

A message from the OTF President



Anne Vinet-Roy

Colleagues,

As I write these words, I am getting ready to meet with teacher candidates at Queen's University. I have also visited Lakehead University teacher candidates, as well as Ottawa U. Still to come is Western as well as Laurentian University. Many thanks to everybody assisting with the faculty presentations and a special thank you to all the people at the faculties for their warm welcome and support.

What I like about these visits is talking not only about one of the best professions in the world with energetic and hopeful future teachers, but also having a candid conversation with them about the very real challenges that teachers face on a daily basis in their classroom and school environment.

I sincerely hope your school year has started out well, in light of the

challenges such as larger class sizes and curriculum changes that teachers, educational workers and students are already facing.

The government thinks it has solved the issue of cell phones in the classroom with its recent announcement. As for the Health and Physical Education, teachers know that the exemptions in the curriculum will bring their own unique challenges.

On the assessment side of learning, the government also thinks that teacher candidates must be tested in math to improve students results in EQAO standardized tests, while many experts agree that evidence and research do not support the premise that such a test either improves teachers' math competency or leads to better student outcomes.

As we move further into this new school year, it's worth reminding ourselves that the work of teachers and other educational workers has a profound impact on students' lives. We will keep, in every way possible, urging the government to commit to working with all stakeholders (parents, administrators, teachers and their federations) to ensure that we build on Ontario's earned reputation as one of the best publicly funded education systems in the world.

OTF will continue to work with our partners to champion what is best for teachers and students.

Yours in education,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anne Vinet-Roy".

Anne Vinet-Roy
President

2019 OTF Fellowship recipients



Annually, OTF awards up to 10 Fellowships to deserving individuals who have made outstanding contributions to OTF, publicly funded education, and/or advocating on social issues.

Each Affiliate may nominate up to two (2) candidates for Fellowship in the Affiliate member category and may, additionally, recommend a candidate or candidates for Fellowship in the non-member category.

The Fellowships are presented at the Annual Board of Governors' meeting in August.



Back row - left to right: Michelle Teixeira, OSSTF; Rob Gascho, OSSTF; Cassandra Hallett, Non-member; Warren Grafton, OECTA; François Boudrias, AEFO; Caroline Morin, AEFO; Jennifer Mitchell, ETFO; Joe Pece, OECTA; Ruth Dawson, ETFO

Seated - left to right: Scott Perkin, OTF Secretary-Treasurer; Diane Dewing, OTF President 2018-2019

Found money

Eleven years ago, I asked my mother-in-law what her teacher's pension looked like. She laughed and told me she had only worked for a few years as a Kindergarten teacher before she left to raise her family. She did not believe that she qualified for a pension. I encouraged her to contact the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan (OTPP) and she did. So, for the last ten years, she has been receiving a pension each year which will continue, with a cost of living adjustment, annually for as long as she lives! For many, this "found money" is a welcome addition to their income.

My mother-in-law is not the only person who has not taken the steps necessary to apply for their pension. In fact, the OTPPP estimates that there are thousands of former teachers who are not receiving a pension. Do you know someone who taught for a time and then left the profession? If you were in their shoes, would you like to know that you might be eligible for a pension?

An eligible pension plan member must be 50 years old in order to receive a pension. Also, a pension plan member who leaves teaching does not

have to wait until they turn 50 to take advantage of the assets they have accumulated in the plan.

No matter who you are, I would encourage you to contact OTPPP to make sure that they have your current contact information and to determine what your options might be.

OTPP: 416.226.2700/1.800.668.0105
or email Inquiry@otpp.com

Jeffrey Barber

Director, Pension and Economic Affairs



A message from the OTF Secretary-Treasurer



Scott Perkin

New, but not so new ...

I am honoured to have been appointed as the new Secretary-Treasurer of OTF, succeeding my colleague and mentor, Rhonda Kimberley-Young, as she begins a well-deserved retirement. OTF owes Rhonda a huge debt of gratitude for the 12 years that she led the organization, and for the many years that she previously worked with her Affiliate to improve Ontario's publicly funded education system for teachers and students alike.

Although new to the Secretary-Treasurer role, I have been at OTF since 2012 serving as the Director of Pension and Economic Affairs. Prior to joining OTF, I spent 15 years of my career serving the teachers of Ontario as the Director of Plan Policy at the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan (OTPP). One of the more significant responsibilities that I enjoyed while at OTPP was engaging with OTF in its role as a co-sponsor of the Plan.

Serving at OTPP (the administrator of the Plan) and now at OTF (co-sponsor of the Plan) has provided me with many unique perspectives on one of the world's best-governed and most successful pension plans.

OTF is celebrating its 75th year of representing the professional interests of Ontario's teachers. Aside from co-sponsoring OTPP, OTF's mandate encompasses many other significant activities such as engaging in curriculum development and providing professional learning opportunities (by teachers for teachers) along with our four teacher Affiliates and with our colleagues in the Ministry of Education.

Unfortunately, our Ministry colleagues have been absent from such professional collaboration over the past year. With funding cuts to many programs, increased class sizes and

the imposition of a new math test for teacher candidates, the current government has chosen a decidedly different policy approach to education in Ontario: austerity instead of investment, and policy based on ideology rather than evidence. Ontario's teachers and students deserve much better than this.

OTF will continue to stand up for a world-class education system in Ontario, a system that respects the professionalism of the teachers who are integral to its success and that invests in the future of Ontario's students.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Scott Perkin', with a long, sweeping underline.

Scott Perkin
Secretary-Treasurer



This year's official OTF charity is Feed Ontario, formerly known as the Ontario Association of Food Banks.

This organization does very important work in many locations in Ontario, including several bilingual food banks.

OTF invites you to support the food banks in your respective communities, because having access to good food can certainly contribute to student success and improve learning conditions.

<https://feedontario.ca/>

Transforming and Healing through Education

2019 National Gathering for Indigenous Education

Refresh and renew your passion for teaching!

Join hundreds of other educators and partners to network and share successful practices in Indigenous education, centered around this year's theme, *Transforming and Healing through Education*.

The annual National Gathering for Indigenous Education

November 20-22, 2019
Sheraton Centre, Toronto

indspire.ca/national-gathering

Break the Fake

Media Literacy Week October 7-11

It can be tough to tell what's true and what's "fake news" just by looking at a headline. But it's easy to do a quick check and get the real facts when something doesn't look right online. MediaSmarts wants you to help Break the Fake by stopping the spread of false info and getting students to check before sharing.

Lots of resources to use such as

- a free workshop for hosting an event: <http://mediasmarts.ca/digital-media-literacy/e-tutorials/break-fake-how-tell-what%E2%80%99s-true-online>
- fact-checking tip sheets: <http://mediasmarts.ca/teacher-resources/break-fake-how-tell-whats-true-online>
- lesson plans: http://mediasmarts.ca/search/break%20the%20fake?f%5B0%5D=type%3Alesson_plan.

MediaSmarts: <https://mediasmarts.ca/get-involved/media-literacy-week-break-fake>

Helping our youth build a healthy financial future

The Canadian Foundation for Economic Education (CFEE) welcomes the launch of the new Grade 10 Career Studies course in Ontario that includes a significant financial literacy component.

Far too many Canadians are living a life of financial stress and anxiety. This happens when they lose control of their finances and, when impacted by those who influence their decisions, they get stretched beyond their financial comfort zones.

Teachers and parents can help prepare our youth for their financial futures—to set goals, live within their means, value the non-material things in life, and develop confidence in their ability to achieve the goals they set for themselves.

Recently, CFEE surveyed over 6,000 youth regarding money—did they want to learn about it? If so, what did they want to learn? And from where? Overwhelmingly, they want to learn about money—and they want to learn at home and at school. They want to learn from sources they trust. As a teacher, you can make a major difference in the financial futures of Ontario's youth and help address their desire to learn and be prepared.

CFEE has supported financial education and Ontario teachers for many years. They will provide whatever assistance they can, including free access to our new "Money and Youth" resource in both print and online editions, complete with teacher guides. Find it online at www.moneyandyouth.com or order free class sets from Bonnie Wood: bwood@cfee.org.

