

A message from the OTF President



Chris Cowley

Teachers,

Despite the season changing from winter to spring, some things in Ontario education seem to never change. Sadly, uncertainty seems to be the feeling among teachers as we continue to navigate COVID in our schools and a Provincial Government that appears to have declared a premature end to the pandemic. Indeed, the complete lack of leadership from the government has made a difficult situation even worse and we likely face an increase in COVID transmission in schools.

The ongoing shortage of occasional teachers is another area where we are staring into a vacuum of leadership. This shortage is a growing concern across the province but especially acute in our francophone schools. We need to address this on all fronts: government, school boards and faculties of education. Wild swings in supply and demand should not be happening within a sophisticated system like Ontario's and it takes leadership from government to ensure reliable staffing levels.

The funding of our retirement through OTPP remains rock solid. We have seen the positive results reported recently with a healthy surplus. But that does not mean we rest on our laurels; OTF will continue to advocate for those issues and concerns that are important to members. Most recently, the tragic situation in Ukraine has brought forward questions of OTPP's investments in that region of the world. I have engaged the CEO of Teachers' Pension and he has assured me that OTPP has no direct investments in Russia and no plans for future investments there.

Despite the many challenges faced by our schools, one thing remains clear: Ontario's publicly funded education system is held together by the dedication and commitment of the many professionals who work in our schools every day. We can bring the change we need to Ontario by strongly reminding our politicians that we need a government that values the work of teachers and understands that strong schools build strong communities. I encourage all teachers to find the education friendly candidate in your area and get involved to move Ontario in a new direction.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Cowley'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

Chris Cowley
President



2022 Spring Meeting of the OTF Board of Governors.
First in-person meeting since January 2020.

The Ministry of Education's Revised Curriculum Implementation Plan: You Can't Always Get What You ~~Want~~ NEED



You know these lines from the Stones' famous tune: *No, you can't always get what you want/...But if you try sometime you'll find/You get what you need*. Alas, when it comes to implementation resources for revised curricula, the latter isn't even true for teachers and educators in Ontario schools under the current government.

Since the winter (December) edition of *Interaction*, the Ministry of Education has continued to pursue an overly ambitious schedule for the review and revision of nine curricula. To that already large number, it has added four more this spring: Language (Grades 1-8), English (Grades 9-12), Français (Grades 1-8) and Français (Grades 9-12). Keep in mind that both the English and Français (Grades 9-12) curricula will be de-streamed in September 2022. Our members could be forgiven if they can't seem to catch their collective breath between the Minister's announcements.

The Ministry's curriculum review process, and especially its implementation plan for each released revised curriculum, remains woefully inadequate. Why? Well, consider that while there has been much ballyhoo by leaders at the Ministry about the *imminent* availability of classroom-ready resources and in-service, the hype is not borne out by the facts and the reality. For example, the Ministry's uploading to its Digital Curriculum Portal of a single "Key Changes" document represents a basic informational resource. Frontline classroom teachers are left waiting in vain for the timely release of other critical and

practical resources and in-service opportunities to guide their program planning and delivery. Sadly, without fail, these resources follow months to a year after the official, mandatory implementation date has come and gone.

No one disputes the need for periodic review and refresh of curricula in Ontario to ensure that they respond to current realities and prepare students to successfully navigate a dynamic, ever-evolving future. That said, it is also an equally reasonable expectation that those who are charged with animating said revised curricula—frontline teachers and educators—should be equipped with the resources and training required to do so. In October 2020, OTF and its affiliates submitted to the Ministry *A Roadmap for Renewal: Revisiting the Curriculum Review Process in Ontario* which offered constructive suggestions about the Ministry's approach to, and process for, curricula review and implementation. What changed as a result? The suggestions have gone unheeded and unimplemented.

One is, therefore, bewildered and frustrated by the Minister's and the Ministry's seeming inability to understand, or worse their cavalier indifference to, the needs of educators and teachers. To riff on some lines from yet another Stones' song: Ontario teachers and educators "*can't get no satisfaction/[We] can't get no satisfaction/Cause [we] try, and [we] try, and [we] try, and [we] try/[We] can't get no, [We] can't get no.*"

We stand with
UKRAINE

A message from the OTF Secretary-Treasurer



Scott Perkin

Dear colleagues,

As spring offers a new “normal” following two years of pandemic restrictions, OTF is grateful for the efforts of frontline educators in managing through the last two chaotic school years. Teaching today’s students (and tomorrow’s citizens) should not have been subjected to the many obstacles that the government threw at the education system over the past two years.

Unfortunately, the government forged ahead during the pandemic with changes to several curricula, without genuine consultation or proper supports for teachers, and major governance changes at the College of Teachers that effectively ignore the profession. We will continue to advocate for changes that **support** Ontario’s teachers and that **enhance** the voice of the profession.

And while we offered some excellent professional learning for teachers this spring through *OTF Connects*, we can only hope for a return to collaborative professionalism where the Ministry of Education also **invests** in the success of the profession.

For the ninth consecutive year the Teachers’ Pension Plan is fully funded and, as Plan co-sponsors, OTF and the government have agreed to file the January 1, 2022 funding valuation with the regulators, classifying the surplus as a contingency reserve. The reserve is intended to reduce volatility in Plan funding and to facilitate stability in Plan members’ contributions and benefits.

And, we will soon have the results of two research projects, exploring the austerity and privatization agenda of the government before and during the pandemic, as well as the implications of online teaching and learning in Ontario.

OTPP Virtual Pension Presentations

Join the Ontario Teachers’ Pension Plan for a virtual presentation to learn about one of your most important financial assets: your pension. Each session is about 1.5 hours with a Q&A session.

YOUR MOMENT – GETTING YOU READY FOR RETIREMENT (FOR MEMBERS WITHIN FIVE YEARS OF RETIREMENT)

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

[May 3, 2022 at 4:30 pm](#)

[May 5, 2022 at 6:00 pm \(French\)](#)

[May 12, 2022 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.

BEING A MEMBER – YOUR LIFE AS A TEACHER (FOR EARLY TO MID-CAREER MEMBERS)

Your pension is one of your most important financial assets.

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.

Click on the following link to register.

[May 10, 2022 at 4:30 pm](#)

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

OTF congratulates nine Outstanding Fellows!

In 1964, the Ontario Teachers' Federation celebrated 20 years of Federation. In order to commemorate that event, the Board of Governors established Fellowships in OTF. Intended to acknowledge service to OTF and to the teaching profession, the new honour was given in its first year to George Drew, the Premier of the Province when the *Teaching Profession Act* was passed in 1944. The other honourees in that first year were all former Presidents of OTF and founding members of the Board of Governors.

This year, OTF would like to congratulate nine outstanding OTF Fellows who will be honoured and presented with their Fellowship at the 2022 President's Banquet, to be held on August 22, 2022 in Markham.



Rick Belisle
OECTA



Shirley Bell
ETFO



Domenic Bellissimo
OSSTF



Adelina Cecchin
ETFO



Yves Durocher
AEFO



Mary Lachapelle
OECTA



Lisa Mastrobuono
ETFO



Pat Wright
OSSTF



Alphonse Marie Yongoua
AEFO