

2017/2018

# ANNUAL REPORT



ONTARIO PUBLIC  
SCHOOL BOARDS'  
ASSOCIATION

**Leading Education's Advocates**



# STATEMENT OF MISSION 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 and compassionate participation in the life of the family, the community, the province, the nation, and a global society*

*Cultivating a love of learning*

*Employing highly qualified, highly motivated teachers, strongly committed to ongoing professional development*

*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 community it serves and must build effective partnerships throughout the community.

Local, elected school boards play a key role as part of a democratic process of checks and balances in decision-making by ensuring that schools remain responsive to both provincial program requirements, local needs and resources.

# MESSAGE TO MEMBERS



This past year has been an active one both internally to OPSBA as we welcomed a new Executive Director, as well as in our continued work on behalf of all public school boards and school authorities with the wide variety of education stakeholders across the province and the country.



With a shared goal of building a better environment and greater opportunities for Ontario students and school staff, we have worked productively with our many partners in education, and across the health and children's service sectors throughout our communities, welcoming all children to further the strategic priorities of the association that focus on enabling student well-being and achievement into the future. The work described in the following pages provides a comprehensive account of the accomplishments throughout the past year that we can all take great pride in.

The months ahead will bring both provincial and municipal elections that will have impacts on public education, and we will need to ensure we are prepared to move forward in the interest of students and build confidence in public education. We will continue to focus on the value and principles of publicly funded education to strengthen the programs and services that make a real difference in the lives of Ontario children, youth and their families. Our sincere gratitude to all those leaders in education who have contributed this year.

Handwritten signature of Laurie French in black ink.

Laurie French  
OPSBA President

Handwritten signature of W.R. (Rusty) Hick in black ink.

W.R. (Rusty) Hick  
Executive Director

# HIGHLIGHTS

Through our Board of Directors, OPSBA's member boards establish multi-year strategic priorities that position the organization to engage with the key forces affecting high quality public education in Ontario today. They drive how the Association uses its expertise, time and resources. The priorities offer a framework for decision-making and help shape action on ongoing initiatives and emerging issues that are relevant to the Association's mission. OPSBA's multi-year strategic priorities are:

- The Whole Child and Student Well-Being
- New Generation Education
- Advocating for the Role of Trustees as Members of the Board and Building Leadership Capacity
- Advancing Reconciliation: First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education
- Labour Relations
- Education Finance

OPSBA's priorities and key activities are designed to improve the academic achievement for all students and promote opportunities that offer Ontario's children and youth success in school and in life. The Association advocates not only for first-rate programs, pedagogy and resources, but for a social and educational environment that nurtures the values of universality, inclusiveness, human rights, respect and kindness. OPSBA's multi-year priorities reflect these values.

Our actions in advancing these priorities position OPSBA as the credible voice of Ontario's public school system and underscore the expertise that is respected by the provincial

government when it seeks advice on legislation and impact of policy directions.

Our efforts are dedicated to investing expertise and energy in ways that we know will have positive impacts on a wide variety of student needs across the province. We ensure we have an informed voice at the tables addressing current issues and opportunities in education, such as the Early and Middle Years, Special Education, Community Hubs, Technology in Teaching and Learning, Indigenous Education, Student Assessment, Equity and Inclusive Education, Curriculum Review and Children and Youth Mental Health. We have a body of acknowledged expertise in Labour Relations and Education Funding which continues to ensure significant impact in these areas. Highlights of our advocacy and work in the past year include:

## **Provincial, Municipal and School Board Elections**

OPSBA once again partnered with the Ontario Education Services Corporation (OESC) to coordinate a series of resources to support trustee candidates and communities in the October 22 Municipal and School Board elections occurring across Ontario. This initiative is being undertaken with support from the Ministry of Education. Resources that have been and will be developed include updated versions of guides for running for trustee and a centralized school board election website.

OPSBA also declared May 23 as Education Day in Ontario in advance of the June 7 provincial election. On that day, in many ridings across the province, a number of Ontario public school trustees hosted non-partisan Education Day forums, inviting

candidates from the major provincial parties to share their party's education platforms and answer voter questions.

### **Mental Health and Well-Being**

OPSBA continues in its role as founding member of the Ontario Coalition for Children and Youth Mental Health, which has positioned itself in an advisory capacity with the various Ministries to support and model collaborative efforts to positively impact children and youth mental health. The 2018 Summit on Children and Youth Mental Health, held in Toronto in April, attracted hundreds of attendees from school boards and industry partners. OPSBA and the Coalition's advocacy has contributed to significant mental health investments in the public education system for 2018-19 and beyond.

### **Equity and Inclusion**

OPSBA is providing ongoing input into the government's implementation of the Equity Action Plan, with equity and inclusion featured as a central focus at the 2018 Public Education Symposium. OPSBA staff and representative trustees advocated for and participated in a planning committee for trustee professional development in the area of human rights, equity and ethical leadership. These efforts resulted in the creation of an inaugural training session for trustees in the area of human rights, equity and inclusion and provided feedback for improvement.

### **Indigenous Education**

OPSBA's Indigenous Trustees' Council has engaged

in a range of initiatives to support the education of Indigenous students, and to ensure all students are educated about the history and culture of Indigenous peoples. Council members have successfully worked on revisions to the mandatory curriculum to include treaty education, the history and legacy of residential schools, the Sixties Scoop, the High Arctic relocation, the Powley Decision, and the impact of the *Indian Act*. Under the guidance of OPSBA, Module 20, *A Journey Towards Truth and Reconciliation*, was released at OPSBA's Public Education Symposium in January 2018.

### **Education Funding**

In 2017-18, OPSBA staff submitted a brief during the Ministry's consultations regarding the development of the 2018-19 GSN. OPSBA identified several areas of advocacy and concern that have been expressed to the Association through consultation with school boards and school authorities including the re-establishment of the local priority funding, special education, children and youth mental health, administrative funding (including executive compensation), professional development for educators, capital funding/school operating budgets, FSL supply and demand issues and technology and digital resources.

### **Northern, Rural and Remote Education**

The Northern Region Meeting and Program in Sault Ste. Marie in October focused on dialogue with Ministry of Education staff in areas of equity and inclusion, differentiated resourcing and programming and services to support Northern Ontario students and school boards. In addition,

# HIGHLIGHTS

OPSBA staff facilitated a special northern regional meeting of community, Ministry of Education staff and school boards to support the northern graduation strategy. These face-to-face opportunities were followed-up by a letter from OPSBA's Northern Regional Board of Directors members with recommendations.

## **French as a Second Language (FSL)**

OPSBA is leading the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (MAESD) Labour Market Partnership Project with all education partners, including the Ministry of Education, to determine recommendations to support increasing the supply pipeline with qualified and language proficient French language teachers. This is a one-year project that can be extended by application for MAESD approval up to three years.

## **Legislative Submissions**

OPSBA has engaged in a wide range of advocacy work, related to the provincial government's legislative and regulatory agenda, including submissions and letters regarding:

- Bill 148, *Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act*
- Bill 174, *Cannabis, Smoke-Free Ontario and Road Safety Statue Law*
- The Sector Engagement regarding Governance-Related Issues
- Draft Revisions to the Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline (PARG) and Community Planning and Partnerships Guideline (CPPG)
- The New Vision for Student Transportation in Ontario

- The Education Accessibility Standard Engagement
- Proposed Amendments to Education Act – Bill 31, *Plan for Care and Opportunity Act (Budget Measures)*

## **Labour Relations**

OPSBA remains fully engaged in its role as the bargaining agent for all English public school boards in the province. OPSBA's labour relations staff continue to work to systematize both the implementation of current collective agreements and prepare for the next round of bargaining.

## **Conferences and Seminars**

The 2017 Annual General Meeting, 2018 Public Education Symposium, 2018 Education Labour Relations and Human Resources Symposium, the 2018 Summit on Children and Youth Mental Health and Regional Meetings held throughout Ontario offered trustees and school board staff a dynamic opportunity for professional learning uniquely tailored to meet the needs of Ontario's education leaders.

## **Daily Services**

While we work to achieve concrete outcomes in our priority areas, we are also proud to offer a full range of valued ongoing services. These include: continuous updates on education in the news and support for local media relations, rapid turnaround analyses of funding announcements, daily and weekly reports from the provincial legislature that focus on school board concerns, timely response on labour relations matters, development of policy

positions on critical educational issues and highly topical professional development.

Progress on our multi-year strategic priorities is covered in detail on the following pages. Over the past year, our achievements have been steady and, as an Association, we take pride in the range of successful outcomes and the impact they have had. With a shared goal of building a better environment and greater opportunities for Ontario students, we have worked productively with our many partners in education and across the health and children's services sectors and throughout our communities.

Our shared goal has been building a better environment and greater opportunities for Ontario students. In the year ahead we will continue to focus on the value of publicly funded education and on strengthening the programs and services that make a real difference in the lives of Ontario children, youth and their families.



# THE WHOLE CHILD AND STUDENT WELL-BEING

## AREAS OF EMPHASIS

## ACTIONS TAKEN IN 2017-18

Active participation in processes to implement Ontario's renewed vision for education

Advocate for increased and sustained collaboration among school boards, student trustees, community agencies and municipal governments to ensure effective approaches in supporting children and youth

Advocate for collaboration among relevant provincial ministries in relation to children and youth mental health, in-risk students, and poverty reduction

Monitor the Service Transformation initiative of the Comprehensive Strategy to ensure effective expansion, integration and coordination of child and youth mental health and special needs supports and services through renewed school-community agency partnerships

Advocate for a strong, accessible, responsive and equitable level of children's mental health services in Ontario

- Contributing and influential member of every key Ministry advisory committee and sub-committee, shaping the content, context, structures and policies related to the implementation of the Ministry's renewed vision.
- Regular meetings with Ministry and Minister's staff to advocate and influence policy development and implementation of existing and new initiatives.
- Regular discussion with the Education Program Work Team to identify and act on opportunities for collaboration, advocacy and action, e.g. OPHEA, OSTA-AECO, Coalitions.
- Facilitated a northern meeting of community, the Minister of Education, Ministry staff and school boards to support the northern graduation strategy.
- Follow-up letter to the Minister from the northern regional directors regarding recommendations to support the northern graduation strategy.
- Continued role as founding member of the Ontario Coalition for Children and Youth Mental Health, which has positioned itself in an advisory capacity with the various Ministries to support and model collaborative efforts to positively impact children and youth mental health.
- Coordination and hosting of the 2018 Summit on Children and Youth Mental Health.
- Regular update reports on the progress on the Transformation Initiative are presented at the Ontario Coalition for Children and Youth Mental Health meetings.
- Ministry staff from 4 Ministries (EDU, MAESD, MCYS, MOHLTC) annually attend the June meeting of the Ontario Coalition of Children and Youth Mental Health to share updates and seek input.
- OPSBA and the Coalition's advocacy has contributed to significant GSN and EPO mental health investments for 2018-19 and beyond.

***OPSBA believes that improving student achievement and student engagement is directly linked to ensuring that we work collaboratively for the social, emotional, mental and physical well-being of all children and youth.***

## AREAS OF EMPHASIS

## ACTIONS TAKEN IN 2017-18

Continue leadership and advocacy for social justice, equity and inclusion for all students in our member school boards

- Ongoing input into the implementation of the Equity Action Plan.
- Equity and inclusion featured as a central focus at PES 2018.
- Advocating for and participation in a planning committee for trustee professional development in the area of human rights, equity and ethical leadership.
- Participation in an inaugural training session for trustees in the area of human rights, equity and inclusion and provided feedback for improvement.

Continue to advocate for equitable and diverse learning opportunities to support the varied needs of students

- Participation in professional development workshops to support the practices related to culturally relevant and responsive classrooms/ curriculum to support student success.
- Input into the revision of the leadership framework to include accountability for equity, human rights and inclusive classroom and school practices.
- A survey of school boards regarding exemplary practices for alternative education for sharing and adding to a repository on the OPSBA website

Advocate for sustained funding to support mental health leaders and the ASSIST program in years 4 to 10 of the Comprehensive Provincial Strategy on Mental Health and Addiction

- The 2018-19 GSN announcements once again included funding to support the School Mental Health ASSIST program that supports school boards and mental health leaders. This has been consistently advocated for by the Ontario Coalition for Children and Youth Mental Health and highlighted in OPSBA's GSN consultation document.

Continue provision of input and feedback to the Ministry of Education regarding the content, measurement and implementation of the Ministry's Well-Being Strategy

- Representation on the Provincial Advisory Committee on Student Well-being and the Ministry Initiatives sub-committees on Student Well-being and Staff Well-being. Significant gains have been made in developing the policy and approaches, especially as they relate to measurement. School Climate surveys will be updated based on input and resulting data has been confirmed as the sole property of school boards.

Monitor and advocate for 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

- Contributing member of the Provincial Advisory Group for the Integrated Delivery of Rehabilitation Services to influence the coordination and integration of supports and services.
- Regular meetings with Ministry staff to review funding shortfalls and advocate for additional funding in school boards related to special education programs, support and services.

# THE WHOLE CHILD AND STUDENT WELL-BEING

## AREAS OF EMPHASIS

## ACTIONS TAKEN IN 2017-18

Continue to advocate for effective Full-Day Kindergarten (FDK) and before-and-after-school programs

- Member of the Kindergarten Implementation Working Group to provide input into the kindergarten program and professional development supports for teacher-ECE teams.
- Member of the Minister's Early Years and Child Care Advisory Committee.

Advocate for creating positive school climates for learning and working

- Input on the revision of school climate surveys.
- Assisted in the design and delivery of the regional collaborative professionalism sessions to support PPM 159 (Collaborative Professionalism) and collaborative cultures in schools and school boards.
- Contributing member of the Provincial Advisory Committee on Student Well-Being and the Ministry Initiative Sub-committee focused on staff well-being
- Scheduled meetings of Central Labour Relations Committees (CLRC) for all union groups to problem solve and build relationships.
- Related keynote speaker at PES 2018 – a new education paradigm encouraging creative and entrepreneurial talents.

Monitor issues related to technology/social media that pose risks and provide opportunities for students

- Input provided into the OCT provincial advisory on bullying and the influence of social media.
- Continuing advocacy for opportunities that integrate technology within the classroom to support student success and global competencies.

Ensure strong school board participation in and contribution to the next steps in implementing the recommendations of the provincial government's Community Hubs Strategic Framework and Action Plan

- Meetings and consultation opportunities of the Ministry of Infrastructure's Community Hubs Capacity Development Reference Group.
- Communications with member boards regarding updates on the community hubs file.

Explore policy implications with other education stakeholders of the impact on students of pending federal legalization of marijuana in summer 2018

- Ministry of Education presentation at fall joint meeting of OPSBA work teams (Healthy Schools Branch).
- Fall 2017 letter sent to Ministry of Education regarding implementation implications.
- Topic included in spring 2018 letter to new Minister of Education.
- Outreach to member boards and AMO regarding retail locations.
- Participation in Education Stakeholder Roundtable meetings.
- Topic included at 2018 Public Education Symposium.
- Signatory to the Canadian School Boards Association Declaration Statement.
- Monitoring of legislative stages both provincially and federally and inclusion in regular Legislative Update e-newsletter.
- Participation in media interviews.



# NEW GENERATION EDUCATION

## AREAS OF EMPHASIS

## ACTIONS TAKEN IN 2017-18

Active participation in processes to implement Ontario's renewed vision for education, including identification and promotion of the teaching of 21st century competencies

- Contributing and influential member of every key Ministry advisory committee and sub-committee that is shaping the content, context, structures and policies related to the implementation of the Ministry's renewed vision.
- Participation in the consultation on global competencies and the measurement and assessment of such in student report cards for September 2018.
- Advocacy for and participation in the provincial consultation process on large scale testing and assessment including EQAO, which the Ministry facilitated and completed.
- Letter sent to the Minister of Education and the newly established Assessment Secretariat summarizing member board feedback, which included the OPSBA Discussion Paper: *EQAO and Large Scale Testing in Ontario*.
- Advocacy for the reestablishment of an EQAO Advisory Committee. The first meeting was in February 2018

Continue to advocate for a provincial vision for technology in learning and teaching

- OPSBA's document *A Vision for Learning and Teaching in a Digital Age* continues to be used as a resource for shaping the provincial vision for technology in learning and teaching in Ontario.
- Participation in all provincial advisory committees related to the renewed provincial vision and the how technology can be used in an integrated way to support students and staff.

Continue to advocate for teacher training and professional development that meets the needs of today's schools

- As part of the 2014 central agreement with the various education unions, professional development and support is now a key discussion driver integrated within the context of all discussions related to any existing and new ministry initiatives.

Advocate for technological programs and skilled trades as viable student options and for support for individuals working in the trades to become teachers

- Participate together with CUPE, OSSTF and the Crown to create apprenticeship opportunities for employees.
- Contributing member of the Highly Skilled Workforce sub-committee, which is focused on increasing student pathways, experiential learning, cooperative education experiences and career options.
- Participation in the consultation sessions on revising the Career Studies curriculum.
- Letter sent to the Minister summarizing feedback from the OPSBA work teams on the Career Studies and Civics courses.
- Advocacy for increases in guidance counsellors and associated professional development on current labour market information in both secondary and elementary schools, especially in the middle years.

***OPSBA believes that preparing students for success in the 21st century means that our educational programs and instructional practices must incorporate the skills, attitudes, values and knowledge that are needed for today's complex global context.***

## AREAS OF EMPHASIS

## ACTIONS TAKEN IN 2017-18

Share effective and creative practices that will help promote the expansion and sustainability of alternative programs that provide diverse pathways for students

- OPSBA has annually surveyed school boards regarding exemplary practices that can be replicated to create an on-going repository that school board staff can access as required. This year the survey is focused on alternative education programs.
- PES and AGM programs have a component of sharing effective practices whereby school boards can learn from each other.

Advocate for graduation diploma or equivalent that has value for students no matter what program pathway they choose, including directly into the world of work

- Contributing member of the Transformation Steering Committee that is reviewing all aspects of secondary programming leading to graduation and post-secondary pathways.
- OPSBA staff continue to raise this issue in regular meetings with Ministry and Minister's staff.

Promote review of traditional school structures and calendars to explore alternatives that support improved student achievement

- OPSBA is a contributing member of the Transformation Steering Committee, which will be reviewing all aspects of school that contribute to and improve student achievement and well-being.
- School boards with year-round calendar schools will be surveyed and any research associated with these schools will be shared with OPSBA member school boards.

Continue to focus on environmental sustainability practices in curriculum and capital planning

- OPSBA has surveyed school boards and posted exemplary practices linked to environmental sustainability on its website to support school board efforts. This is now integrated into the practices of all school boards.

Promote the value of social justice, equity and inclusion to advocate for differentiated resourcing, programming and services to support students, especially in northern school boards, rural and remote areas

- Fall Northern Region Meeting focused on dialogue with Ministry of Education staff in areas of equity and inclusion, differentiated resourcing and programming and services to support Northern Ontario students and school boards.
- OPSBA staff continue to support this work through attendance at the Northern regional meetings.

Advocate for a comprehensive government review of the current delivery of French Immersion

- OPSBA is leading the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (MAESD) Labour Market Partnership Project with all education partners, including the Ministry of Education, to determine recommendations to support increasing the supply pipeline with qualified and language proficient French language teachers. This is a one-year project that can be extended by application for MAESD approval up to three years.
- Regular meetings with Ministry and Minister's staff to discuss issues related to the delivery of FSL programs.
- Membership in the FSL Working Group that is focused on the effective delivery of FSL including increasing resources, supports and professional development opportunities.

# ADVOCATING FOR THE ROLE OF TRUSTEES AS MEMBERS OF THE BOARD AND BUILDING LEADERSHIP CAPACITY

## AREAS OF EMPHASIS

## ACTIONS TAKEN IN 2017-18

Continue promotion of the role of trustees as members of the board, including advocacy for clear government support for the role of trustees as a matter of public confidence in education

- Development of Local Government Week resources for trustees and school board communications staff.
- Participation in fall 2017 Governance review conducted by the Ministry of Education.
- Initial review of OPSBA's Code of Conduct Template.
- Advocacy letter sent to Nova Scotia Minister of Education in support of the Nova Scotia School Boards Association.
- Working with OESC in the development of resources for 2018 Municipal and School Board Election resources.
- Development of OPSBA resources for school board staff (Q&s, policy templates, amendment overview summary).
- Panel session at PES 2018
- Creation of OPSBA Education Day materials and resources for June 2018 Provincial Election.

Advocate for public education on the significant role and value of locally elected school board trustees

- OESC reviewed and enhanced its online PD module #6: *The Strategic Role and Multi-year Strategic Planning*.
- See above

Provide supports for first-term trustees and new chairs in the 2014-2018 term of office, including mentorship and active promotion of OPSBA resources developed specifically to support trustees in their multi-faceted role

- Part of initial orientation materials created in 2014 that included Good Governance and PD sessions

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

N/A in 2017-18

Build capacity in the area of community involvement including trustee role in board committees

N/A in 2017-18

***OPSBA believes that 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

## ACTIONS TAKEN IN 2017-18

Continue focus on increased visibility and scope for action to expand capacity of First Nation trustees and increased general understanding of issues affecting First Nations

- Increased general understanding enhanced by showing the first video of the new Trustee PD Module #20, and through speakers and presentations at PES and the AGM.
- Strategic planning for the Indigenous Trustees' Council included capacity building, and a discussion of roles.
- The Ministry has been asked to include training on this role in the new trustee programs, which will be run following the fall elections.

Continue to emphasize the role of First Nation trustees with regard to effective implementation of Education Services Agreements (ESAs)

- Indigenous Trustees' Council members are participating on the Minister's Working Group on Reciprocal Education Agreements, which will replace ESAs.

Further strengthen the role of Regional Vice-Presidents and Board of Directors members as OPSBA ambassadors to boards in their region.

- OPSBA Board of Directors orientation materials reviewed and updated.

Advocate for improvements in communication from Ministry to Trustees, including meaningful consultation and partnership with trustees in strategies that affect school boards

- Information summarized and provided in regular Legislative Updates, which are posted on the OPSBA Connects blog and on Twitter.

Pursue legal and regulatory protection of the role of trustees, e.g. with regard to broad impacts of conflict of interest litigation

N/A in 2017-18

Advocate for the inclusion of local school board governance in the government/civics curriculum (Grade 5 and Grade 10)

- Advocacy letter sent to the Ministry of Education regarding the Careers and Civics curriculum.

# ADVANCING RECONCILIATION: FIRST NATION, MÉTIS AND INUIT EDUCATION

## AREAS OF EMPHASIS

## ACTIONS TAKEN IN 2017-18

Continue focus on improving student achievement for First Nation, Métis and Inuit students and advocacy for an 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 for First Nation, Métis and Inuit children and their families, and the ongoing legacy that is the responsibility of all Canadians

- OPSBA has had representation at the Steering Committee and on writing teams.
- First new curriculum components were piloted this year. Training took place for teachers in December through January. Complete roll-out of the social studies curriculum expected in 2018-2019. Next steps will be the development of curriculum in other areas.

Advocate for provincial funding to cover curriculum resources and training to support the implementation of the revised Ontario curriculum

- Council members participated in the GSN consultations.

Commit to ensuring that the needs and aspirations of First Nation, Métis and Inuit children and their families are a prominent focus of OPSBA's other five priority areas

- No action. While many of the other priority areas would support Indigenous students and their families, there is little direct reference to this.

Respect the TRC Call to Action regarding retention and revitalization of Indigenous languages, advocacy for the teaching of Indigenous languages in Ontario schools by fluent Indigenous speakers

- Council has advocated for this consistently. There has been little to no progress made on this, largely due to regulatory restrictions on the hiring of teachers.

Continue to focus on increased visibility and scope for action to expand capacity of First Nation trustees and increased general understanding by all trustees of First Nation, Métis and Inuit issues

- It has been recommended to the Ministry that this form a part of their provincial training following the fall election.
- FNMI issues have been highlighted at OPSBA events (e.g. PES).
- Trustee professional development module has been completed and released.

Advocate for action that supports eliminating inequity at the Federal level in education funding for First Nation students

- The current Federal government has promised to fund its students at the same level as coterminous provincially funded schools. So far this has not occurred.

Explore the issues of representation of First Nation, Métis and Inuit students in urban environments

- Several boards are considering appointing Indigenous student trustees where Education Service Agreements do not exist. One urban board has requested the ability to appoint an Indigenous trustee to the Board, but this requires a change in the legislation.

*OPSBA believes that through education we can 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).*



# LABOUR RELATIONS

## AREAS OF EMPHASIS

## ACTIONS TAKEN IN 2017-18

Continue leadership as a Designated Bargaining Agent in implementation of the central agreements bargained under the School Boards Collective Bargaining Act

- Provide support for 2017-2019 implementation of extension agreements.
- Develop *Critical Path to Collective Bargaining 2019*

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

- Participate in central committees generated through Provincial Discussion Tables:
  - Future Role of the Principalship Committee / Recruitment and Retention Committee
  - Crisis Support for Principals and Vice-Principals

Ensure government initiatives (legislation/policy) are assessed from the labour relations/collective bargaining perspective on behalf of OPSBA member boards

- *Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act* (Bill 148) created amendments to the *Labour Relations Act* and *Employment Standards Act* which have continuing impact on collective agreements, including increased costs to school boards.
- Develop a comprehensive data set from all school boards to support the development of bargaining priorities.

Provide service and support to all OPSBA member boards in ongoing labour relations/collective bargaining services

- Hearing grievances and disputes through the central grievance/arbitration process.
- Maintain and improve the OESC/OPSBA Portal.
- Support to boards in understanding and implementing Bill 148 legislation.

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

- Training sessions to support collective bargaining at Public Education Symposium, January 2018 and Labour Relations Symposium, April 2018 to enhance and frame Trustees' understanding of their role in bargaining and implementation of collective agreements.
- Regular presentations at Labour Relations Council, Senior Negotiators and the Public Council of Ontario Directors of Education.
- Northern School Boards Senior Negotiators meeting (October 13, 2017) to gather specific feedback for bargaining preparation.

***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

## ACTIONS TAKEN IN 2017-18

Track board experience with contract implementation for forward planning

- Track grievances, disputes and arbitrations through the Grievance Tracking System (GTS) in coordination with the Council of Trustees' Associations and the Ministry of Education.
- Establish framework to compile, post and update frequently asked questions from school boards regarding contract implementation.

Continue development of the Provincial Portal and strategies to enhance its use

- Committee comprising OPSBA, OCSTA, AFOCSC, ACEPO and OESC has been meeting regularly to enhance the Portal for member school boards.

Maintain relationships with key education partners

- Regular participation in: Technical Advisory Group (TAG), Labour Relations Council (LRC), Council of Trustees' Association (CTA).
- Meet regularly with the Labour Relations Council (LRC) to facilitate system-wide information exchange.
- Scheduled meetings of Central Labour Relations Committees (CLRC) for all union groups to problem solve and build relationships.
- Ongoing participation in committees and meetings with the Crown and stakeholder groups to bring the OPSBA voice to the discussion. To date, 15 committees generated through collective bargaining have completed their work.
- Provide annual professional development to CEN, NAEN, SOQP and OPSBA Board of Directors.

Ensure that OPSBA maintains its presence as an independent and separately distinct party during labour negotiations

N/A in 2017-18.

Monitor 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 and ensure that the work is provided to the Education Program Work Team for consideration

- "Workplace Violence in School Boards, A Guide to the Law" was released on March 9, 2018.
- Communication of this material will be disseminated in spring 2018 and training will be provided during the 2018-19 school year.
- A common online reporting tool for staff to report violent incidents is being developed.

# EDUCATION FUNDING

## AREAS OF EMPHASIS

## ACTIONS TAKEN IN 2017-18

Advocate for a full and complete review of the funding model grant categories to ensure that they support the current local needs of all school boards

- Two main submissions:
  - 2018-19 Grants for Student Needs Submission to the Ministry of Education
  - Submission to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs regarding 2018-19 Provincial Budget

Advocate for resolution of pressing problems in funding such as transportation, Special Education, Full-Day Kindergarten, and child poverty

- See 2018-19 GSN and provincial budget submissions.
- Participation in meetings of the Student Transportation Working Group.

Advocate for expanded supports and services to support children and youth mental health and well-being

- See 2018-19 GSN and provincial budget submissions.

Advocate for funding to provide core curriculum subjects to rural and remote schools with a lack of critical student population

- See 2018-19 GSN and provincial budget submissions.

Advocate for adequate funding to support the operation of rural and remote schools and active participation in the rural education strategy consultation

- See 2018-19 GSN and Provincial Budget submissions.
- Submission regarding revised amendments to the Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline and Community Planning and Partnerships Guideline.
- Submission regarding Student Transportation.

Advocate for the reintroduction of local priority spending

- See 2018-19 GSN and provincial budget submissions.

Continue to advocate for full funding by the Ministry of any new initiative

- See 2018-19 GSN and provincial budget submissions.

Support for the impact on boards of ongoing funding formula changes

- See 2018-19 GSN and provincial budget submissions.

***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

## ACTIONS TAKEN IN 2017-18

Promote full collaboration among the four school board systems and enhancement of partnership among boards

- N/A in 2017-18

Advocate for infrastructure funding including flexibility in funding approaches, transparency in the approval process for capital projects and alignment between government priorities and capital funding

- See 2018-19 GSN and provincial budget submissions.

Advocate for the Ministry to review the current Education Development Charges (EDC) regulation to allow boards more flexibility in terms of capital funding

- Advocacy letter regarding EDC regulation change.

Ensure strong school board participation in and contribution to the next steps in implementing the recommendations of the provincial government's Community Hubs Strategic Framework and Action Plan

- Meetings and consultation opportunities of the Ministry of Infrastructure's Community Hubs Capacity Development Reference Group.
- Communications with member boards regarding updates on the community hubs file.

Advocate for the importance of Community Schools to community sustainability

- N/A in 2017-18

Advocate for adequate funding to allow boards to meet AODA compliance deadlines and maintain ongoing compliance in future years

- Durham DSB Trustee and OPSBA Central East Vice-President appointed to Education Standards Development Committee.
- OPSBA submissions to the Education Accessibility Standard Engagement and the Ontario Human Rights Commission regarding accessibility standard and guideline updates.

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

OPSBA's professional development services support trustees in their role of ensuring Ontario's education system continues to consistently produce excellent results in student achievement and well-being. As leaders in school board governance, trustees are committed to initiating the important conversations that improve life chances for students and to engaging in vital professional and personal learning that hones leadership skills.

Our professional development offerings enhance skills, build capacity and provide the kind of information and analysis that supports informed decision-making. This is accomplished through symposia and conferences, single-day events, regional meetings, and other learning opportunities such as the comprehensive suite of online Trustee Professional Development Modules.

The 20 professional learning modules for trustees and school boards reflect the needs articulated by Ontario trustees for greater clarity on their roles as governors of school boards. In 2017-18, OPSBA worked with the Ontario Education Services Corporation to develop the 20th module, entitled *"A Journey towards Truth and Reconciliation: First Nations, Métis and Inuit Trustee Professional Learning Module."* The two-part video module focuses on the true history of Indigenous peoples in Canada and the ways in which school boards, and schools, are moving towards reconciliation. The videos and resources provide trustees and school boards with context and an understanding and appreciation for Indigenous histories and with insight and support for building school communities where the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Ontarians is founded on mutual respect.

The full Trustee Professional Development Program, including the additional 19 modules, is available at [www.ontarioschooltrustees.org](http://www.ontarioschooltrustees.org). The website provides easy access to the learning modules, accompanying videos and resources along with search, read and print functions in English and in French.





# CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS

OPSBA conferences and seminars offer trustees and school board staff a dynamic opportunity for professional learning that is uniquely tailored to the needs of Ontario's education leaders.

## **2017 OPSBA Annual General Meeting (AGM)**

At OPSBA's AGM, members determine priorities and directions for the coming year, elect officers and plan for the future. The event also offers a comprehensive professional development program for trustees.

In 2017, the 29th AGM was held at Blue Mountain from June 8 to 10. Laurie French, Trustee with the Limestone DSB, was acclaimed for a second term as President for the 2017-18 term, while Jerry Chadwick, Trustee with the Toronto District School Board, was acclaimed 1st Vice-President. Cathy Abraham, Trustee with the Kawartha Pine Ridge DSB, was acclaimed 2nd Vice-President. Elaine Johnston was acclaimed as the Indigenous Trustee representative to the OPSBA Board of Directors.

Keynote speakers included Ramona Pringle, an interactive producer and expert on digital media culture, Ontario Ombudsman Paul Dubé, Sandra Herbst, CEO of connect2learning, and author Joseph Boyden. The 2017 program also featured a range of workshops that focused on key issues in Ontario's education sector.

## **Regional Meetings**

OPSBA's five regional councils – Northern, Western, Eastern, Central East, and Central West – share information related to issues and matters affecting their school boards with the Executive Council and Board of Directors. In the 2017-18 school year, the

member boards of each region held meetings in October and November. Meetings were also held in all regions (except the Northern) in April 2018, in addition to the regional meetings held at OPSBA's Public Education Symposium and the Annual General Meeting.

## **2017 Northern Regional Meeting and Program**

The annual (except during election years) OPSBA Northern Regional Meeting and Program offers trustees from our Northern Region a dynamic professional development and networking opportunity. This year's conference was held on October 13 and 14 in Sault Ste. Marie. At this event, a meeting of community, Ministry of Education staff and school boards was organized to support the northern graduation strategy. The Northern Regional Meeting also featured a keynote from then Minister of Education Mitzie Hunter, a panel on northern economic, business and workforce realities and a regional trustee business meeting.

## **2018 Public Education Symposium (PES)**

More than 250 trustees, student trustees, Directors of Education and senior school board administrators participated in PES 2018, jointly hosted with the Association des conseil scolaires des écoles publiques de l'Ontario (ACÉPO) from January 25 to 27. This leading professional development symposium, specifically designed for school board leaders, offered dynamic sessions on topics directly affecting the role of trustee and the broader environment within which school boards operate. Keynote speakers included Professor Yong Zhao of the University of Oregon and University of Kansas, Kevin Lamoureux of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, Dr. Hayley Hamilton

of the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health and Minister of Education Indira Naidoo-Harris.

A number of sessions informed new and returning trustees on many of the key issues currently affecting Ontario's public education system:

- Equity and Human Rights
- 15 Minute Sessions from the Renfrew County, Kawartha Pine Ridge, Trillium Lakelands and Halton District School Boards
- Indigenous Education
- Collective Bargaining
- Freedom of Information policies and legislation
- The 2018 Provincial and Municipal and School Board Elections
- Student transportation

### **2018 Education Labour Relations and Human Resources Symposium**

OPSBA's annual Education Labour Relations and Human Resources Symposium is 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. The event, held on April 26 and 27, gave school board decision makers the opportunity to share ideas and strategies, learn about next and best practices, and explore practical solutions to the challenges faced by Ontario school boards. Presentations covered a wide range of relevant topics, including:

- Best approaches to conducting workplace investigations
- Addressing use of medical marijuana in the workplace

- Impacts of Bill 148 on school boards
- Creating positive teaching and learning cultures for all employees
- Navigating workplace violence issues
- Best practices used to implement early return to work from sick leave
- Understanding the Crown's role in the two-tier bargaining process
- Optimal methods to prevent, detect and address IT security threats
- Methods of managing sick leave costs and building of relationships
- Effective methods to use when completing a workforce census
- Expanded understanding of provincial benefit plans
- Challenges and duties of boards to address 'invisible disabilities'
- Sharing of best HR and LR practices
- Proactive strategies to navigate changes in the workplace
- Development of organizational health and wellness

### **2018 Summit on Children and Youth Mental Health**

OPSBA has continued to be a leader in the Coalition for Children and Youth Mental Health, which held its fifth Summit in Toronto in April 2018. The theme of the 2018 Summit was *Beyond Collaboration: Towards Integrated Systems for Supporting Child and Youth Mental Health*. Speakers offered evidence-informed practices, programs and resources that have been shown to work and can make a real difference in the lives of children, youth and their families. Keynotes included Mark Henick, a policy influencer in the mental health system, and Dr. Mark Greenberg, the Edna Peterson Bennett Endowed Chair in Prevention Research and Professor of Human Development and Psychology at Penn State.

# INDIGENOUS TRUSTEES' COUNCIL

OPSBA's Indigenous Trustees' Council (ITC) is composed of First Nations trustees appointed to school boards, and other Indigenous trustees elected through the regular electoral process.

Members of the Council contribute to the work of OPSBA's Education Program and Policy Development Work Teams. The Chair of the Council sits on the OPSBA Board of Directors. Members of the ITC sit on the Ministry of Education's TRC Curriculum Steering Committee, as well as the Minister of Education's Advisory Committees, and relevant Working Groups. A First Nation trustee representative co-chairs the Work Team of the Minister's Advisory Council on Indigenous Education.

The Council has engaged in a range of initiatives to support the education of Indigenous students, and to ensure all students are educated about the history and culture of Indigenous peoples. Council members have successfully worked on revisions to the mandatory curriculum to include treaty education, the history and legacy of residential schools, the Sixties Scoop, the High Arctic relocation, the Powley Decision, and the impact of the *Indian Act*. Phase 1 of the revised curriculum was piloted in 2017-18, and the curriculum documents were released in April for full implementation in 2018-2019. Phase 2 will be in the writing process in the summer of 2018 (for pilot in 2019-2020), and a third phase is being considered. The Minister's Working Group on Education Service and Reverse Service Agreements provided advice to the Minister on changes to the *Education Act*, which were incorporated in the omnibus budget bill, and will provide further advice

on the Regulations that will accompany the changed legislation. On April 26, 2018, OPSBA provided a response to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs regarding these amendments.

Under the guidance of OPSBA, Module 20 of the Trustee Professional Development program was completed, and the Module (*A Journey Towards Truth and Reconciliation*) was released at OPSBA's Public Education Symposium in January 2018.

Members of the ITC provided input during the consultations leading up to the 2018-2019 provincial budget and Grants for Student Needs. Further enveloping of funding for school boards' Action Plans was achieved.

The Ministry is set to release its Third Progress Report prior to the end of the 2017-18 school year, and OPSBA's Education Program Work Team has ensured that OPSBA member boards' Indigenous Education Exemplary Practices are posted on the OPSBA website.





# LABOUR RELATIONS

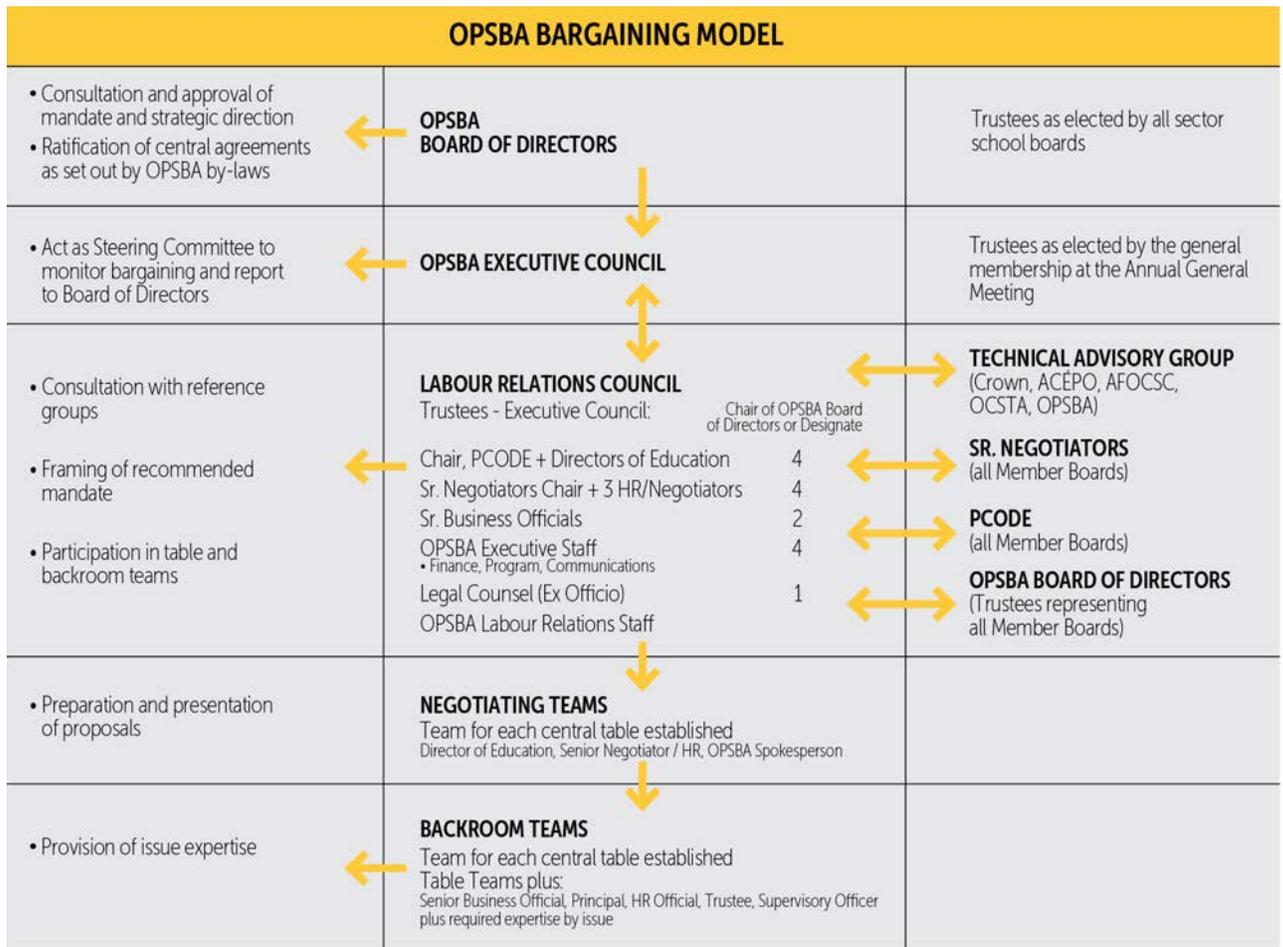
## School Boards Collective Bargaining Act (SBCBA)

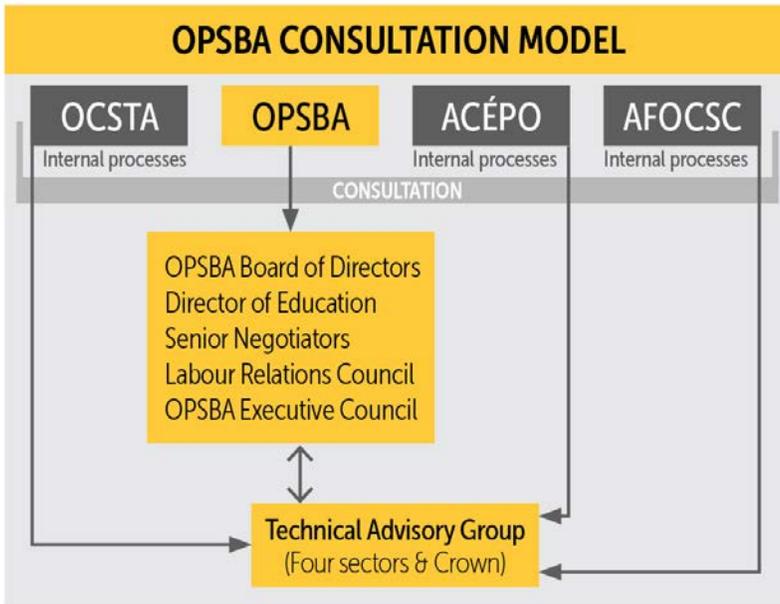
Amendments to the SBCBA received Royal Assent March 27, 2017, which allowed for the implementation of extension agreements to occur with ETFO Teachers and Education Workers, OSSTF Teachers and Education Workers, Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), Education Workers Alliance of Ontario (EWAO) and Ontario Council of Educational Workers (OCEW). Extension agreements are in effect September 1, 2017, to August 31, 2019.

OPSBA member school boards also granted authority to OPSBA to represent English Public School Board Principals in the development of provincial terms and conditions of employment for Principals and Vice-Principals for which OPSBA negotiated a 2014-2018 agreement and an extension agreement covering 2018-2020.

## Central Bargaining

The OPSBA Board of Directors established collective bargaining and consultation models, designed to create mandates and local mechanisms to ensure all voices are heard.





**Committees and Workgroups Arising from Collective Bargaining (on following pages)**

Coming out of the central collective agreement bargaining, committees were established among the Crown, the unions/associations and the employer bargaining agent. OPSBA either stands alone or is the designated bargaining agent as a member of a Council of Trustee Associations (CTA). It is important to note that in all cases OPSBA is represented on these teams by local School Boards.



# LABOUR RELATIONS

## FOLLOWING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2014-2017 COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS AND 2017-2019 EXTENSION AGREEMENTS, THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES HAVE COMPLETED THEIR WORK:

### **ETFO FDK Class Size Committee: Memo to Directors released July 5, 2016**

- Recommendations provided to the Minister of Education resulted in the Crown providing school boards with a commitment to make FDK class size regulatory changes and funding for school boards to cap FDK class sizes at 30 in 2017-18 and at 29 in 2018-2019, with a 10% flex factor to be applied in certain circumstances. Additionally, where a school has classes exceeding 30 students and under 16 in a single track, ECEs shall be assigned to both classes.

### **ETFO Class Size Committee, Grades 4-8: Report released**

- Recommendations provided to the Minister of Education resulted in the Crown providing school boards with a commitment to make grade 4-8 average class size regulatory changes and funding to support school boards in achieving the average of 24.5.

### **ETFO Hiring Practice (Regulation 274): Report released**

- A final report was shared in November 2016, which included agreed to provisions on several items related to Reg. 274 which includes, for example, a debrief of unsuccessful candidates to the LTO list, negotiating a capped roster, granting an interview for the LTO list to a relocating teacher, etc.

### **ETFO Special Education: Report released**

- Submitted to the Ministry of Education were several recommendations that included IEP development and reporting; PA Days, educator training; funding and professional support personnel. The Ministry released a memo on July 19, 2016, regarding the recommendations and is committed to completing a deeper review.

### **Consolidated (CUPE, EWAO, OCEW) ECE Committee: Report submitted to the Minister of Education**

- In February 2017 recommendations related to ECE class size, student needs, staffing levels and professional collaboration and development were submitted to the Minister of Education.

### **ETFO ECE Committee: Report submitted to the Minister of Education**

- Recommendations related to class size, student needs, staffing levels and professional collaboration and development have been developed.

### **OSSTF ECE Committee: Report submitted to the Minister of Education**

- Recommendations related to class size, student needs, staffing levels and professional collaboration and development have been developed.

### **Ministry Initiatives Committee**

- Committee developed during the recent round of collective bargaining to discuss the timing, pace, volume, coordination and coherence of Ministry initiatives.

### **CUPE Education Workers Diverse and Inclusive Workforce Committee**

- This committee has completed its work and the report related to best practices that support diverse and inclusive workforces was distributed to school boards in March 2018.

### **OSSTF Education Worker Apprenticeship**

- The committee has completed its work and approval of applications have been processed in support of funding provided for in the 2017-2019 Extension Agreement.

**FOLLOWING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2014-2017 COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS AND 2017-2019 EXTENSION AGREEMENTS, THE WORK OF THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES IS ONGOING:**

**Provincial Health and Safety Work Group**

- On March 9, 2018 the Ministry of Labour posted *Workplace Violence in School Boards: A Guide to the Law*. Training on this document will be provided during the 2018-2019 school year.
- Regular meetings continue to be scheduled to discuss other items of concern outlined in the original terms of reference.

**Regulated Support Staff Compensation Sub-Committee**

- This consolidated sub-committee (EWAO and OSSTF Education Workers) continues to meet regularly to discuss items of concern.

**OSSTF Hiring Practices (Regulation 274)**

- In abeyance.

**Long Term Disability (LTD) Plan Working Groups**

- This consolidated Work Group includes P/VP, ETFO and OSSTF Education Workers, CUPE, EWAO, and OCEW. Information has been collected and discussion continues.

**Benefits Trust Transition Committees attended by OPSBA and the Crown exist for each bargaining table**

- Transition of benefits to Employee Life Health Trusts (ELHTs) continues for various employee groups.

**OSSTF Adult Day School Teachers**

- The joint committee working to establish how the funding can be applied to Adult Day School Teacher wage parity continues to meet. Changes to hourly rates for adult day school teachers will be implemented September 1, 2018, with retroactivity to September 1, 2017, as outlined in the extension agreement.

**CUPE Apprenticeship/Professional Development**

- The application process related to system investment funds for on-the-job training for employees as apprentices and/or skills upgrading opportunities was released to boards. Application review and approval will occur in spring 2018 for use in 2018-2019.

**Committees and Workgroups Arising from Provincial Discussions**

**VICE-PRINCIPAL COMMITTEES ARISING FROM PROVINCIAL DISCUSSIONS:**

**Crisis Support for Principals and Vice-Principals Working Group. Report released March 26, 2018**

- Best practices related to crisis intervention and support was developed as a result of information collected from school boards and gathered from Principals and Vice-Principals.

**Future Role of the Principalship**

- This is a standing committee that also encompasses recruitment and retention strategies.
- Determining administrator supports continues to be the focus of this committee.

**Long Term Disability (LTD) Plan Working Group**

- This consolidated Work Group includes P/VP, ETFO and OSSTF Education Workers, CUPE, EWAO, and OCEW. Information has been collected and discussion continues.

**Benefits Transition Committee**

- This committee is working towards the transition of benefits to Employee Life Health Trusts (ELHTs).

# LABOUR RELATIONS

## **Central Labour Relations Committee (CUPE, ETFO, EWAO, OCEW, OSSTF)**

The purpose of this committee is to facilitate communication between rounds of bargaining on issues of joint interest.

## **Central Dispute Resolution Committee (CUPE, ETFO, EWAO, OCEW, OSSTF)**

All collective agreements established a process by which disputes over the meaning of collective agreement language are addressed in an orderly fashion and removed from the workplace through either informal or formal resolution. Central parties may file disputes as a grievance and engage in settlement discussions and it is the responsibility of each party to inform their respective local parties of each step in the dispute resolution process, and to direct them accordingly.

## **Provincial Labour Relations**

In the role of designated employer bargaining agent, to systematize both the implementation of the current collective agreements and prepare for the next round of bargaining, OPSBA delivers professional learning throughout the year and at the annual Education Labour Relations and Human Resources Symposium, and has established or maintains participation in:

### **> Council of Trustees' Associations (CTA)**

The CTA involves Labour Relations Teams from ACEPO, AFOCSC, OCSTA and OPSBA. Consultation among the parties occurs regularly to ensure consistency of practice related to collective agreement implementation across all four educational sectors.

### **> Labour Reference Groups**

Expert groups have been utilized from across the teaching and bargaining portfolios to offer advice to labour relations. These teams meet on an ad hoc basis.

### **> Labour Relations Council (LRC)**

The LRC is a cross section of OPSBA Executive Council, Directors of Education, HR Officials and Senior Business Officials and OPSBA staff. The LRC meets regularly to give advice and guidance to the bargaining process.

### **> Labour Relations Steering Committee**

The Executive Council of the OPSBA Board of Directors serves as the steering committee to consider and vet labour relations strategies.

### **> Principal and Vice-Principal Associations**

The Ontario Principals' Council is composed of principals and vice-principals in public school boards across Ontario and information is obtained/shared as needed.

### **> Public Council of Ontario Directors of Education (PCODE)**

PCODE comprises Directors of Education in public school boards across Ontario. Consultation occurs through the Labour Relations Council by Director Members and updates provided directly to PCODE by OPSBA staff.

### **> Senior Negotiators**

The labour negotiators from the 31 OPSBA member boards meet four times annually to share issues, ideas and solutions from their

respective education settings as well as through teleconferences to deal with specific issues.

### **Technical Advisory Group (TAG)**

TAG is composed of Labour Relations Teams from the Crown, ACEPO, AFOCSC, OCSTA and OPSBA. The purpose is to ensure communication and understanding of implementation issues across provincial educational sectors.

### **National and International Labour Relations**

#### **> Canadian Education Negotiators (CEN)**

CEN is a team with representation from the Provinces and Territories who are bargaining on behalf of the employer in education settings. Membership comes from the School Board Associations and/or Governments as applicable.

OPSBA participates in these meetings to understand issues facing Provincial jurisdictions including collective bargaining issues, changes in legislative frameworks. These meetings take place twice annually and have provided valuable insights into other centralized bargaining models, particularly those that include the Crown.

#### **> North American Association of Educational Negotiators (NAEN)**

NAEN is an annual conference that brings together educational negotiators and human resources professionals from across Canada and the United States to share challenges and solutions from the sector.



# FINANCE ISSUES

OPSBA was proactive in addressing the education funding issues identified by member boards during successive dialogues with the Minister of Education and Ministry staff.

In 2017-18, OPSBA staff submitted a brief during the Ministry's consultations regarding the development of the 2018-19 Grants for Student Needs (GSN). A modified version of the brief was later shared with the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs during the provincial 2018 Pre-Budget Consultations. OPSBA identified several areas of advocacy and concern that have been expressed to the Association through consultation with school boards and school authorities including the re-establishment of the local priority funding, special education, children and youth mental health, administrative funding (including executive compensation), professional development for educators, capital funding/school operating budgets, FSL supply and demand issues and technology and digital resources.

## **Finance Database and Website (EdFinet)**

A continuing focus in OPSBA's advocacy work is increasing public awareness on education finance issues. OPSBA's Education Finance Network - EdFinet - is a valuable resource in supporting the association's advocacy strategies in this area. These resources provide a solid foundation for the association's positions and messages. EdFinet ensures that we have accurate, factual and current information that positions us to speak with authority on emerging funding issues. Our finance consultants respond to user needs through ongoing database enhancements and provide timely analysis of government finance announcements. Access to these resources are available to OPSBA member boards on a request basis.

# TOTAL 2018-2019 GSN - \$24.53 BILLION

## HIGHLIGHTS

The total funding for public education in Ontario is increasing from \$23.91 billion in 2017-18 to \$24.53 billion in 2018-19. Per-pupil funding is projected to increase in 2018-19 to \$12,300.

### **New key investments for 2018-19 include:**

- \$72 million in special education to address the current waitlist for assessments and increase services through multi-disciplinary teams and other staffing resources
- \$30 million increase to the Special Incidence Portion allocation, to support students' extraordinarily high needs.
- \$46 million to support more than 450 additional teachers who will help Grade 7 and 8 students engage in career and pathways planning.
- \$10 million for demographic and growth adjustments through the Diversity in English Language Learners (formerly Pupils in Canada) component within the Language Grant
- \$24.5 million, growing to \$49.5 million in 2019-20, to fund approximately 180 mental health workers in 2018-19 and 400 in 2019-20.

### **Additional announcements included:**

- Continued implementation of 2017-19 central labour agreements including salary benchmark increase, community use of schools, class size investments, Employee Life and Health Trusts transformation and local priorities funding
- Program Leadership Allocation – leads in areas of mental health, Technology Enabled Learning and Teaching, Indigenous Education, student success, school effectiveness and early years
- Trustee Honoraria – including establishment of working group and a \$400 increase to base honorarium
- Expansion of new teacher induction program
- Indigenous Education – enveloping of board action plan funding
- Literacy and math outside the school day allocation
- 4% increase in student transportation funding
- 2% increase in school operations funding regarding utilities, insurance and other costs
- Continuation of rural and northern education fund
- Phase-in of 2011 census and national household survey data
- School bus safety training
- Cash management strategy

### **Capital**

- Continuation of:
  - School condition improvement with investment of \$1.4 billion
  - Greenhouse gas reduction fund with investment of \$100 million
  - School renewal allocation
  - Capital planning capacity funding
  - Joint use funding supports
- Early years capital

# OPSBA WORK TEAMS

Members of OPSBA's Work Teams play a meaningful role in advancing the Association's identified priorities through the initiatives they accomplish. They focus on OPSBA's identified priorities and take on tasks that are aimed at action on the Association's priorities.

The Work Teams had several guest speakers attend meetings throughout the year. These included:

- Patrick Case, Assistant Deputy Minister, Education Equity Secretariat
- Sharon Weller, Safe and Healthy Schools, Ministry of Education
- Tiffany Blair, Minister of Education's Office
- Margaret Correia, Leadership Collaboration and Governance Branch, Ministry of Education
- Frédérique Dombrowski, Student Vote/Civix

## Policy Development Work Team

Members of the Policy Development Work Team (PDWT) dedicated their work this past year to support legislative and education initiatives that aligned with the Association's priorities.

The PDWT was actively involved in the Association's legislative and regulatory submissions, meeting several times in person as well as consulting over teleconference, Adobe Connect and through many email discussions.

Topics covered included: student transportation, the Ministry of Education's Equity Plan of Action, school board governance, concussion safety, the Pupil Accommodation Review and Community Planning and Partnerships Guidelines, cannabis

legalization, Career Studies/Civics and Citizenship, anti-racism data standards, education funding and Education Development Charges.

A good portion of advocacy focused on the role of trustees and resources for elections; both at the provincial and municipal level. PDWT members were involved in the revision of Local Government Week materials, the creation of a student transportation survey, new and updated supports for OPSBA's Education Day, the development of a template for board resources and reviewing of candidate guides for the municipal and school board elections.

Another significant project was the response to the government's consultation on governance-related issues. These topics included: Integrity Commissioner and Code of Conduct; Trustee Honoraria; Electronic Participation in Board and Committee meetings; Student Trustee terms of office and election process; and Broadening the Director of Education qualifications.

## Submissions:

Throughout the year, the PDWT provided input on the following matters:

- April 26, 2018 - OPSBA Response to Proposed Amendments to the Education Act: Bill 31, Schedule 9
- April 4, 2018 - OPSBA Response to the New Vision for Student Transportation in Ontario discussion paper
- March 23, 2018 - OPSBA Feedback on Draft Revisions to Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline (PARG) and Community Planning and Partnerships Guideline (CPPG)
- February 9, 2018 - OPSBA Response to Rowan's

Law (Concussion Safety) Regulatory Posting and OPSBA Submission (February 27, 2018) to the Standing Committee on Social Policy regarding Bill 193, Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety)

- January 31, 2018 - OPSBA Letter to Nova Scotia Education Minister regarding Nova Scotia school boards
- January 16, 2018 - OPSBA 2018 Pre-Budget Consultation Submission
- December 5, 2017 - OPSBA Brief to the Ministry of Education Regarding 2018-19 Education Funding Engagement Guide / GSN
- November 30, 2017 - OPSBA's Submission regarding Bill 174, Cannabis, Smoke-Free Ontario and Road Safety Statute Law Amendment Act, 2017
- November 24, 2017 - OPSBA Submission to the Sector Engagement regarding Governance-Related Issues
- November 8, 2017 - Letter to Minister Mitzie Hunter regarding a request for review of Education Development Charges regulation
- September 19, 2017 - Letter to Ministry of Education staff regarding the legalization of cannabis
- July 20, 2017 - OPSBA Submission regarding Bill 148, Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act
- July 14, 2017 - OPSBA Submission regarding Education Accessibility Standard Engagement
- June 29, 2017 - Joint School Board Submission to the Ontario Human Rights Commission regarding an update of the Guidelines on Accessible Education
- June 16, 2017 - OPSBA Submission regarding the Rural and Remote Education Review and Discussion Paper

### **Areas for ongoing consideration**

Next year the work team will continue to be engaged in the following issues:

- Children and Youth Mental Health
- Ontario's Equity Action Plan
- Cannabis Legalization
- 2018 Municipal and School Board Elections
- School Board Governance
- Student Transportation
- Community Hubs

### **Members**

Corrie McBain, York Region, Central East  
Shelley Laskin, Toronto, Central East  
Jeanne Gray, Halton, Central West  
David Green, Peel, Central West - *Vice-Chair*  
Keith Penny, Ottawa-Carleton, Eastern  
John McAllister, Upper Canada, Eastern  
Jennifer Sarlo, Algoma, Northern (E)  
Mark Mannisto, Superior Greenstone, Northern (W)  
Cheryl Lovell, Greater Essex County, Western - *Chair*  
Arlene Morell, Thames Valley, Western  
Howard Archibald, Ontario Northeast, First Nations

### **Executive Council Liaison**

Cathy Abraham, Second Vice-President

### **Alternates**

Donna Edwards, Durham, Central East  
Kathy McDonald, Peel, Central West  
Mary Hall, Hastings and Prince Edward, Eastern  
Harold Fry, Near North, Northern (E)  
Cecile Marcino, Keewatin Patricia, Northern (W)  
Colleen Schenk, Avon Maitland, Western  
Michael Brant, Hastings and Prince Edward, First Nations

# OPSBA WORK TEAMS

## **Education Program Work Team**

OPSBA's multi-year priorities related to The Whole Child and Student Well-Being, New Generation Education and Advancing Reconciliation: First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education continued to be a focus for the work of the Education Program Work Team (EPWT) throughout 2017-2018.

## **The Whole Child and Student Well-Being – Cannabis Legalization**

EPWT hosted staff from the Ministry's Safe and Healthy Schools Branch in a consultation and information session in September 2017. Both EPWT and PDWT contributed to OPSBA's submission regarding Bill 174, *Smoke-Free Ontario and Road Safety Statute Law Amendment Act, 2017*.

## **The Whole Child and Student Well-Being – Concussion Safety**

EPWT monitored the introduction and passing of *Rowan's Law (Concussion Safety), 2017*, and provided comments for a response to the Standing Committee on Social Policy regarding the legislation in February 2018.

## **The Whole Child and Student Well-Being – The Ontario Coalition for Children and Youth Mental Health**

OPSBA was the founding member of the Coalition and through the work team provides ongoing advice for OPSBA's role in the Coalition. The Coalition's profile continues to grow and its ability to provide timely expert advice on issues is well-recognized. The Coalition's meetings continue to promote cross-sectoral and inter-ministerial collaboration and recognition of shared goals on behalf of children and youth mental health.

The Coalition added members this year to incorporate the voice and advocacy of students at the postsecondary level from the Centre for Innovation in Campus Mental Health, the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance and the College Student Alliance.

The fifth Summit on Children and Youth Mental Health took place on April 12 and 13, 2018, in Toronto. Speakers and exhibitors shared evidence-based strategies and collaborative approaches that participants can review and implement within the context of their own communities and school board context.

## **The Whole Child and Student Well-Being and New Generation Education – First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education**

EPWT continues to advocate for the implementation of Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Committee's Final Report with regards to curriculum. An Indigenous trustee representative co-chairs the Work Team of the Minister's Advisory Council on Indigenous Education. More information related to this topic is available on page 26.

## **The Whole Child and Student Well-Being and New Generation Education – Ontario's Equity Action Plan**

The EPWT, in partnership with the PDWT, hosted Patrick Case, ADM, Education Equity Secretariat, in September 2017, for a discussion on the Secretariat's work and an overview of its Action Plan.

## **The Whole Child and Student Well-Being and New Generation Education – French as a Second Language (FSL)**

In March 2016, OPSBA, through the EPWT, submitted a proposal to the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (MAESD), to establish a three-year Ontario Labour Market Partnership project to study labour market needs for FSL instruction in the province. This project is entitled Meeting Labour Market Needs for French as a Second Language Instruction in Ontario. Following MAESD approval, OPSBA proceeded in 2017-18 with Phase 1 of the three-year project – *Understanding Perspectives Regarding the French as a Second Language Teacher Labour Market Issue*.

FSL was also identified both in OPSBA's Grants for Student Needs submission and in discussion with the Ministry as an area that requires a provincial focus to address issues impacting school boards' ability to deliver high-quality and sustainable programming and instruction.

#### **The Whole Child and Student Well-Being and New Generation Education – Transformation Steering Committee**

The work team continues to monitor and provide feedback to the Transformation Steering Committee, through OPSBA staff support, including comments on curriculum renewal, the education assessment review, student report card review, equity and inclusion and enhanced parent and community outreach and engagement for the transformation process.

#### **New Generation Education – EQAO and Assessment Review**

The OPSBA Discussion Paper EQAO and *Large Scale Testing in Ontario* continues to be referenced at Ministry of Education working tables and

committees. The work team welcomed Norah Marsh, EQAO CEO, to the November 2017 meeting for a discussion on the future of the Office. Dr. Michael Fullan, Education Advisor, and Dr. Erica van Roosmalen of the Education Assessment Secretariat were also welcomed to the November meeting to discuss the government's assessment review process. A summary letter, including OPSBA's EQAO position paper, was sent to the Minister of Education and the Secretariat. EPWT continues to advocate for ongoing dialogue with education partners to discuss the recommendations within the OPSBA report.

#### **New Generation Education – Exemplary Alternative Education Strategies**

The work team selected exemplary Alternative Education strategies as the focus of its 2017-18 survey of member boards. This survey builds on the OPSBA website repository of effective practice. In the 2016-17 school year exemplary Indigenous Education strategies that have had a positive impact on student learning were posted at [www.opsba.org](http://www.opsba.org).

#### **New Generation Education – Career Studies/Civic and Citizenship Consultation**

Members of the EPWT and OPSBA staff attended regional consultations regarding proposed changes to the Career Studies and Civics courses. The EPWT addressed concerns with the timing of the consultation in a letter to the Minister and her staff in light of the comprehensive curriculum review that was announced by the Ministry of Education in September 2017.

# OPSBA WORK TEAMS

## Members

Louise Clodd, Trillium Lakelands, Central East  
 Parthi Kandavel, Toronto, Central East  
 Alex Johnstone, Hamilton-Wentworth, Central West  
 Kathi Smith, Waterloo Region, Central West  
 Marjorie Adam, Renfrew County, Eastern - *Vice-Chair*  
 Caroll Carkner, Upper Canada, Eastern  
 Tom Henderson, Ontario North East, Northern (E)  
 George Saarinen, Lakehead, Northern (W)  
 Connie Buckler, Greater Essex County, Western  
 Jan Johnstone, Bluewater, Western - *Chair*  
 Michele Locke, Simcoe County, First Nations

## Executive Council Liaison

Jerry Chadwick, First Vice-President

## Alternates

Linda Stone, Durham, Central East  
 Marty Fairbairn, Upper Grand, Central West  
 Donald Cram, Upper Canada, Eastern  
 Ruth Ward, Rainbow, Northern (E)  
 Trudy Tuchenhausen, Lakehead, Northern (W)  
 Ruth Tisdale, Thames Valley, Western  
 Carol Stevens, Near North, First Nations

## OPSBA Ad-Hoc Committee regarding Student Trustees

Following last year's AGM, OPSBA created an Ad-Hoc Committee to consider opportunities for student involvement in the Association. The OPSBA Board of Directors unanimously approved a one-year pilot for the 2018-19 school year in April 2018. The pilot will include:

- The establishment of a Committee to be a formalized forum to support the Ontario Student Trustees' Association (OSTA).
- The participation of an OSTA student representative on the Education Program and Policy Development Work Teams.
- Two presentations from OSTA's Public Board Council to the OPSBA Board of Directors.



# LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

The Association is proud of its expertise and track record in the area of effective advocacy to support its priorities. The Association is a respected voice in the province on issues that affect the education agenda and has been fully engaged this year in creating and influencing positive change.

OPSBA is a non-partisan association that advocates for public education regardless of which political party is in power at Queen's Park.

Effective advocacy entails sharp analysis of the emerging issues and trends in our sector, confidence that we are representing the thoughtful consensus of our member boards, choosing strategic opportunities for presenting our positions in ways that engage audiences, and, where appropriate, drawing media attention.

OPSBA monitors legislation and regulations that could affect our students and member boards. With the support of our Work Teams, Executive Council and Board of Directors, staff provide submissions and feedback to many government consultations.

OPSBA continues to issue regular Legislative Updates to all member boards on a regular basis. Our Advocacy can be seen at all levels of government.

## MUNICIPAL

### Local Government Week

OPSBA continued its advocacy for school boards and trustees with the promotion of Local Government Week, which occurred October 16 to 20, 2017. The goal remained to increase youth and public awareness about the important role local

government plays in our communities. Through the Policy Development Work Team, the Association updated school board/trustee-focused materials that included:

- A short PowerPoint presentation
- Facts and figures
- A brief history of the role of trustees
- Why trustees matter
- The “rules” of school in Ontario
- The legislated responsibilities of a school board and its trustees
- A brief outline of the roles within a school board
- Questions and discussion points for trustees to consider
- Questions and discussion points for trustees to ask classrooms
- Online resources and video links
- Template website content
- Template internal message for school board staff (email, staff e-newsletter, etc.)
- Template news release/media advisory/message to local media
- Suggested social media posts
- A backgrounder on the role of trustees and Ontario's public education system

All Trustees were encouraged to contact their local principals to arrange meetings with Grade 5 Social Studies and Grade 10 Civics students to discuss the important democratic role of school board trustee.

### 2018 Municipal and School Board Elections

The next Municipal and School Board election will be held on Monday, October 22, 2018. Once again, OPSBA is partnering with the Ontario Education Services Corporation (OESC) to coordinate a series of resources to support trustee candidates and



communities. This initiative is being undertaken with support from the Ministry of Education.

Resources that have been and will be developed include updated versions of the following items:

- Making a Difference for Kids: Running for Election as a School Board Trustee
- Your Guide to Hosting a School Board Trustee All Candidates Meeting
- Public Education Resources – Posters and Newspaper Ads
- Centralized School Board Elections Website
- Good Governance Guide

### **PROVINCIAL**

The Legislative Assembly of Ontario was in session from September 11, 2017, until the writ was issued

for the 2018 provincial election on May 9, 2018 (except for a short prorogation in March). The next Ontario general election is scheduled to be held on June 7, 2018.

In January 2018, MPP Indira Naidoo-Harris (Halton) became the Minister of Education, replacing Minister Mitzie Hunter (Scarborough-Guildwood), who was shuffled to the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development. Minister Naidoo-Harris attended the Public Education Symposium in January, while Minister Hunter attended the Northern Region Meeting and Program in October to meet directly with trustees and staff from Northern boards. Minister Michael Coteau attended the September Board of Directors meeting to discuss the work of his ministries; Children and Youth Services and Anti-Racism.

# LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

OPSBA also maintains relationships with opposition parties and in particular their Education Critics. At publication time, Lorne Coe, MPP (Whitby-Oshawa), was the PC Critic and Peggy Sattler, MPP (London West), was the NDP Critic.

## **OPSBA Education Day**

OPSBA declared May 23 as Education Day. On that day, in many ridings across the province, a number of Ontario public school trustees hosted non-partisan Education Day forums, inviting candidates from the major provincial parties to share their party's education platform and answer voter questions. A variety of resources were developed to support school boards and trustees in promoting the initiative.

## **FEDERAL**

As a member of the Canadian School Boards Association (CSBA), OPSBA examines provincial and federal legislation that affects Ontario students and our member boards. In areas such as copyright or Indigenous education, the CSBA gives its members a national voice and opportunities for influence beyond the provincial level. President Laurie French and Executive Director Rusty Hick represented OPSBA on the CSBA Board of Directors for 2017-18.

Throughout the year, OPSBA monitored legislation in Nova Scotia regarding that province's decision to abolish locally elected school boards in favour of government appointees, based on the recently commissioned Raise the Bar report. On January 31, OPSBA sent a letter to Nova Scotia Minister of Education Zach Churchill expressing the Association's shock and disappointment with the decision. OPSBA also continues to follow the

implementation of federal Bill C-45, Cannabis Act (An Act respecting cannabis and to amend the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, the Criminal Code and other Acts).

## **An Advisory Role**

OPSBA's political leadership and staff continue to be active participants in many consultations that cover a broad range of topics and involve the Ministry of Education and other Ministries. OPSBA senior staff and representative trustees are also contributing members on a number of government/ministry advisory groups including:

- Middle Years Strategy Roundtable
- Minister's Early Years and Child Care Advisory Committee
- Minister's Education Partnership Table
- Minister's Advisory Council on First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education and associated Working Group
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission Curriculum Steering Committee
- French as a Second Language (FSL) Working Group
- Healthy Schools Working Table
- Provincial Steering Committee for Urban Aboriginal Education Project
- EQAO Assessment Advisory Committee
- Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education (MACSE)
- Trillium List (of approved books) Advisory Committee
- Integrated Delivery of Rehabilitation Services Provincial Advisory Group
- Transformation Steering Committee (TSC)
  - Equity and Grade 9 Refresh TSC Sub-Committee

- Outreach and Consultation TSC Sub-Committee
- Report Card TSC Sub-Committee
- Ministry Initiatives Committee
  - Highly Skilled Work Force Sub-Committee
  - Collaborative Professionalism Sub-Committee
  - Renewed Math Strategy Sub-Committee
  - Student Well-Being/Staff Well-Being Sub-Committee
- Community Hubs Capacity Development Reference Group (Ministry of Infrastructure)
- Education Standards Development Committee (Accessibility Directorate)

OPSBA also participates in a number of other external organizations through senior staff and trustee membership including:

- Canadian School Boards Association (CSBA)
- Ontario Coalition for Children and Youth Mental Health
- Ophea
- Chiefs of Ontario Education Coordination Unit
- Learnography
- Public Services Health and Safety Association
- Ontario School Bus Association
- OMERS

### **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities**

OPSBA continues to take the lead on behalf of all Ontario school boards in supporting implementation of the accessibility standards regulated by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). In 2017-18, OPSBA provided submissions to the Ministry of Education’s Education Accessibility Standard Engagement and the Ontario Human Rights Commission regarding accessibility standard and guideline updates. OPSBA continues to monitor the work of the Education Standards Development Committee. Durham DSB Trustee and OPSBA 2017-18 Central East Vice-President Donna Edwards was appointed to the Committee in February 2018.



# COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA RELATIONS

The focus of OPSBA's communications and media relations is to ensure that the Association's identified priorities are presented in a strong light, positively showcasing public education and the achievements of school boards.

OPSBA's communications and media relations strategies are designed to increase public confidence in the effectiveness of our public school system. OPSBA continues to stand out as a credible and primary voice of public education in Ontario.

The 2017-2018 year was a successful year for OPSBA in achieving sustained media coverage on a variety of issues. OPSBA is a consistent point of contact for reporters and columnists when they are looking for a provincial perspective on education issues. Throughout the year, OPSBA president Laurie French was a valued commentator, interviewed by the mainstream media on issues that impacted public education including:

**Ontario's first four pot shops to be located in Toronto, Kingston, Guelph and Thunder Bay**  
*Toronto Star, April 12, 2018*

"My question would be, what was their process to decide that location" in Toronto, said Laurie French, president of the Ontario Public School Boards' Association.

"Did they consult with the school board?"

French said there is "significantly less" distance between the shop and schools than the Toronto District School Board had hoped for, "though I realize how difficult that can be in the city."

She said school boards have been clear that they wanted to be involved in consultations on locations.

**Ontario Liberals promise \$300-million to support special education**  
*Globe and Mail, March 27, 2018*

Laurie French, president of the Ontario Public School Boards' Association, said school districts have been requesting more support and resources, and the increased funding will help address the need.

**Auditor takes aim at Wynne's government over spending, waste, lax oversight**  
*Toronto Star, December 6, 2017*

The Ontario Public School Boards Association fired back at Lysyk, saying boards face growing financial pressures.

"Contrary to the auditor general's findings, school boards need more flexibility, not less," said president Laurie French.

**School boards association raises question of store locations**  
*North Bay Nugget, November 15, 2017*

The Ontario Public School Boards' Association is asking school trustees across the province how close cannabis stores should be to elementary and secondary schools?

Near North trustee Michelina Beam says schools want to get ahead of the issue before the drug becomes legal next summer.

## **Ontario elementary teachers' union want to rename John A. Macdonald schools**

***Canadian Press, August 24, 2017***

The Ontario Public School Board(s) Association said dialogue with Indigenous members and the community will be the most important step moving forward.

“The conversation around these historical figures ... is a very sensitive topic, but it’s one that has to happen now,” association president Laurie French said. “We have to be mutually respectful in this situation, and in particular, respect what has occurred and what is our history.”

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Our ongoing commitment to keeping the membership of OPSBA informed on critical issues meant frequent development of up-to-date analysis of breaking news and reports.

In 2017-2018 OPSBA staff provided comprehensive communication support and leadership to member boards on key issues impacting education across the province to ensure positive and consistent messaging and positioning to highlight the strength of public education including the Auditor General’s 2017 Report, Executive Compensation and the release of the Grants for Student Needs funding.

OPSBA’s popular daily “Media Report” service, launched in 2013 in response to a pressing need to issue breaking labour negotiations news to trustees and board staff on a daily basis, continues to serve staff and trustees.

Media reports and releases, templates and other communication vehicles and supports were regularly developed and distributed to all trustees, directors of education, senior human resources and finance officials, and communication officers.

A range of feature stories in OPSBA’s magazine *Education Today*, which moved fully online this year, touched on issues including: equity and inclusion, financial literacy, community hubs, internal school board communications, early learning, and the legalization of cannabis. OPSBA would like to thank former editor Cathy Watson for her nearly 20-year contribution to the magazine.

At the networking session at the Public Education Symposium in January, OPSBA staff discussed updates relevant to the group of school board communications. Cyrus Mavalwala, Founding Partner of Advantis Communications Inc., provided an interactive session on crisis communications, while Licinio Miguelo, Senior Manager of Communications at the York Region DSB, discussed how his board rebuilt trust with the community following a series of crises related to equity, transparency and accountability in 2016-17.

OPSBA works proactively with the Ministry of Education and other branches of the provincial government, seeking to cooperate and collaborate on issues of mutual interest. This approach has strengthened relations between the government and school boards and has contributed to gains in advancing our shared commitment to improved student achievement and local democracy.

# COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA RELATIONS

## OPSBA on Twitter

OPSBA uses Twitter as an important digital tool to engage with key stakeholders and strengthen its online presence. It allows direct communication with key online audiences as part of ongoing efforts to be accountable and transparent to member boards.

Twitter was used by the Association and member trustees extensively throughout the 2017 OPSBA AGM (#OPSBA17) and the 2018 Public Education Symposium (#PESym18). As of May 2018, @OPSBA had nearly 6,000 followers and the account had tweeted more than 8,500 times. Since June 2017, the account gained nearly 600 followers.

Significant social media campaigns included Twitter strategies regarding PES 2018, the May 23 provincial Education Day, the French as a Second Language Labour Market Partnership, the 2018 Summit on Children and Youth Mental Health, and the OPSBA Awards.



# 10

GOOD REASONS WHY  
SCHOOL BOARDS BELONG IN

OPSBA

- Effective advocacy on issues that make a difference for students: education funding, child care, Indigenous education, children and youth mental health, special education, transportation, and school accommodation reviews
- High quality professional development opportunities for school trustees
- Media relations, social media and information services support on key issues
- United and credible voice in advocacy and action in legislative and policy changes
- Democratic environment and responsiveness to member board needs
- Access to energy savings and other education services through OPSBA's partnership with the Ontario Education Services Corporation
- Practical support for complying with legislative and regulatory changes
- Strategic relations with education partners across Ontario and Canada
- Effective leadership in collective bargaining
- OPSBA is a respected source of consultation by the Provincial Government for education initiatives

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2017-2018\*

**Cathy Abraham**  
Second Vice-President  
Kawartha Pine Ridge DSB

**Carrie Andrews**  
Central West  
Peel District School Board

**Jennifer Arp**  
Central East  
Toronto District School Board

**Patrice Barnes**  
Central East  
Durham DSB

**Michelina Beam**  
Northern (East)  
Near North District School Board

**Christine Boothby**  
Eastern  
Ottawa-Carleton District School Board

**Jerry Chadwick**  
First Vice-President  
Toronto District School Board

**Ellen Chambers**  
Northern (West)  
Lakehead District School Board

**Diane Chase**  
Central West  
District School Board of Niagara

**Bob Clement**  
Northern (East)  
Rainbow District School Board

**Amy Collard**  
Central West  
Halton District School Board

**Cynthia Cordova**  
Central East  
York Region District School Board

**Donna Danielli**  
Vice-President, Central West  
Halton District School Board

**Dwight Delahunt**  
Treatment Centre School Authority  
Ottawa Children's Treatment Centre

**Donna Edwards**  
Central East  
Durham District School Board

**Marty Fairbairn**  
Central West  
Upper Grand District School Board

**Laurie French**  
President  
Limestone District School Board

**Tom Henderson**  
Northern (East)  
District School Board Ontario North East

**Susan Humphries**  
Eastern  
Renfrew County District School Board

**Robert Hunking**  
Vice-President, Western  
Avon Maitland District School Board

**Elaine Johnston**  
Indigenous Trustees' Council  
Algoma District School Board

**Alex Johnstone**  
Central West  
Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board

**Jan Johnstone**  
Western  
Bluewater District School Board

**Parthi Kandavel**  
Central East  
Toronto District School Board

**Jennifer Kitowski**  
Northern (West)  
Keewatin-Patricia District School Board

**Gerald Kleist**  
Vice-President, Northern  
Keewatin-Patricia District School Board

**Shelley Laskin**  
Vice-President, Enrolment  
Toronto District School Board

**Graham Lidstone**  
Northern (East)  
Algoma District School Board

**Angela Lloyd**  
Central East  
Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board

**Michele Locke**  
Central East  
Simcoe County District School Board

**Cheryl Lovell**  
Western  
Greater Essex County District School Board

**Linda Lowery**  
Central East  
Durham District School Board

**Mark Mannisto**  
Northern (West)  
Superior-Greenstone District School Board

**Corrie McBain**  
Central East  
York Region District School Board

**Don McBride**  
Northern (West)  
Rainy River District School Board

**David McDonald**  
Eastern  
Upper Canada District School Board

**Tom McGregor**  
Western  
Lambton Kent District School Board

**Arlene Morell**  
Western  
Thames Valley District School Board

**David Morrison**  
Central East  
Trillium Lakelands District School Board

**Dave Patterson**  
Eastern  
Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board

**Keith Penny**  
Eastern  
Ottawa-Carleton District School Board

**Matt Reid**  
Western  
Thames Valley District School Board

**Suzanne Ruttan**  
Eastern  
Limestone District School Board

**Colleen Schenk**  
Western  
Avon Maitland District School Board

**Dave Shields**  
Vice-President, Eastern  
Renfrew County District School Board

**Carol Ann Sloat**  
Central West  
Grand Erie District School Board

**Rick Williams**  
Vice-President, Enrolment  
Peel District School Board

**Kathleen Woodcock**  
Central West  
Waterloo Region District School Board

\*As of May 2018

# MEMBER BOARDS

## CENTRAL EAST

Bloorview School Authority  
 Campbell Children's School Authority  
 Durham District School Board  
 Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board  
 The Protestant Separate School Board of the Town of Penetanguishene  
 Simcoe County District School Board  
 Toronto District School Board  
 Trillium Lakelands District School Board  
 York Region District School Board

## CENTRAL WEST

District School Board of Niagara  
 Grand Erie District School Board  
 Halton District School Board  
 Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board  
 KidsAbility School Authority  
 Niagara Peninsula Children's Centre School Authority  
 Peel District School Board  
 Upper Grand District School Board  
 Waterloo Region District School Board

## EASTERN

Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board  
 Limestone District School Board  
 Ottawa-Carleton District School Board  
 Ottawa Children's Treatment Centre School Authority  
 Renfrew County District School Board  
 Upper Canada District School Board

## WESTERN

Avon Maitland District School Board  
 Bluewater District School Board  
 Greater Essex County District School Board  
 John McGivney Children's Centre School Authority  
 Lambton Kent District School Board  
 Thames Valley District School Board

## NORTHERN SUB REGION EAST

Algoma District School Board  
 District School Board Ontario North East  
 James Bay Lowlands Secondary School Board  
 Moose Factory Island District School Area Board  
 Moosonee District School Area Board  
 Near North District School Board  
 Rainbow District School Board

## SUB REGION WEST

Keewatin-Patricia District School Board  
 Lakehead District School Board  
 Rainy River District School Board  
 Superior-Greenstone District School Board



# CONTACT US

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