

## A Message from the OTF President, December 2018

Colleagues,

Hopefully, the tribulations of flu season, time change and first snow have left you unscathed. No doubt you have been busy! We have been too.

Teachers understand the importance of building relationships. Connections with our students and our communities ensure deeper understanding. OTF has made lots of connections this fall through events such as

- a visit to Eabametoong, home of one of our Lieutenant Governor's Summer Literacy Camps,
- the People for Education Making Connections conference,
- the Children's Mental Health Ontario conference, and
- a symposium on the Importance of Indigenous Education in Ontario.

One event I particularly enjoyed was Indspire's National Gathering for Indigenous Education. OTF stepped forward as a "Workshop Sponsor," making it possible for me to meet the many OTF members present. The voice of teachers was strong.

Our schools are charged with educating students, in age-appropriate ways, about residential schools, treaties and the historical and contemporary contributions of Canada's Indigenous people. While this is not easy work, many resources exist. Step forward and begin this journey.

Protecting your pension, working with your Affiliates and participating as part of the Canadian Teachers' Federation remains high on our agenda. The only area missing is interaction with our provincial government. To date, there has been little meaningful discussion about supporting teachers.

Despite our current government's lack of commitment to education supports, your commitment inspires other Ontarians to step up to the plate. Ontario's future is in our classrooms today. If we are serious about building a strong Ontario, it must start with our schools.

Remember, governments come and governments go but the influence of a teacher is forever. We will prevail.