

A message from the OTF President



Parker Robinson

Dear colleagues,

As the pandemic continues, OTF recognizes the stress that education workers are feeling as they try to provide a quality education experience for students while keeping their health and safety at the top of the list. Education workers should be prioritized for vaccinations if the Ford government is, indeed, committed to a return to school plan that is safe and sustainable.

OTF continues to recognize disturbing trends in the policies and practices the Ministry of Education and the Ford government are putting in place. The direction certainly points to a shift to privatization of our publicly funded education system. This is unacceptable. Strong, publicly funded education provides opportunities for success for the children and families of Ontario without barriers based on cost or equitable access. OTF has been involved in an active campaign pushing back on these disturbing trends. Social media messaging has been used to educate our members and the Ontario public. Also, we have used our interactions with other education stakeholders to express our concern regarding these trends and advocate for appropriate funding for the publicly funded education system. Finally, opportunities for research partnerships are being sought out to investigate the impact of online learning on the learning outcomes of students and how these trends fit into the publicly funded education system.

As we head into the final third of the school year, OTF will continue to work on behalf of our members to protect publicly funded education in Ontario and to support the educators who work every day to help students learn as well as deal with the challenging times that our communities are facing.

We ask that all educators be sure to take care of their own wellbeing and seek out support if they need help.

Yours in education,



Creating conditions, conversations and collaboration for equity, diversity and inclusion in teacher education



Each year, OTF and the Affiliates co-sponsor a conference on teacher education to discuss current trends and issues in pre-service teacher education. Participants include liaison officers who sit on our Teacher Education Liaison Committees (TELCs) at the 13 faculties of education in Ontario, along with faculty members and teacher candidates. Both last year and this year, the event was combined with the annual retreat of the OTF Curriculum Forum, an assembly of some 50 Ontario subject and division associations.

This year's symposium, *Creating conditions, conversations and collaboration for equity, diversity and inclusion in teacher education*, was held on February 5-6 and due to COVID-19 restrictions, was fully online.

A tremendous success, the symposium provided an important opportunity for the 144 participants to take a critical look at work currently being done to promote equity, diversity and inclusion in education. Our four exceptional keynote speakers (Rania El Mugammar, Jodie Williams, Giidaakunadaad (Nancy) Rowe and Darlene Ciuffetelli Parker) delivered on their promise to push our learning deeper. They helped us see how we can move from intention to action and how we can transition from being concerned observers to agents of real and lasting change. Workshops were presented by ETFO, OSSTF, le Centre ontarien de prevention des agressions (COPA), the Canadian Museum of Human Rights and our Indigenous partners at the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Association of Ontario (FNMIEAO). Finally, all participants were asked to commit to doing at least one thing differently after the symposium was over, so that what they had learned and achieved would not be lost.

To view the keynotes and workshops, visit [symposium2021](#).

Lost and found pensions

Every year, teachers leave the profession before they reach retirement. When they leave, they often leave behind their contributions to the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan (OTPP). An eligible Plan member must be 50 years old to receive a pension, but a 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.



If you know someone who taught for a time and then left the profession, encourage them to contact the OTPP to investigate what options may be available to them.

Regardless, it is always good practice for all Plan members to contact OTPP to make sure their current contact information is up to date.

416.226.2700, 1.800.668.0105

Email: Inquiry@otpp.com.

Coding and computational thinking

OTF Connects



Coming in late April or early May is a series of six *OTF Connects* webinars focused on coding and computational thinking across the curriculum and divisions. Each 45 to 90 minute webinar will provide practical applications and examples you can transfer and apply in your own context.

So stay tuned, virtual professional learning "by teachers for teachers" is on the way this spring.

A message from the OTF Secretary-Treasurer



Scott Perkin

Dear colleagues,

As we head into spring and the remainder of the school year, it is hard to ignore the challenges endured by Ontario's teachers, educators and students during the past 12 months, including the cycle of school closure and reopening that has occurred across the province.

Through it all, teachers and educators have done their utmost to adjust to these challenging circumstances, despite the lack of proper support from the Ontario government, in an effort to keep students engaged, learning and progressing on their own educational journeys.

At OTF, we are so proud of what Ontario's teachers and educators have been able to accomplish in the face of adversity and despite what they have had to put up with from the Ford government: inadequate funding for our schools, health and safety protocols that ignored the advice of health experts, inconsistent and self-serving messaging, and a continuing fixation on online learning that doesn't work for most students.

And we are also proud of our Affiliates – AEFO, ETFO, OECTA, OSSTF – for regularly calling out the current government for its ongoing failings to the teachers, educators and students of this province.

The March 24th Budget is but another example of this government's unwillingness to properly invest in education on behalf of the students of Ontario.

In the meantime, we continue to advocate against the unnecessary imposition of EQAO testing at the secondary level – a pilot test of an online platform no less – a further unwanted burden on students and teachers during a school year otherwise fraught with unprecedented challenges.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'S Perkin', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

A graphic for Earth Day featuring a central image of a small green seedling with two leaves growing out of a mound of dark soil. This seedling is being held up by a circle of approximately 12 hands of various skin tones, all reaching up from the bottom. The background is a light gray gradient.

OTF FEO

Earth Day

April 22

Ontario's teachers Working together to protect our earth



Being a member – Your life as a teacher

(for early to mid-career members)

Join the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan (OTPP) for a virtual presentation to learn about one of your most important financial assets: your pension.

Consider this your Pension 101. Designed for all early to mid-career members, you will gain an understanding of how your contributions and pension are calculated, how to maximize your pension benefit and how some life events may impact your pension.

You have two dates to choose from. Each presentation will be the same, so please choose a date and click on it to register.

MAY

May 11, 2021 at 4:30 pm

May 13, 2021 at 6:00 pm

You will receive an email confirming your registration. Two days before the date you selected, you will receive another email with information on how to join the virtual presentation.

Your Moment: Getting you ready for retirement

(for members within five years of retirement)

Join the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan (OTPP) for a virtual presentation to learn about one of your most important financial assets: your pension.

You have been contributing to your pension throughout your career. Now that you're thinking about retiring, find out how this asset fits into your financial picture.

This interactive and informative presentation will provide you with everything you need to know about preparing for retirement, and what to expect throughout the retirement application process.

You have four dates to choose from. Each presentation will be the same, so please choose a date below and click on it to register. Each session is about 1.5 hours with a Q&A session.

APRIL

April 20, 2021 at 4:30 pm

April 22, 2021 at 6:00 pm

MAY

May 4, 2021 at 4:30 pm

May 6, 2021 at 6:00 pm

You will receive an email confirming your registration. Two days before your webinar, you will receive another email with information on how to join the virtual presentation.



A visit to this digital archive of feminist activism in Canada from the 1970s to 1990s is well-worth it. This site is dedicated to documenting and sharing the history of the liberation and anti-oppression movements that won some victories, changed some attitudes, and radically altered the gendered and political landscape during this period.

In addition to pages dedicated to timelines, activism and culture, the site has resources for educators.

The site, which is relatively new, is still gathering materials to fill in the gaps in this period of feminist activism. You can help by donating, contributing materials such as old photos, flyers, buttons and documents or volunteering.

Find out more at [riseup](https://riseup.ca).

