

2018/2019

KEY WORK



ONTARIO PUBLIC
SCHOOL BOARDS'
ASSOCIATION

Leading Education's Advocates

WHO WE ARE

The Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) represents 31 public district school boards and 10 public school authorities across Ontario, which together serve more than 1.3 million public elementary and secondary students.

The Association advocates on behalf of the best interests and needs of the public school system in Ontario and we are seen as the credible voice of public education in Ontario.

We are called on by the provincial government for input and advice on legislation and the impact of government policy directions.

MISSION STATEMENT AND BELIEFS

The mission of the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) is to promote and enhance public education by: helping Member Boards to fulfil their mandates; developing effective partnerships with other groups interested in public education; and providing a strong and effective voice on behalf of public education in Ontario.

OPSBA believes that the role of public education is to provide universally accessible education opportunities for all students regardless of their ethnic, racial or cultural backgrounds, social or economic status, individual exceptionality or religious preference.

EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION IS ACHIEVED BY:

Promoting high standards of individual achievement

Providing the understanding and basic skills required for active, compassionate participation in the life of the family, the community, the province, the nation and a global society

Cultivating a love of learning

Recognizing the value of diversity among learners and communities

Exploring creative educational alternatives

To maintain excellence, the public school system must be accountable to the communities it serves and work to fulfill its mandate through building strong community partnerships.

Local, democratically-elected school boards play a key role in ensuring that schools remain responsive to both provincial program requirements and local needs and resources.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

FOR MORE THAN TWO CENTURIES, democratically elected school board trustees have been the local community's voice for quality public education in Ontario.

Although education is a shared responsibility, local relationships are key to its success. OPSBA and its member trustees have been, and continue to be, the supporters and defenders of public education that know their community best. We are the voice of students, parents and community members. It is a tremendous responsibility that we embrace, because it is crucial to the future of our society.

As President of the Ontario Public School Boards' Association, I know we all share the same determination to do the right thing for our students, our partners in education and our communities.

I am proud to represent dedicated trustees who understand the value of our public education system and the importance of supporting our children and youth as they seek success in our increasingly complex world. It is through the work we do every day in our local communities that we are able to reflect the values of equity and respect that make Ontario's education system one of the very best in the world.

As a non-partisan association, we are committed to working with our partners in education to ensure that we remain focused on those goals that we all have in common – student achievement and well-being. OPSBA has a long history of positive, mutually respectful and collaborative working relationships with all education partners in Ontario, including the government. These relationships help us to represent the voice of our public school boards on the diverse range of issues that affect students, school board staff and our communities.

Our organization's central purpose is support our member boards and trustees. We are confident our expertise and full range of services – including our annual Public Education and Education Labour Relations and Human Resources Symposiums and our hosting of the Canadian School Boards Association's Annual Congress in July 2019 – will continue building on the unique value the role of trustee brings to making education funding and policy relevant and meaningful for students, families and communities.

Yours in Education,

Cathy Abraham
OPSBA President
October 2018

OPPSBA PRIORITIES FOR 2018-19

The Association's priorities are designed to advocate for conditions that support and improve student achievement and well-being. All students should feel valued, welcomed and respected. Education must be supported within a framework of values that ensures young people will become caring, responsible, and productive citizens. Curriculum and teaching must be reinforced by a culture that nurtures the values of universality, inclusiveness, human rights, respect and kindness.

OPPSBA'S MULTI-YEAR PRIORITIES FOR 2018-2019 ARE:

The Whole Child and Student Well-Being for Today and Tomorrow

Advancing Reconciliation – First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education

Trustees as Leaders in Public Education

Education Funding

Labour Relations

OPPSBA's Board of Directors has assigned areas of emphasis to these priorities and endorsed supporting actions aimed at achieving successful outcomes.

THE WHOLE CHILD AND STUDENT WELL-BEING FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW

OPSBA believes that improving student achievement and student engagement is directly linked to ensuring that we work collaboratively to support the social, emotional, mental and physical well-being of all children and youth in our increasingly complex world.

Areas of Emphasis for Action

- Participate in processes to implement Ontario's vision for education
- Collaborate with relevant provincial ministries to ensure strong, equitable, accessible, and responsive services and supports for children and youth mental health
- Continue leadership and advocacy for social justice, equity and inclusion
- Work to support equitable and diverse learning opportunities for all students in our member school boards
- Build on progress achieved for differentiated resourcing, programming and services to support students, especially in northern school boards, rural and remote areas
- Continue to provide input and feedback to the Ministry of Education regarding the content, measurement and implementation of the Ministry's Well-Being Strategy

- Monitor and promote increased opportunities, supports and coordinated services for students with developmental disabilities and special needs with a focus on early intervention to maximize learning outcomes for students
- Monitor the implementation of the pending federal legalization of cannabis and its implications for school boards through 2020
- Continue to advocate for teacher training and professional development that meets the learning needs of students, and reflects the diverse nature of Ontario, including its Indigenous Peoples
- Advocate for technological programs and skilled trades as viable student options, and for support for individuals working in the trades to become teachers
- Advocate for a graduation diploma or equivalent that has value for students no matter what program pathway they choose, including directly into the world of work
- Continue to support environmental sustainability practices in curriculum and capital planning
- Advocate for a comprehensive government review of the current delivery of French as a Second Language

ADVOCATE FOR TECHNOLOGICAL PROGRAMS AND SKILLED TRADES AS VIABLE STUDENT OPTIONS, AND FOR SUPPORT FOR INDIVIDUALS WORKING IN THE TRADES TO BECOME TEACHERS.

ADVANCING RECONCILIATION: FIRST NATION, MÉTIS AND INUIT EDUCATION

OPSBA believes that through education we will move towards a Canada where the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians is founded on mutual respect and OPSBA, therefore, supports the Calls to Action of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).

Areas of Emphasis for Action

- Advocate for a comprehensive Ontario curriculum that contains clear expectations that every Ontario student will acquire knowledge and understanding of Treaties and of the historical context that gave rise to residential schools, the impact on First Nation, Métis and Inuit children and their families, and the ongoing legacy that is the responsibility of all Canadians
- Advocate for sufficient provincial funding to cover curriculum resources, and staff training, to support the implementation of the comprehensive Ontario curriculum
- Ensure the needs and aspirations of First Nation, Métis and Inuit children and their families are a prominent focus of OPSBA's other priority areas
- Respect the TRC Call to Action regarding retention and revitalization of Indigenous languages in Ontario schools, taught by fluent Indigenous speakers

- Expand capacity of First Nation trustees and increase understanding by all trustees of First Nation, Métis and Inuit issues
- Advocate for equity at the federal level in education funding for First Nations students
- Explore the issues of representation of First Nation, Métis and Inuit students in urban environments
- Support the development of mechanisms to increase the hiring of Indigenous staff, including in leadership roles
- Advocate for supports needed to ensure the well-being of Indigenous students



TRUSTEES AS LEADERS IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

OPSBA believes that local democratically elected trustees make a significant and direct contribution to the achievement of all students through their leadership in directing the policies and priorities of the local school board that shape a culture of continuous improvement.

Areas of Emphasis for Action

- Continue promotion of the role of trustees, including advocacy for clear government support for the role of trustees as a matter of public confidence in education
- Advocate for public education on the significant role and value of local, democratically elected school board trustees
- Provide supports for first-term trustees and new chairs in the 2018-2022 term of office, including mentorship and active promotion of OPSBA and OESC resources developed specifically to support trustees in their multi-faceted role
- Continue professional learning for trustees as to scope and legal implications of trustee duties and building of deeper awareness of the day-to-day trustee requirements, including accountability and governance, collaboration with municipal partners, conflict management and relationship building
- Support the development of communication materials and/or resources for trustees to use in their role to support social justice, equity and inclusion in their board and communities

- Further strengthen the role of Regional Vice-Presidents and Board of Directors members as OPSBA ambassadors to boards in their region
- Advocate for improvements in communication from the Ministry to OPSBA, including meaningful consultation and partnership in strategies that affect school boards
- Advocate for the inclusion of local school board governance in the government/civics curriculum (Grade 5 and Grade 10)
- Continued advocacy for greater school board autonomy in hiring
- Enhance representation of student voice through elected student trustees within OPSBA and at member boards



EDUCATION FUNDING

OPSBA believes that strong and equitable education funding is a foundational factor in setting the conditions that promote and sustain student achievement.

Areas of Emphasis for Action

- Advocate for an ongoing cycle of review of the funding model grant categories to ensure that they support the current local needs of all school boards
- Advocate for more flexibility in local spending
- Advocate for resolution of pressing problems in funding, such as Special Education and student transportation
- Advocate for expanded funding and services to support children and youth mental health and well-being
- Continue to advocate for full funding by the Ministry of any new initiative
- Promote collaboration among the four school board systems and enhancement of partnership among boards
- Advocate for infrastructure funding including flexibility in funding approaches, transparency in the approval process for capital projects, alignment between government priorities and capital funding



- Participate and advocate for OPSBA member board issues during the Ministry's 2018-19 Urban Student Accommodation Engagement
- Ensure strong school board participation in and contribution to the next steps in implementing the recommendations of the Community Hubs Strategic Framework and Action Plan
- Continue to emphasize the role of First Nation trustees with regard to effective implementation of Education Services Agreements
- Advocate for adequate funding to allow boards to meet AODA compliance deadlines and maintain ongoing compliance in future years

LABOUR RELATIONS

OPSBA believes that teachers and education workers deeply influence a positive and productive learning environment for students and are supported in this role through the peace and stability engendered by successfully negotiated collective agreements.

Areas of Emphasis for Action

- Ensure OPSBA priorities are reflected in collective bargaining strategies and positions
- Continue leadership as a Designated Employer Bargaining Agent in the bargaining of central agreements under the School Boards Collective Bargaining Act
- Provide leadership in the discussions of central terms and conditions that respects the contributions of principals and vice-principals and their role in improving student achievement and well-being
- Ensure government initiatives (legislation/policy) are assessed from the labour relations/collective bargaining perspective
- Provide support to all OPSBA member boards in ongoing labour relations/collective bargaining services
- Facilitate information and learning exchange through the OPSBA Board of Directors, Labour Relations Symposium, Senior Negotiators Committee and the Public Council of Ontario Directors of Education

- Track board experience with contract implementation for forward planning
- Maintain relationships with key education partners
- Enhance communications support to school boards regarding labour relations
- Participate in the work of the Provincial Health and Safety Working Group, which is addressing the issue of violence in classrooms as it affects the safety, health and well-being of all employees

ENSURE OPSBA PRIORITIES ARE REFLECTED IN COLLECTIVE BARGAINING STRATEGIES AND POSITIONS.



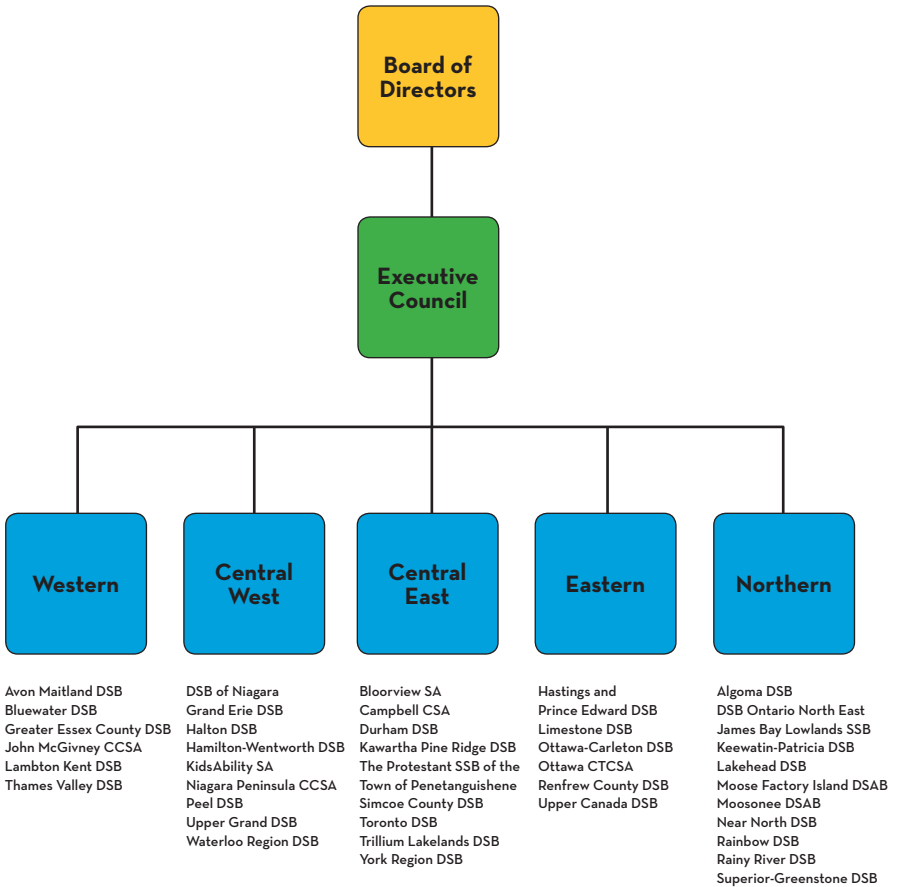
OPSBA'S SERVICE AREAS

OPSBA offers a full range of services to its Member Boards in the following areas:

- Education Program Policy
- Policy Development
- Legislation and Regulation Monitoring and Analysis
- Government Relations
- Communications and Media Relations
- Labour Relations and Human Resources
- Education Finance
- Networking and Facilitation
- Conference, Meeting and Event Coordination
- Professional Development and Issues Awareness
- Association Administration and Operations

For more information on any of the above services we provide, visit www.opsba.org or call 416-340-2540.

OPSBA Structure Chart



CONFERENCES, MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Rich professional development is critical to supporting trustees in their public education advocacy role and as informed decision makers. Symposia, provincial and regional meetings, workshops and seminars for trustees and board employees focus on key education issues.

OPSBA Scheduled Events – 2018-19

2019 PUBLIC EDUCATION SYMPOSIUM (PES)

This annual symposium offers a unique and rich combination of information and resources: guest speakers who are recognized experts in their field, forums and plenary sessions that raise the most critical issues of the day, and access to experienced and dedicated professionals.

January 24 to 26, 2019, at the Sheraton Centre Hotel in Toronto

2019 EDUCATION LABOUR RELATIONS AND HUMAN RESOURCES SYMPOSIUM

OPSBA's annual Education Labour Relations and Human Resources Symposium is held each spring and designed to provide professional development in the areas of labour relations and human resources to trustees, Directors of Education, senior human resources officials and labour relations staff.

April 4 and 5, 2019, at the Sheraton Centre Hotel in Toronto

2019 OPSBA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, CANADIAN SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION CONGRESS AND NATIONAL TRUSTEE GATHERING ON ABORIGINAL EDUCATION

At the AGM, OPSBA Members determine priorities and directions for the coming year, elect officers and plan for the future. This event also includes a comprehensive professional development program for trustees.

Concurrently with the AGM, OPSBA will be hosting the 2019 CSBA Congress and the National Trustee Gathering on Aboriginal Education, which are annual professional development events in which approximately 350 school trustees or commissioners gather for professional development and to share best practices, compare experiences and learn new ways of better serving Canadian students. July 4 to 7, 2019, at the Westin Harbour Castle in Toronto

REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETINGS

Regional Council Meetings offer trustees and administrators opportunities to exchange information and keep current on relevant local and provincial issues. The workshop-style meetings encourage trustees to explore practical and political issues and develop positions and solutions that are locally sensitive. Each Region holds a meeting in conjunction with PES and the AGM, and additional meetings are held at a local board in the Region throughout the year.

Held annually in October (except during election years), the Northern Regional Meeting and Program offers trustees from Northern Ontario a dynamic professional development and networking opportunity. As 2018 is an election year, there will not be a Northern Regional Meeting this year. **Common meetings in all Regions, except Northern Region, are scheduled for April 2019.**

**For more information visit
www.opsba.org/events-and-publications.**

CONTACT US



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