assessment Results (Primary, Junior and Grades 9 and 10)**

On August 23, 2017, EQAO released highlights of the English-language and French-language provincial-level results from the 2016–2017 Grade 10 OSSLT/TPCL. Subsequently, on August 30, 2017, EQAO released highlights of the English-language and French-language provincial-level results for the Primary and Junior Reading, Writing and Mathematics and Grade 9 Mathematics Assessments.

On September 20, 2017 EQAO issued two full reports. These reports provided results, demographic information, and Student Questionnaire responses from the primary and junior Assessments of Reading, Writing and Mathematics, the Grade 9 Mathematics Assessment, and the Grade 10 OSSLT/TPCL.

#### *Provincial Elementary School Report, 2017*

(EN): <http://www.eqao.com/en/assessments/results/Pages/provincial-report-elementary-2017.aspx>

(FR): <http://www.eqao.com/fr/tests/resultats/Pages/rapport-provincial-elementaire-2017.aspx>

#### *Provincial Secondary School Report, 2017*

(EN): <http://www.eqao.com/en/assessments/results/Pages/provincial-report-secondary-2017.aspx>

(FR): <http://www.eqao.com/fr/tests/resultats/Pages/rapport-provincial-secontaire-2017.aspx>

#### *English-language assessment results*

#### **Results from the Primary and Junior Reading, Writing and Mathematics Assessments**

- 74% of Grade 3 students were at or above the provincial standard in the *reading* assessment, up by 6% since 2013.
- 74% of Grade 3 students were at or above the provincial standard in the *writing* assessment, down by 4% since 2013.
- 63% of Grade 3 students were at or above the provincial standard in the *mathematics* assessments, down by 5% since 2013.
- 81% of Grade 6 students were at or above the provincial standard in the *reading* assessment, up by 4% since 2013.
- 80% of Grade 6 students were at or above the provincial standard in the *writing* assessment, up by 3% since 2013.
- 50% of Grade 6 students were at or above the provincial standard in the *mathematics* assessment, down by 7% since 2013.

#### Results from the Grade 9 Mathematics Assessment

- 83% of students who were enrolled in an academic level mathematics course were successful while 44% of students who were enrolled in an applied level mathematics course were successful.
- Both percentages have remained stable since 2013.

#### Results from the Grade 10 Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) Assessment

- 81% of the 136,492 first-time eligible students who wrote the 2017 OSSLT were successful.
- 11,741 (52%) *students with special education needs* were successful.
- 92% of students who were enrolled in an academic level English course were successful while 44% of students who were enrolled in an applied level English course were successful.
- Overall, results have remained stable over the past five years (2013-2017).

#### *French-language assessment results*

#### Results from the Primary and Junior Reading, Writing and Mathematics Assessments

- 83% of Grade 3 students were at or above the provincial standard in the *reading* assessment, up by 5% since 2013.
- 78% of Grade 3 students were at or above the provincial standard in the *writing* assessment, down by 5% since 2013.
- 76% of Grade 3 students were at or above the provincial standard in the *mathematics* assessments, down by 2% since 2013.
- 91% of Grade 6 students were at or above the provincial standard in the *reading* assessment, up by 2% since 2013.
- 84% of Grade 6 students were at or above the provincial standard in the *writing* assessment, up by 2% since 2013.
- 82% of Grade 6 students were at or above the provincial standard in the *mathematics* assessment, down by 1% since 2013.

#### Results from the Grade 9 Mathematics Assessment

- 85% of students who were enrolled in an academic level mathematics course were successful while 44% of students who were enrolled in an applied level mathematics course were successful.
- The latter reflects a 6% drop from the results in 2013.

#### Results from the Test provincial de compétences linguistiques (TPCL)

- 92% of the 5,396 first-time eligible students who wrote the TPCL were successful.
- 786 (77%) *students with special education needs* were successful.

- 97% of students who were enrolled in an academic level French course were successful while 73% of students who were enrolled in an applied level French course were successful.
- Overall, results have shown a modest increase over the past five years (2013-2017).

Overall, results showed that French-language students are consistently performing better than their English-language peers across all assessment areas and at all the divisions. However, French-language students studying mathematics at the applied level experienced the steepest decline in results (6%) from last year.

EQAO also noted that some of the first-time eligible students were able to complete the first online versions of the OSSLT/TPCL, which were subjected to a cyberattack in October 2016. However, most students took the assessment again, as a pencil and paper version, during the regularly scheduled OSSLT/TPCL administration in March 2017.

### **New EQAO Chief Assessment Officer**

In October, EQAO's Chief Executive Officer Norah Marsh announced the appointment of Dr. Steven Reid as EQAO's new Chief Assessment Officer replacing Lisa Walsh.

### **EQAO Advisory Committee (EAC) [formerly the Assessment Advisory Committee (AAC)]**

On December 12, EQAO announced that it would be transforming the AAC (formed in 1996) into the EQAO Advisory Committee (EAC). The latter was to have a broader mandate and include wider stakeholder representation. Staff representatives from OTF and each of its Affiliates attended the first meeting on February 1, 2018 at the Courtyard Toronto Downtown hotel.

The meeting featured remarks from CEO Norah Marsh, CAO Steven Reid, Director of Transformation Joanne Rinella and Director of Data and Reporting Laurie McNelles. In the course of their respective remarks, they signalled that EQAO was embarking on a new approach to modernization, one in which students were more clearly at the centre of its work with special attention paid to the needs of English language learners and students with special needs. The scope of modernization would reflect five distinct areas: large-scale assessments; reports; research; engagement with Ontarians; and, internal business processes. EQAO was also considering how it could measure different things and measure them more deeply. EQAO wants to promote how EQAO assessments can be reliable, accessible and useful and support quality educational experiences that benefit student achievement at individual, classroom, school, and system levels. Furthermore, it was interested in exploring what the next decade held in terms of trends in large-scale assessments and that it was planning on expanding the scope of its research. Noting that EQAO was "not an island", they recognized the need to listen attentively and be responsive, adaptive and agile to constant change. There was an acknowledgement that there exist competing perspectives about the work of EQAO and its role and mandate. There was also recognition that EQAO assessments and data have impacts on individual students and that EQAO needed to continue to try to mitigate the unintended consequences of EQAO data use.

Throughout the meeting, mixed-representative table groups were invited to consider and respond to different prompts: “It’s 2028...How does EQAO support the work taking place in the school communities of the future?” and “Describe assessments that would support the needs of students from 2028.”

Overall, it became clear, especially based on the table group activities, that EQAO is in the midst of an identity crisis and is purposefully trying to remake and rebrand itself in the image of an agency that is not redundant but rather responsive and flexible to a changing and still dynamic assessment (and indeed accountability) ecosystem. To be sure, it is downplaying the “Accountability” term in its name to reflect a greater focus on “Assessment”. Indeed, a close look at the way in which the table-group discussion prompts/questions were framed, revealed that references to “EQAO-specific assessments” were minimized. Furthermore, EQAO was positioning itself as an agent and champion of “equity and inclusivity” assessment to better align with the assessment paradigm in Ontario’s publicly-funded education system especially given the reality of the Independent Assessment Review’s then-future report expected in March 2018.

While EQAO normally hosts a minimum of two face-to-face EAC meetings each school year, in light of the incoming Ontario premier Doug Ford’s announcement that the government would be placing restrictions on public service expenditures, EQAO cancelled its scheduled June 21 meeting.

### **EQAO Forum**

EQAO’s one-day Forum usually takes place annually in May. However, due to the impending 2018 provincial election in June, EQAO elected to move up the Forum to February 28, 2018. It was held at the Sheraton Parkway Toronto North Hotel & Suites in Richmond Hill. The theme was “Data, Equity and a Culture of Hope”.

The opening segments of the Forum featured a traditional land acknowledgement and teaching by Nancy Rowe, a knowledge keeper from the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation, remarks by CEO Norah Marsh who echoed her remarks at the first EQAO Advisory Committee meeting on February 1, 2018 and an interactive keynote address by Dr. Pamela Rose Toulouse, Associate Vice-President, Academic and Indigenous Programs (Interim) at Laurentian University.

The balance of the Forum, for the morning and early afternoon, consisted of break-out sessions whose foci connected to the Forum’s theme. These sessions were led by staff from EQAO, Ministry of Education, colleges and universities and school boards. The most unsettling aspect of the Forum were remarks from Dr. Bette M. Stephenson, Director Emeritus (EQAO), in which she twice referred to the teacher unions as barriers and roadblocks who opposed the creation of EQAO and who suggested that they should be the only ones to recognize the work of teachers and educators with awards. She also erroneously observed that most teacher union leaders had been converted to an appreciation of EQAO’s contributions to public education and that some hold-outs, with an oppositional stance, would soon be gone – presumably clearing the way for a full embrace of EQAO. Equally troubling, was her casual observation that testing of teacher quality had been an unintended, but useful, by-product of EQAO assessments and results. CEO Norah Marsh did attempt to publicly distance EQAO from Dr. Stephenson’s remarks and to

make a point of later seeking out OTF and Affiliate staff to apologize for Dr. Stephenson's remarks and to underscore the fact that Dr. Stephenson's position on the Federations was not shared by EQAO, and to note that she was deeply troubled by such negative public pronouncements being made at the Forum.

## **MINISTRY OF EDUCATION COMMITTEES and EVENTS**

### **PPM 159 Implementation**

The Secretary-Treasurer represented OTF on this workgroup. Initially, there were plans for a series of regional, roll-out meetings related to the PPM on Collaborative Professionalism early in the year but they were postponed and the fall meetings of the workgroup were devoted to planning the workshops for later in the year. Six events were scheduled between February 22, 2018 and April 24, 2018. Affiliate staff were involved in planning and participated in the meetings as well. Feedback from the early sessions informed the latter and, by and large, they were successful.

### **Transformation Steering Committee**

The 2017-18 year began with a letter from then Minister of Education Mitzie Hunter announcing a review of many facets of education including grade nine, assessment and report cards. Ken Thurston and Marilies Rettig were chosen by the Ministry as co-facilitators of a Transformation Steering Committee charged with providing advice to the Minister on these matters. Affiliates were represented by staff and other groups (principals, trustees, supervisory officers, parents, students and others) participated in the larger TSC meetings and some of the spin off sub-committees. The Secretary-Treasurer participated in the sub-committee on the review of grade nine. Meetings took place throughout the year and into the spring. Some key results from those sessions included the Minister's acceptance of the TSC's consensus recommendation and she issued a letter saying that "province-wide implementation of global competencies / transferable skills in the student report cards will not move forward in the 2018-19 school year." Likewise, she accepted advice that grade nine not be de-streamed and that reviewing one academic year, in isolation from all other years in the continuum of education, was a difficult and complex task.

### **Ministry of Education-Subject/Division Association meetings - Fall Meeting**

The meeting was held on Friday, October 27 at the Chestnut Residence and Conference Centre in Toronto and chaired by Debra Cormier, Acting Manager of the Curriculum, Assessment, and Student Success Policy Branch, who replaced Maureen Callan in August 2017. At the outset of the meeting, selected subject/division associations delivered brief updates about the work of their respective Associations since the Ministry's spring 2017 meeting. Cormier and other lead Ministry staff followed with updates on Ontario's Education Equity Action Plan, the Well-being Strategy, and the Global Competencies. After lunch, updates continued with Community-Connected Experiential Learning. There was little of consequence shared that was not already known to most in the room. At the conclusion of the meeting, Debra Cormier indicated that she was unable to provide an opportunity for subject/division associations to provide input into the curriculum refresh process given the existence of consultation protocols and timelines aligned with the mandate of



Ken Thurston and Marilies Rettig, both of whom were tasked with leading the consultations on the review. Instead, Debra Cormier provided what was obviously a tightly scripted response to some questions that subject/division associations had forwarded in advance of the meeting. All told, the meeting was far more “sit-and-get” than the consultative format to which participants have become accustomed in the last decade.

### **Ministry of Education-Subject/Division Association meetings - Spring Meeting**

Initially, the Ministry of Education had scheduled a meeting with Subject/Division Associations on Friday, May 4, one day before the OTF Curriculum Forum meeting. However, less than one week before the meeting, the Ministry elected to cancel it. Notably, the cancellation occurred even in advance of the official dropping of the writ on May 9 after which the government had a duty to suspend some activities as it entered the legislated “caretaker mode”. Despite that decision, the Ministry did agree to cover all travel expenses for representatives from the Subject/Division Associations who attended the OTF Curriculum Forum meeting.

### **Ministry of Education-Faculties of Education Liaison Committee**

Ian Pettigrew represents OTF and the Curriculum Forum members on the Liaison Committee. This year, the Liaison Committee was co-chaired by Stefanie Muhling (EDU) and Dr. Madeleine Azzola (Laurentian University). The Liaison Committee met four times this year. Apart from updates from various branches of the Ministry, the Ontario College of Teachers and OTF, among others, meetings concentrated on arts education, the role of associate teachers and assessment and evaluation, knowledge mobilization networks and equity and inclusive education. The final meeting of the year scheduled for Friday, June 22, 2018 was cancelled due to the provincial government being in transition.

### **Ministry of Education-Faculties of Education Forum Planning Committee**

Ian Pettigrew represents OTF and the Curriculum Forum members on the Forum Planning Committee. The one-day 2018 Ministry of Education-Faculties of Education’s Forum (Forum) was originally scheduled for Friday, May 11, 2018 in at the Courtyard Marriott, Toronto Downtown. The theme was to have been “Equity Complexities in Action”. However, due to the provincial government entering caretaker mode on May 9 in advance of the June 7 provincial election and a decision by the Ministry of Education to suspend involvement of its staff in activities prior even to that date, the Ministry of Education, in consultation with the Forum Planning Committee, opted to cancel the Forum.

### **2018 Forum synergie**

The two-day 2018 Forum synergie: portant sur la recherche en éducation de langue française de l’Ontario (Forum) occurred at the Radisson Admiral Harbourfront Hotel in Toronto on March 28 and 29, 2018. The Forum, now in its fourth year, is a French-language education-focused symposium that showcases collaboration among, and research conducted by, the Ministry of Education, school boards and Faculties of Education. This year’s theme was *La recherche avec*

*un petit et un grand «R »:moteur de changement.* All told, the Forum attracted some 175 participants.

The opening segment of the first day of the Forum included a traditional land acknowledgement, remarks from both Lillian Patry, Acting Director, French-Language Teaching and Learning Branch, Deputy Minister of Education Bruce Rodrigues and keynote speaker Michel St. Germain, professor emeritus at the University of Ottawa. Following the opening segments, participants heard from a five-member panel convened to respond to provocations emerging from the keynote address. Thereafter, participants self-selected two of five round-tables to attend. Typically, these sessions involved a series of 10-minute presentations connected to research that had been conducted on a particular topic (e.g. well-being). In addition, there were poster session in which invitees shared their research projects on a range of aspects from technology-supported learning, to language development in Kindergarten and literacy across the curriculum, to name a few.

The second day opened with remarks by Denys Giguère, Assistant Deputy Minister, French-Language Teaching, Learning and Achievement Division, and Greg Orencsak, Deputy Minister, Advanced Education and Skills Development. These remarks were followed by keynote speaker Matthieu Brennan, president of Brynaert Brennan and Associates. After the keynote, participants were invited to attend any one of the five round-tables that they had not attended on day one. The closing keynote speaker was Mylène Paquette, who completed – in a rowboat – the first, solo trans-North Atlantic crossing by a person from the Americas. The focus of her address was following one's passion and the mindset needed to overcome both predicted and unexpected risk and adversity.

All the complementary materials can also be found online at <http://goo.gl/APLMYM>.

## **ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TEACHERS**

### **Discipline Matters**

In his June 2018 Report to Council, the Registrar included discipline statistics from the Investigations and Hearings (I&H) Department for Q1 2018.

Compared to the same period in 2017, there was a decrease in the number of complaints originating from members of the public (20% / 64 v. 80), but an increase in the number of complaints originating from the Registrar (including employer notifications) (30% / 105 v. 81) and a significant increase in complaints from members of the College (163 % / 21 v. 8).

### **OCT Act Amendments re: sexual abuse**

Earlier this year, the Education Minister had proposed various amendments to the OCT Act (and the Early Childhood Educators Act) to reflect changes made in 2017 to the Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA) regarding sexual abuse. The OCT Act amendments were contained in Schedule 19 to Bill 31 (the Budget Bill) which received Royal Assent on May 8, 2018.

Amendments that took effect as of Royal Assent include:

- expanded list of sexual abuse acts that trigger mandatory revocation of a teaching certificate; and
- mandatory suspension of a teaching certificate for certain other acts of sexual abuse.

Amendments that have yet to take effect (upon proclamation) include:

- new authority for the Investigation Committee to require a member to undergo a medical assessment if the Committee believes the member may be incapacitated; and
- a new program, to be established and administered by the College, of funding for therapy and counselling for students who are the subject of sexual abuse or a prohibited act involving child pornography.

Eligibility for funding (for therapy and counselling) only requires allegations of sexual abuse or a prohibited act involving child pornography, where the member supervised or was responsible for the student at the time of the alleged act, and does not require the student to undergo a psychological or other assessment. Such funding will be reduced by any amounts otherwise paid by OHIP or a private insurer.

One of the outstanding issues at this point is how the program for therapy and counselling will be funded generally. The recent amendments provide further bylaw-making authority to the College Council “requiring members to pay specified amounts to pay for the program” (either specified in, or calculated according to, the bylaw). However, the amendments also provide the Discipline Committee with the power to order the offending member to reimburse the College for funding provided under the program (and to post security for such reimbursement), while also providing the College with a right of recovery against offenders (albeit through the courts) for monies paid under the program.

## **2018 Council Election**

Election of the 8<sup>th</sup> Council was held earlier this year. Voter turnout was 3.40% (2.45% in 2015). The election involved 69 candidates running for 21 Council positions. Four (4) positions were acclaimed and two (2) positions remain vacant: English-language Roman Catholic Board Secondary and Supervisory Officer. Members of the incoming (8<sup>th</sup>) Council will fill these two vacant positions later this year, based on applications received by July 16<sup>th</sup>.

## **Governing Council Meeting – December 7, 2017**

Council approved an amendment to its bylaws to allow the Registrar to permit, upon a member’s request, a different name or former name of a member to appear on the College’s public register “when the former name is inconsistent with the gender identity of the member.”

### **Governing Council Meeting – March 1, 2018**

At its March meeting, Council approved an amendment to the College's bylaws to allow members of the profession (in good standing with the College) who are not current or former Council members, but who hold appropriate qualifications and are employed in Vice-Principal or Supervisory Officer roles, to serve on Discipline and Fitness to Practice Committee panels as roster members. This is intended to ensure that sufficient number of such individuals are available to assist such panels as needs arise.

Council also approved changes to its parameters and protocols for public presentations at Council meetings, dealing specifically with the distribution of presentation materials. From now on, presentation materials will only be distributed to Council members if received by the College at least two business days before the meeting at which the presentation occurs. In addition, materials submitted less than ten days in advance of the meeting will only be distributed to Council if approved by the Registrar and Chair of Council.

### **Governing Council Meeting - June 7, 2018**

Other items worthy of note from the June 2018 meeting of Council (the last meeting of the 7<sup>th</sup> Council) are as follows:

the College is drafting its next professional advisory (supporting student mental health) and will be seeking feedback from expert readers and College stakeholders over the summer.

Council adopted a Restricted Cash Policy, the goal of which is to have two (2) months of cash flow in reserve (approximately \$6.7 million on an annual operating budget of \$40 million) "to maintain ongoing operations and programs and to fund unplanned opportunities and liabilities". The current restricted cash reserves of the College are roughly \$8.5 million, much of which arose from a significant property tax recovery and an HST rebate a few years ago, together with operating surpluses over the past few years.

## **PENSION**

### **OTF Actuary**

OTF hires an independent consulting actuary to provide advice to OTF as needed. Andrew Fung of Morneau Shepell was OTF's actuary for most of the past year. Andrew advised us in the spring that he was leaving Morneau Shepell taking the position of Chief Actuary of FSCO. We had some opportunities to meet Andrew's replacement, Joseph De Dominicis, and we look forward to working with him.

## **2018 Plan Valuation**

As Governors are aware, the OTPP finished 2017 with a 9.7% investment return and, for the fifth year in a row, the Plan had a funding surplus (\$10.3 billion as of January 1, 2018).

Following discussions with Governors earlier this year, the Partners filed a January 1, 2018 Plan funding valuation with the regulators, allocating the entire surplus to a contingency reserve. As discussed, the purpose of the contingency reserve is to reduce volatility in Plan funding and to facilitate stability in Plan members' contributions and benefits (including inflation protection).

As Governors will recall, the Partners' filing of the previous (2017) Plan valuation had already fully restored conditional inflation protection (CIP) for pensioners and had eliminated the 1.1% contribution rate surcharge for active Plan members (both effective January 1, 2018).

## **Pension Forum**

The annual OTF Pension Forum, held on April 12<sup>th</sup> prior to OTPP's Annual Meeting, addressed a number of topical investment issues including: proxy voting, disruptive technologies, carbon footprint and the Plan's agriculture investment strategy. OTF uses the Forum to consider timely issues, but also to address investment-related concerns raised by Plan members and Affiliates.

## **Semi-Annual Financial Reporting by OTPP**

When OTPP moved to semi-annual reporting of financial results in 2017, due to the issuance of debt for liquidity purposes, the Partners initiated discussions with OTPP management regarding the Partners' ongoing needs for disclosure of the Plan's funding (not financial) status.

As previously reported to Governors, the Partners were able to preserve the existing avenues for such funding disclosure including: the Technical Working Group (which reviews actuarial assumptions used in the preliminary valuation each year), the Partners' Consultative Committee (which will continue to receive quarterly funding updates, with the regular caveat that such info remains confidential), the Preliminary Valuation presentation to the Partners (which will simply exclude rate of return info), and the Annual Report process (a draft of which, shared in advance with the Partners, will simply exclude financial information).

Having worked through OTPP's annual funding and reporting cycle over the past year under this new regime of restricted disclosure, it is worth observing that things have progressed well from OTF's perspective as a Plan Partner.

## **Plan Amendments**

As previously reported to Governors, OTF worked with our Government Partner and with OTPP staff, over the past few years, to resolve issues related to the backdating of pension payments when a member's pension application is delayed. Plan amendments were signed, and changes to OTPP's administrative practices were implemented, to ensure that pension entitlements are properly paid despite such (often inadvertent) delays. A related Plan change, effective in 2018,

lowered the early retirement reduction factor for Plan members who cease employment in education on or after age 50 and who begin a reduced pension some time later, regardless of any delay in applying for such pension.

During the past year, the Partners also agreed to housekeeping changes to the Plan (including clarification of the rules that apply when a Plan member on a leave of absence also performs some occasional employment during the leave), to the Partners' Agreement (to clarify the compensation payable to OTPP Board members who also serve on other boards), and to the Retirement Compensation Arrangement (to provide further funding flexibility to the RCA to ensure that benefits can be paid when due).

The Partners have also been working with OTPP staff to develop a proper indemnity to protect the Partners when they engage in certain matters affecting the Plan.

### **OTPP Directors and Board Chair**

Over the course of the year, the Secretary-Treasurer and OTF President met with all OTPP Directors and the CEO of the Plan. We were joined at these meetings by two representatives of the Government partner as well.

Governors are aware that Rod Albert completed his term as a Director last December and Gene Lewis replaced Rod on the Board. This year, OTF has no other Directors to replace, however, both partners will choose the next Chair of the Board to replace Jean Turmel when he retires from the Board on December 1, 2018. Part of the purpose of the meetings with Directors was to assist the partners in recommending Jean's replacement and to review the overall skill set / matrix of the Board to assist in choosing suitable candidates for future vacancies.

Because the Government went into caretaker mode in the spring, the Government is not able to finalize its recommendation for the position but we are hopeful that a decision can be taken early in the fall to allow the appropriate partner(s) to follow a process to fill any vacancy created.

Aside from that practical purpose, these regular "governance check in" meetings with the Directors are an important part of OTF fulfilling its role as a plan sponsor and they are also very useful in maintaining positive relations and engagement between the sponsors and directors.

### **OTHER**

#### **Parry Sound Campground**

By the time of this report, the camping season at the OTF Parry Sound Campground will be winding down. This summer has been quite busy as the weather has been much better than in recent years. Unfortunately, the hot dry weather has also meant a campfire ban across many parts of Ontario, including the Parry Sound area. Campground staff - Mike (Caretaker) and his wife Mary-Ellen (Registrar) - have been busy maintaining the property around Quinn Lake for the benefit of campers, and we are very fortunate to have them minding things for us. At the same

time, OTF has been making further investments in the property by improving road access and, later this year, with planned renovations to the three cabins on site.

### **International Assistance**

As is the norm, the International Assistance Committee met twice this year –in early December and early June. The number of projects considered by the Committee this year was substantially smaller than in recent years, owing to the decision taken in April 2017 to temporarily suspend all grants to India, due to changes in that country's banking system and regulations for accepting foreign donations. These changes had rendered it virtually impossible for OTF to reliably transfer funds to India without incurring disproportionately high banking fees. Throughout the 2017-18 school year, staff at OTF sought a solution to the situation with India, which included outreach to several national and international organizations, including CTF and EI. I am told that this outreach even included a conversation with Ravi Hutheesing, one-time guitarist for the band Hanson and now cultural diplomat for the US Department of State, with charitable projects of his own in India! I am pleased to let the Governors know, that the Committee has now found a partner in the form of the Deva Kirubai Social Help Association (DKSHA), an NGO based "on the ground" in Tamil Nadu, India. Funds to support Indian projects will be flowed to DKSHA through Canada Helps, a registered Canadian charity that has been working with DKSHA since 2011. The Committee will begin with approving a limited number of projects in India next fall and will assess the success of the arrangement in the year ahead. We are optimistic that the arrangement will work and that we will be able to resume international assistance to India in the near future.

In addition to succeeding in finding a new route for flowing funds to India this year, the Committee considered a total of 193 projects and approved funding to 125 of these across 20 countries, including the Congo, Egypt, El Salvador, Ghana, Guatemala, Honduras, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sierra Leone, South Africa, St Lucia, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Further details on the work of the International Assistance Committee will be presented later on in this meeting, and Governors can also find in their materials package a printed copy of the Committee's report, as well as complete summaries of all of the applications considered this year.

### **International and National Urgent Action Appeals**

As reported at the time of the Winter meeting of the Board of Governors, OTF responded to an Urgent Action Appeal from Education International (EI) in the early fall to support educators and schools in the Caribbean islands and Southern United States, which suffered unprecedented damage from Hurricane Irma over the weekend of September 8 – 10, 2017. The EI Appeal also requested support for the country of Bangladesh, which was ravaged by severe flooding, affecting more than 8 million people there and damaging schools, houses, roads and other infrastructure, as well as destroying crops in this agriculture-dependent country. The Executive authorized support for these Action Appeals.

## **CONCLUSION**

Thanks are due to OTF staff for their efforts over the past year to support our day to day work and to make our events and projects successful.

As this year promises to be an interesting and uncertain one, there will be much more to report on and share at the Winter Board in January.

Thank you to the OTF Executive and Governors for their engagement with and support of OTF over the past year; OTF wishes you all an enjoyable end to the summer and an excellent start to the school year.

Respectfully submitted,

Rhonda Kimberley-Young  
Secretary-Treasurer