



ONTARIO PUBLIC
SCHOOL BOARDS'
ASSOCIATION

Leading Education's Advocates

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July 11, 2023

Patrick Case
Assistant Deputy Minister
Education Equity Secretariat (Ministry of Education)
Patrick.Case@ontario.ca

Re: OPSBA Professional Development Update

Dear Patrick:

With the recent passage of the Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act, 2023, I wanted to connect with you to share an update on the Ontario Public School Boards' Association's (OPSBA's) professional development offerings for the upcoming year. OPSBA is committed to supporting the role and leadership of local and democratically elected school boards in Ontario's English public education system. We strive to equip every trustee with the tools they need to be excellent board members and leaders.

Bill 98 referenced the ability for the Minister of Education to enable standardized training requirement for trustees, Directors of Education, and other senior school board officials. We are pleased to see value placed on consistent professional development for system leaders and we believe OPSBA to be a critical partner in the delivery of this training.

Our association has developed a comprehensive suite of learning opportunities designed to support this commitment. As the association serving Ontario's English public boards, we are well-placed to deliver professional development that is timely, relevant, and contextualized to the unique role of trustees.

At our recent Annual General Meeting, we shared with our members the following current professional development offerings for the next calendar year:

- **OPSBA Conferences and Symposia** offer trustees the opportunity to learn, connect and collaborate face-to-face. Our conference content (keynote speakers, panel discussions, workshops) is guided by the themes of good governance training, leadership and supporting student success, equity, and well-being.
 - **Northern Region Conference** – October 13 and 14, 2023 (Sault Ste. Marie)
 - **Public Education Symposium** – January 25 to 27, 2024 (Toronto)

- **Education Labour Relations & Human Resources Symposium** – April 25 and 26, 2024 (Toronto)
- **Canadian School Boards Association Congress & OPSBA AGM** – July 3 to 5, 2024 (Toronto)
- **Governance Learning Series (Virtual)** in Fall 2023. A series of workshops for trustees and directors of education delivered by governance professionals with a focus on governance basics (e.g. the Role of Trustee, Running Effective Meetings, etc.), plus topics such as Community Consultation and Codes of Conduct.
- **Online Professional Development Modules and the Good Governance Guide** remain excellent governance resources for all trustees. OPSBA and the host of the modules, the Ontario Educational Services Corporation, are eager to explore the possibility of future collaboration with the Ministry of Education and partner school board associations to update and enhance these important training materials.

In addition, we are surveying this current term of trustees to capture not only demographic information, but also their skills, accreditations, and experiences. We would be happy to share this information once we have completed our analysis as it is our hope that it will help us identify gaps in our training offerings.

I would like to arrange a meeting this summer to review our schedule of meeting dates with you and your team and to also discuss how we might align our PD offerings to both our advantages. I will ask my staff to contact your office about this and I look forward to continuing our partnership with the ministry in this critical area that supports healthy local democracy and strong school board governance.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Donaldson
Executive Director

cc.

Dasha Androusenkov, Director, Stakeholder Relations Minister's Office (Education)

Kate Manson-Smith, Deputy Minister, Deputy Minister's Office (Education)