



ONTARIO PUBLIC
SCHOOL BOARDS'
ASSOCIATION

Leading Education's Advocates

2016/2017
ANNUAL REPORT



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; and
- 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

Laurie French
PRESIDENT
*Ontario Public School
Boards' Association*

Gail Anderson
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
*Ontario Public School
Boards' Association*

Change. It's a concept often fraught with fear and trepidation, but it needn't be. Change can often be an opportunity for positive renewal, with new challenges bringing new responsibilities and new opportunities.

The 2016-17 school year has been one of great change both throughout the world and here at the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA). An uneasy and shifting global economic and political climate is permeating all government levels – school board, municipal, provincial and federal.

It was a year of change on many levels within the Association, especially in our advocacy and roles related to our six strategic priorities – these include improvements and changes to First Nations, Métis and Inuit education, the support of mental health and well-being strategies, and ongoing changes to funding for special education and capital programs that many of our boards continue to implement. In addition, we continue to strongly represent our member boards as Designated Bargaining Agent in implementation of central collective agreements, and we continuously monitor and respond to government legislation and regulations, including proposals regarding the government's Community Hubs Strategic Framework and Action Plan.

We welcomed new leaders to OPSBA's Executive Council and Board of Directors tables this year, and we continue to be well-positioned to demonstrate the integrity of elected trustees, our boards and OPSBA as governors of this complex system and historic democratic role.

This ongoing internal and external change reinforces the need for us to stay focused on our values and be proud of our schools as the safe and inclusive spaces for all students that they are. We will continue to be champions of equity for all students, regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability or socioeconomic background. As Scott Urquhart, the Keewatin Patricia DSB's Student Success Leader, put it so succinctly earlier this year, "We will never have equity of outcomes until we have equity of opportunities."

This change will inevitably lead to organizational growth, as we learn from and listen to our communities. OPSBA remains

committed to supporting each and every Ontario public school board trustee in the vital role they play on behalf of students and their families. As well, we must thank the many school board staff who support us in our work.

Leadership in education continues to be as critical as ever. We must always be aware of scrutiny and attention to our role as we continue to lead by example, demonstrating strength in public education governance and inspiring our students, those future leaders, to get involved in their communities and make a difference.

What follows in these pages is a comprehensive account of achievements throughout the past year. We encourage you to read on to find out how we continue to earn our reputation as public education's key advocates in Ontario.

Together, we will continue to make amazing things happen for students across Ontario.

Laurie French
President

Gail Anderson
Executive Director



2016-2017 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 dealing with current initiatives such as the Early and Middle Years, Special Education, Community Hubs, Technology in Teaching and Learning, Indigenous Education, Student Assessment, Equity and Inclusive Education

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:

INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

OPSBA's Indigenous Trustees' Council is engaged in a number of provincial issues, including: tuition agreements, curriculum development, language teaching and the upcoming Indigenous Language Symposium. Much of this work stems from the Calls to Action from the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. OPSBA is also leading the creation of a new trustee professional development module providing a review of the history of Indigenous peoples in Canada and Ontario with examples of related good work being undertaken by school boards across Ontario.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

The Ministry of Education released its Well-Being Engagement Paper in November 2016. In response, OPSBA created its own online survey, and a summary report with recommendations and guiding principles was forwarded to the Ministry. The Ontario Coalition of Children and Youth Mental Health also utilized the results to submit their own report, which reinforced many of the principles contained within OPSBA's submission. Planning for the fifth Summit on Children and Youth Mental Health (April 2018) is underway.

COMMUNITY HUBS

OPSBA continues to advocate for increased and sustained collaboration among school boards, community agencies and municipal governments, including promoting the value of schools as community hubs, as the provincial government rolls out its Community Hubs Strategic Framework and Action Plan. OPSBA staff and member trustees participated in the first Ontario Summit on Community Hubs in May 2017.

FRENCH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (FSL)

OPSBA will be the lead in an upcoming Labour Market Partnership initiative addressing the recruitment and hiring of qualified French language teachers. FSL has been identified as an area that requires provincial focus to address issues impacting boards' ability to deliver high-quality and sustainable education programming.

EDUCATION FUNDING

In 2016-17, OPSBA staff submitted a brief during the Ministry's consultations regarding the development of the 2017-18 Grants for Student Needs (GSN). A modified version of this brief was later shared with the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs during the provincial 2017 Pre-Budget Consultations. OPSBA noted the announcement of increased funds to support Special Education, Indigenous student achievement, school infrastructure, and student transportation but continued to press for solutions to challenges including budget area reductions, pupil accommodation pressures and reduced local flexibility.

RURAL AND REMOTE EDUCATION

OPSBA lobbied key officials in the Ministry of Education regarding the May 2017 province-wide consultation on new approaches to support education in rural and remote communities. OPSBA will be submitting feedback based on consultation with our trustees.

LEGISLATIVE SUBMISSIONS

OPSBA has engaged in a wide range of advocacy work, related to the provincial government's legislative agenda, including responses to Bill 45, Election Statute Law Amendment Act; Bill 65, Safe School Zones Act; Bill 68, Modernizing Ontario's Municipal Legislation Act; and Bill 92, School Boards Collective Bargaining Amendment Act. OPSBA also provided submissions regarding Building a Better Future: A Discussion Paper for Transforming Early Years and Child Care and the Draft Guidelines for School Boards regarding before-and-after-school programming for kindergarten to Grade 6.

MIDDLE YEARS

OPSBA was invited to participate in an inaugural targeted roundtable discussion in February 2017, hosted by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, on strategic priorities for middle years children (six to 12-years-old) and families in Ontario. The province is developing a new Middle Years Strategy and OPSBA has expressed interest in attending future stakeholder discussions in the development, launch and mobilization of the strategy.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AND 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. On March 8, 2017, OPSBA and Ontario's three other school board/trustee associations presented to the Standing Committee on General Government regarding

Bill 92, School Boards Collective Bargaining Amendment Act. This Bill was passed and two-year extensions of the existing central collective agreements have been ratified by all parties, through to August 31, 2019.

EQAO DISCUSSION PAPER

OPSBA announced the release of a Discussion Paper on the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) and Large Scale Testing in Ontario in December 2016. The Discussion Paper summarizes the survey results, identifies key themes and issues for consideration when examining the future of large scale testing and proposes a series of recommendations.

COPYRIGHT

OPSBA continued its active role in the Council for Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) Copyright Tariff Proceedings Sub-Committee, providing updates and advice to member boards whenever possible. This year, OPSBA electronically distributed to school boards a bundle of materials developed by the CMEC, designed to help aid school boards in keeping staff advised about copyright requirements.

CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS

The 2016 Annual General Meeting, 2017 Public Education Symposium, 2017 Education Labour Relations and Human Resources Conference 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 / 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. 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.



OPSBA'S 2016-2017 PRIORITIES

THE WHOLE CHILD & STUDENT WELL-BEING

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

- Active participation in processes to implement Ontario's renewed vision for education
- Advocacy for collaboration among relevant provincial ministries in relation to children and youth mental health, in-risk students and poverty reduction
- Advocacy for a strong, accessible, responsive and equitable level of children's mental health services in Ontario
- Advocacy 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 Addictions
- Monitoring the Service Transformation initiative of the Comprehensive Strategy to ensure effective expansion, integration and coordination of child and youth mental health supports and services through renewed school-community agency partnerships
- Continued focus on improving student achievement for First Nation, Métis and Inuit students and advocacy for an Ontario curriculum that contains clear expectations for every Ontario student with regards to First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education
- Advocacy and focus on strong resources and a wide range of services for children with special needs, especially linked to early learning, and monitoring and implementation of the revised approach to Differentiated Special Education Needs Amount (DSENA) funding
- Monitor and advocate for increased opportunities and supports for students with developmental disabilities
- Continued advocacy for effective implementation of the Full-Day Early Learning-Kindergarten (FDK) program and before- and after-school programs
- Advocacy for creating positive school climates for learning and working
- Continue to advocate for equitable and diverse learning opportunities to support the varied needs of students

- Monitor issues related to technology/social media that pose risks and provide opportunities for students
- Advocacy for increased and sustained collaboration among school boards, student trustees, community agencies and municipal governments to ensure effective approaches in supporting children and youth
- 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

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Active participation on the Ministry Initiatives Committee, Ministry Well-Being Advisory Committee, the Ministry Initiatives Student and Staff Well-Being, Highly Skilled Workforce, Renewed Math Strategy and Collaborative Professionalism Sub-committees.
- Comprehensively responded, from both OPSBA and the Ontario Coalition for Children and Youth Mental Health, to the Ministry of Education's Well-Being Engagement Paper.
- Held a detailed discussion and consultation with Ministry representatives regarding the Differentiated Special Education Needs Amount.
- Continued to be active, through the OPSBA-initiated Ontario Coalition for Children and Youth Mental Health, in engaging with the Ministries of Education, Health and Long-Term Care, Children and Youth Services, and Advanced Education and Skills Development to reinforce the vital role of inter-ministerial collaboration in successful implementation of the government's Comprehensive Strategy on Mental Health and Addictions. Active planning for the 2018 Summit on Children and Youth Mental Health.
- Continued advocacy for mental health literacy and capacity-building across school boards and for the critical role of Mental Health Leaders and mental health strategies in every school board.



DSB Ontario North East students perform at the 2017 Public Education Symposium.

- Active response to ongoing implementation of the government’s Community Hubs Strategic Framework and Action Plan. Discussions with a diverse range of sector partners and government representatives have taken place and staff take part in the Ministry of Infrastructure’s Community Hubs Capacity Development Reference Group.
- Continued to ensure regular communication and consultation with school boards and the Ministry to address impacts from implementation of FDK and before-and-after-school programming for six to 12-year-olds.
- Active participation on the Minister’s Early Years Advisory Committee and the Early Years Advisory Group.
- Submitted a response to *Building a Better Future: A Discussion Paper for Transforming Early Years and Child Care in Ontario* and will continue to work with the Ministry and participate in discussions regarding the paper’s next steps.
- Participated in a roundtable discussion on the “Middle Years” hosted by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) and expressed interest in participating in future stakeholder discussions with MCYS in the development, launch and mobilization of the Middle Years Strategy.
- Provided a response to the Ministry of Education’s consultation regarding the draft *Before-and-After School Programs Kindergarten – Grade 6 Policies and Guidelines for School Boards*.
- Continued analysis and monitoring of regulatory and legislative requirements for school boards related to the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*.
- Partnered with the Ontario Student Trustees’ Association to produce a bilingual accessibility-themed film, entitled *By Any Measure*, showcasing the success of accessibility in Ontario schools.
- Representatives of the Ministry of Children and Youth Services provided a Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) update to work team members in September 2016. OPSBA continued to seek updates regarding the Ministry of Children and Youth Services’ development of a provincial FASD strategy.

- Representatives of the Ministry of Education’s Special Education Policy and Programs Branch visited with OPSBA’s work teams to discuss next steps in initiatives supporting children and youth with Autism Spectrum Disorder.
- Continued development of a relationship with the Ontario Association of Children’s Aids Societies, to advocate and coordinate supports and services for children and youth in care and in-risk children and youth.
- Encouraged participation in Ontario Anti-Racism Directorate Public Meetings and monitoring of the new three-year plan to combat systemic racism in the province entitled *A Better Way Forward*.
- Met with Minister of Children and Youth Services Michael Coteau to explore opportunities for input and consultation regarding Special Needs Strategy, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, Middle Years and Anti-Racism Directorate.
- Regularly shared information from poverty advocacy group Campaign 2000, including their 2016 Annual Report Card.
- Welcomed Irwin Elman, Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, to address the Association’s two work teams.
- Provided a submission to the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services’ provincial consultation regarding the collection of gender identification on public forms.
- Submitted a response to the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change’s consultation on Ontario Reg. 243/07 under the *Safe Drinking Water Act*. The Association worked with the Ontario Association of School Business Officials’ Operations, Maintenance & Construction Committee who took the lead on this consultation by surveying Health & Safety Managers.
- Continued monitoring of all recently introduced legislation that may affect member boards. Please see full list on page 25.



Minister of Education Mitzie Hunter with student trustees.



OPSBA'S 2016-2017 PRIORITIES

▶ NEW GENERATION EDUCATION

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

- Active participation in processes to implement Ontario's renewed vision for education, including identification and promotion of the teaching of 21st century competencies
- Ongoing advocacy for a provincial vision for technology in learning and teaching
- Advocacy for a renewed focus on teacher training to better meet the emerging needs of today's schools
- Continue to advocate for strategies to increase the pool of fluent teachers of Native Languages
- Advocacy for technological programs and skilled trades as viable student options and for support for individuals working in the trades to become teachers
- Share effective and creative practices that will help promote the expansion and sustainability of alternative programs that provide diverse pathways for students
- Advocacy for conditions that ensure that all students get the support they need to receive a graduation diploma or equivalent for successful program completion
- Promote review of traditional school structures and calendars to explore alternatives that support improved student achievement and program viability in rural areas and explore the effect of e-learning in helping rural schools remain viable
- Continued focus on environmental sustainability practices in curriculum and capital planning
- Promote the value of equitable access for all students with a focus on issues of access for students in rural areas
- Advocacy for a comprehensive government review of the current delivery of French Immersion



President Laurie French with Minister Indira Naidoo-Harris at the 2017 Public Education Symposium.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Published and released a Discussion Paper on EQAO and large-scale testing. The Discussion Paper summarized survey results, identifies key themes and issues for consideration when examining the future of large scale testing and proposes a series of recommendations. OPSBA met with Minister Hunter's policy advisor on the EQAO file to present and discuss the report. OPSBA continued to seek an opportunity to meet with education partners to engage in a dialogue regarding the report's recommendations.

- OPSBA's document, *A Vision for Learning and Teaching in a Digital Age*, continued to be referenced and used as a resource at Ministry meetings and discussions on 21st century knowledge, skills/competencies, attitudes and values for students.
- Continued building a repository of effective practice. In 2016-17 member boards have been requested to share exemplary practices in Indigenous Education.
- Applied to the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development to lead a provincial three-year labour market partnership grant to research, analyze and problem-solve the availability issue of French language teachers to support French as a Second Language (FSL) programs in Ontario's English public schools.
- Participated in the Ministry's advisory FSL Working Group.
- Strongly recommended continued investment in education through the technology and learning fund in a brief to the Ministry regarding 2017-18 Education Funding. It was also recommended that the government continue the work on its Broadband Modernization Program to ensure equity of access for all school boards.
- Compiled and shared Northern Ontario school board research related to graduation rates and proposed high leverage strategies to support students at a meeting with Minister Hunter in December 2016.

- Participated in the Highly Skilled Workforce (HSW) Subcommittee of the Ministry Initiatives Committee to explore the K-12 recommendations from the HSW provincial report, which include experiential learning, cooperative education, community partnerships, skilled trades and apprenticeships.
- Continued follow-up with the Ministry of Education through the HSW subcommittee to promote an exemplary skills passport/portfolio with the goal of supporting all students, regardless of post-secondary destination, to receive a graduation diploma or equivalent upon successful completion of a program pathway.
- President French visited northeast Ontario in October 2016 to listen and learn about issues affecting school boards in that part of the province.
- Coordinated a teleconference between the Minister of Education's Early Years Division and school boards' Early Learning Leads regarding Before-And-After School Programming and guidelines for children six-to-12-years of age.
- Engaged with key officials in the Ministry of Education regarding the province-wide consultation on new approaches to support education in rural and remote communities and advised officials of the concerns expressed by member boards following the announcement of this engagement of school boards and municipalities across the province.



Adult Education graduates at Keewatin Patricia DSB.



OPSBA'S 2016-2017 PRIORITIES

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

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

- Continued 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
- Continued work on the multi-year plan for comprehensive trustee capacity-building and professional development
- 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
- Continued 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
- Capacity-building in the area of community involvement including trustee role in Parent Involvement Committees
- Continued focus on increased visibility and scope for action to expand capacity of First Nation trustees and increased general understanding of issues affecting First Nations
- Further strengthen the role of Regional Vice-Presidents as OPSBA ambassadors to boards in their region
- Advocacy for improvements in communication from Ministry to Trustees, including meaningful consultation and partnership with trustees in strategies that affect school boards
- Pursue legal and regulatory protection of the role of trustees, e.g. with regard to broad impacts of conflict of interest litigation

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Created a survey for trustees to provide feedback on trustee honoraria. More than 200 responses were received. The data will be used to inform OPSBA advocacy on this issue.
- Hosted a successful Northern Region Meeting & Program in October 2016 and Public Education Symposium in January 2017.
- Monitored proposed legislation related to the *Municipal Legislation Act* (Bill 68, *Modernizing Ontario's Legislation Act*,

2016). OPSBA also monitored Bill 45, *Election Statute Law Amendment Act*, 2016 and provided a submission to the Standing Committee on General Government.

- Launched a new website at www.opsba.org in August 2016, including the new blog OPSBA Connects, with a revamped search function, and easily navigable access to important Ontario education news, announcements and briefings.
- Provided updated materials for trustees to use when meeting with Grade 5 Social Studies and Grade 10 Civics students to discuss the important democratic role of trustee during Local Government Week (October 16 to 22, 2016).
- Participated in the two-day November 2016 Ministry event *Partners in Dialogue*, which brought together education stakeholders to engage in dialogues on key Ministry priorities.
- Explored the development of professional development modules that address effective practice for private/in camera meetings.
- Secured an engagement opportunity with new Ombudsman Paul Dubé.
- Promoted Equal Voice's Daughters of the Vote event held on February 21, 2017, through posting an article in OPSBA Connects and issuing of several tweets.
- Monitored School Board Governance issues including the review of the "governance and performance" issues at the York Region District School Board.
- Coordinated a meeting between OPSBA senior staff and table officers with new Minister of Education Mitzi Hunter in early August. The Minister also attended the September Board of Directors meeting and met with OPSBA's Northern directors in December 2016.
- President French met with opposition education critics PC Lorne Coe and NDP Lisa Gretzky and Peggy Sattler. OPSBA staff regularly communicate with both opposition offices and critics also attended a joint Work Team meeting in May 2017.



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.

Our multi-year strategic priority on building trustee leadership capacity includes development of the resource *Good Governance: A Guide for Trustees, School Boards, Directors of Education and Communities*. This is both an orientation for new trustees and a refresher for experienced trustees. It incorporates the most up-to-date legislative and policy changes affecting the education environment and the next version will be updated to coincide with the new term of office for school board trustees following the 2018 Municipal and School Board Elections.

The 19 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. They have been inspired by the thoughtfulness and commitment that trustees bring to their governance work. The modules are:

- Effective Governance Through Ethical Leadership
- Effective Governance for Student Achievement and Well-Being: Boards Matter!
- Right from the Start: Roles and Responsibilities
- Relationships in School Boards
- Performance Review: Director of Education
- The Strategic Role and Multi-year Strategic Planning
- Exercising Authentic Governance: The School Board's Role as Policymaker

- Conflict – Managing it Creatively
- Family and Community Engagement
- Advocacy: Engaging the Public
- Legal Aspects of School Board Governance
- Running Effective Meetings
- School Board Finance
- School Boards and Human Resources
- What Makes a Great Board Chair?
- First Nation Trustees: Leading in Two Worlds
- Developing a Code of Conduct for Trustees
- Social Media
- Internal Audit and the Role of Audit Committees

In 2016-17, OPSBA received funding to develop a new Trustee Professional Development Module on Indigenous History and Truth and Reconciliation. The video module will consist of two parts – the first will equip trustees with an accurate knowledge of Indigenous history and the second will showcase examples of promising practices happening in Ontario school boards that are moving us towards reconciliation. With the support of Indigenous partners, work on the module is well underway and will be released in late 2017.

The Good Governance Guide and the full Trustee Professional Development Program are available at 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.

Throughout 2016-17, OPSBA has continued to offer individual school boards professional development programs based on the modules and customized to their needs. This training has been led by facilitators with expertise in the modules.



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.

2016 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 2016, the 28th AGM was hosted in Ottawa by OPSBA's Eastern Region from June 9 to 11. Laurie French, trustee with the Limestone DSB, was elected as President for the 2016-17 term, while Jerry Chadwick, Trustee with the Toronto District School Board, was elected 1st Vice-President. Cathy Abraham, Chair of the Kawartha Pine Ridge DSB, was elected 2nd Vice-President. Peter Garrow was elected the First Nation Director to the OPSBA Board of Directors.



Trustees at OPSBA's April 2017 Central East Regional Meeting.

Keynote speakers included singer-songwriter David Usher and Sandra Herbst, CEO of connect2learning. Workshops and 10-Minute Sessions addressed issues such as summer learning, student engagement, coding, public awareness campaigns, partnering with municipal governments and private/in-camera meetings.

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 2016/17 school year, the member boards of each region (except for the North) held meetings in October/November and April in the 2016/17 school year, in addition to the regional meetings held at OPSBA's Public Education Symposium and the Annual General Meeting.

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 meeting was held on October 14 and 15 in Thunder Bay. At this meeting, the northern boards identified student graduation rates as a collective challenge. OPSBA staff facilitated the collection and collation of data, exemplary practices and the generation of short term and long-term strategies that could assist Northern school boards. OPSBA was able to arrange for the Minister of Education to attend the December Northern Regional Meeting in Toronto to discuss the issues and to present all the information gathered to inform the discussion. The Minister followed up with a visit to Northern Ontario to see the discussed issues first-hand. There has been a response letter from the Minister and there are anticipated announcements to provide targeted supports based on the input provided to the Minister.

2017 PUBLIC EDUCATION SYMPOSIUM (PES)

More than 290 trustees, student trustees, Directors of Education and senior school board administrators participated in PES 2017, jointly hosted with the Association des conseil scolaires des écoles publiques de l'Ontario (ACÉPO) from January 19 to 21, 2017. 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 Amy Whitaker, NYU Steinhardt Visual Arts Management assistant professor, Chris Vollum, social media educator, and Jim Grieve, Executive Director at the Retired Teachers of Ontario.

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

- Indigenous Education and Reconciliation
- Multi-Year Strategic Planning
- Private/In-Camera Meetings: Best Practices for Policies, Agendas, Motions and Minutes
- Effective Preparation for Collective Bargaining
- Sharing Leading Practices



Bob Watts, Adjunct Professor, School of Policy Studies, Queen's University, speaks on Indigenous Education and Reconciliation at PES 2017.



Jennifer McIntyre (left), OPSBA Director of Policy, and Sheila MacKinnon, partner, Shibley Righton LLP, give an overview of private and in-camera meetings at PES 2017.



President Laurie French (left) with Tracy MacCharles, Minister of Government and Consumer Services.

2017 EDUCATION LABOUR RELATIONS & HUMAN RESOURCES CONFERENCE

OPSBA's annual Education Labour Relations and Human Resources Conference 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 6 and 7, 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. The focus this year was on inspiring positive workplaces.

The conference featured workshops on legal and systemic issues, dispute resolution and conflict management, a cross-country review of the labour relations sector, sustaining sick leave plans, workplace investigations and a discussion regarding practical implementation of PPM 159: Collaborative Professionalism.

Speakers included the Hon. Mitzie Hunter, Minister of Education, Renu Mandhane, Chief Commissioner of the Ontario Human Rights Commission and Amanda Rocheleau, Social Worker and Compassion Fatigue Specialist.

OPSBA'S 2016-2017 PRIORITIES

ADVANCING RECONCILIATION: FIRST NATION, MÉTIS AND INUIT EDUCATION

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).

AREAS OF EMPHASIS

- 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
- Commitment 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.
- Respecting 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
- Ongoing 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
- Advocacy that supports action on eliminating inequity at the Federal level in education funding for First Nation students



ACHIEVEMENTS

- OPSBA First Nation trustees were represented at the Minister's Advisory Council on First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education and through the Minister's Working Team contributed to the new implementation plan for the Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework.
- OPSBA First Nation Trustees participated in consultations on the 2017-2018 Grants for Student Needs with the Ministry of Education. The Indigenous Trustees' Council (ITC) requested a report in which its concerns are addressed following the release of the GSN.
- As part of the Truth and Reconciliation Committee Curriculum Steering Committee, the ITC continued to be involved in the creation of a revised mandatory curriculum featuring appropriate Indigenous material, including in both social studies and history and other parts of the curriculum.
- The ITC participated in the Well-Being Subcommittee of the Minister's Advisory Council on First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Work Group, which provided an opportunity to have focused and intentional discussions on Indigenous well-being.
- The ITC provided input to the Joint Ministerial Steering Committee (Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development) on a variety of issues, including educational transitions for Indigenous students and Indigenous language revitalization.
- Coordinated work on a trustee professional development module on the real history of Indigenous peoples in Canada and Ontario, and examples of good work being undertaken by school boards across the province.
- Participated at the National Roundtable on Education in Calgary, organized by the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.
- Worked with the other provincial school board associations through the Canadian School Boards Association on Indigenous issues through cross-provincial sharing and federal advocacy.



Minister Mitzie Hunter (second from left) with members of OPSBA's Indigenous Trustees' Council.

Indigenous Trustees' Council

OPSBA's Indigenous Trustees' Council (ITC) is composed of Indigenous trustees elected and appointed to school boards.

Members of the Council contribute to the work of OPSBA's Education Program and Policy Development Work Teams. The Council has engaged in a range of initiatives to support the education of Indigenous students, and ensure other students are educated about the history and culture of Indigenous peoples. A primary focus for the ITC has been advocacy for mandatory components in Ontario's elementary and secondary curriculum on Indigenous histories, including 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*. OPSBA's advocacy paper for mandatory First Nations, Métis and Inuit components in Ontario's social studies curriculum was released in 2015 at the same time as the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). Members of the ITC sit on the TRC Curriculum Steering Committee, as well as the Minister of Education's Advisory Committees.

A First Nation trustee representative co-chairs the Work Team of the Minister's Advisory Council on Indigenous Education.

OPSBA received funding to act as the lead on developing a new Trustee Professional Development Module on Indigenous History and Truth and Reconciliation. More information on the module is available on page 10 of this report.

The Council provided input during the consultations leading up to the 2017-2018 Grants for Student Needs; one of the positive outcomes was a requirement for a full-time Indigenous lead in each board, and the release of dedicated funds for that position, ensuring that if there was money left in the funding envelope it would need to be spent on the Board's Action Plan.

The ITC will be undertaking a second progress report on the ways in which school boards are meeting the goals of the OPSBA-developed Charter of Commitment on First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education in the 2017-2018 school year.



OPSBA'S 2016-2017 PRIORITIES

LABOUR RELATIONS

AREAS OF EMPHASIS

- Continued leadership as a Designated Bargaining Agent in implementation of the School Boards Collective Bargaining Act (SBCBA)
- Ensuring government initiatives (legislation/policy) are assessed from the labour relations/collective bargaining perspective and influenced, where necessary, on behalf of OPSBA Member Boards
- Effective service and support to all OPSBA member boards in ongoing labour relations/collective bargaining services and track board experience with contract implementation for forward planning
- Share information and learning, and exchange ideas through the OPSBA Board of Directors, Labour Relations Symposium, Senior Negotiators and the Public Council of Ontario Directors of Education
- Gathering and reporting on board experience with contract implementation
- Continued development of the Provincial Portal and strategies to enhance its use
- Strong relationships with key education partners



ACHIEVEMENTS

- Concluded and ratified fully funded, equitable, two-year extensions to both central and local collective agreements for seven bargaining units:
 - CUPE
 - ETFO Teachers
 - ETFO Education Workers
 - Education Workers' Alliance of Ontario (EWAO)
 - Ontario Council of Educational Workers (OCEW)
 - OSSTF Teachers
 - OSSTF Education Workers
- In recognition of the significant leadership provided by Principals and Vice-Principals in ensuring positive learning conditions for students, the OPSBA Board of Directors approved a mandate that allowed for provincial discussions to take place related to extension agreements (up to 2 years) with Principal and Vice-Principal Associations.
- Continued work with Central Labour Relations Committees to enhance relationships with union leadership.
- Reported regularly to Executive Council in their capacity as the Labour Relations Steering Committee and the Board of Directors for discussion and advice related to collective bargaining and labour relations.
- Met with the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) on an ongoing basis to ensure open communication with the education sector and the Crown.
- Provided professional learning opportunities for school board officials through the Public Education Symposium (PES), the Ontario Association of School Business Officials (OASBO), the North American Association of Educational Negotiators (NAEN), the Canadian Education Negotiators (CEN), the OPSBA Labour Relations and Human Resources Symposium and Senior Negotiators meetings attended by staff from the 31 member boards.
- Provided regular communication to stakeholders through the Labour Relations Updates.

School Boards Collective Bargaining Act

Between January 2016 and February 2017, OPSBA was involved in a consultation process to review the School Boards Collective Bargaining Act (SBCBA).

Amendments to the SBCBA received Royal Assent March 27, 2017. Among the amendments, one 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 will be in effect September 1, 2017 to August 31, 2019.

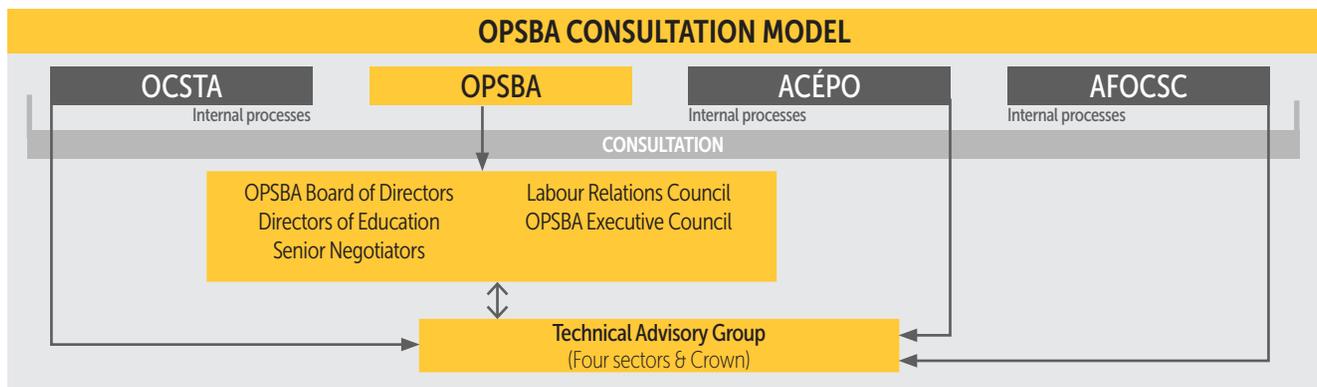
Central Bargaining

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

BARGAINING MODEL

OPSBA BARGAINING MODEL														
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation and approval of mandate and strategic direction • Ratification of central agreements as set out by OPSBA by-laws 	<p>← OPSBA BOARD OF DIRECTORS</p>	Trustees as elected by all sector school boards												
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act as Steering Committee to monitor bargaining and report to Board of Directors 	<p>← OPSBA EXECUTIVE COUNCIL</p>	Trustees as elected by the general membership at the Annual General Meeting												
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with reference groups • Framing of recommended mandate • Participation in table and backroom teams 	<p>← LABOUR RELATIONS COUNCIL Trustees - Executive Council:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Chair, PCODE + Directors of Education</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sr. Negotiators Chair + 3 HR/Negotiators</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sr. Business Officials</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>OPSBA Executive Staff • Finance, Program, Communications</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Legal Counsel (Ex Officio)</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>OPSBA Labour Relations Staff</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Chair, PCODE + Directors of Education	4	Sr. Negotiators Chair + 3 HR/Negotiators	4	Sr. Business Officials	2	OPSBA Executive Staff • Finance, Program, Communications	4	Legal Counsel (Ex Officio)	1	OPSBA Labour Relations Staff		<p>↔ TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP (Crown, ACÉPO, AFOCSC, OCSTA, OPSBA)</p> <p>↔ SR. NEGOTIATORS (all Member Boards)</p> <p>↔ PCODE (all Member Boards)</p> <p>↔ OPSBA BOARD OF DIRECTORS (Trustees representing all Member Boards)</p>
Chair, PCODE + Directors of Education	4													
Sr. Negotiators Chair + 3 HR/Negotiators	4													
Sr. Business Officials	2													
OPSBA Executive Staff • Finance, Program, Communications	4													
Legal Counsel (Ex Officio)	1													
OPSBA Labour Relations Staff														
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation and presentation of proposals 	<p>↓ NEGOTIATING TEAMS Team for each central table established Director of Education, Senior Negotiator / HR, OPSBA Spokesperson</p>													
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of issue expertise 	<p>← BACKROOM TEAMS Team for each central table established Table Teams plus: Senior Business Official, Principal, HR Official, Trustee, Supervisory Officer plus required expertise by issue</p>													

CONSULTATION MODEL



STATUS OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

OPSBA is the designated bargaining agent for English Public School Boards in the province of Ontario. Below are the unions and associations with whom OPSBA negotiated 2014-2017 central

collective agreements and 2017-2019 extension agreements, and the ratification dates:

SUMMARY			
Central Table	Total Bargaining Units*	2014-2017 Central Collective Agreement Ratification Date:	2017-2019 Extension Agreement Ratification Date:
CUPE	48	December 04, 2015	January 30, 2017
ETFO Teachers	34 Permanent and 32 Occasional	November 13, 2015	March 4, 2017
ETFO Education Workers	12	December 16, 2015	March 4, 2017
EWA0	6	December 17, 2015	March 4, 2017
OCEW	13	January 21, 2016	March 4, 2017
OSSTF Teachers	32 Permanent and 29 Occasional	September 18, 2015	April 12, 2017
OSSTF Education Workers	53	December 16, 2015	April 12, 2017

* Includes the School Authorities, excepting the treatment centres

The OPSBA member boards granted OPSBA the authority to represent English Public School Boards in the development of provincial terms and conditions of employment for Principals and Vice-Principals. Most recently, the OPSBA Board of Directors approved a mandate to enter into extension discussions (for up

to two years) with the Principal and Vice-Principal Associations (Association des directions et directions adjointes des écoles franco-ontariennes, the Catholic Principals' Council Ontario, and the Ontario Principals' Council).

COMMITTEES AND WORKGROUPS ARISING FROM COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

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 OPSBA 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.

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

ETFO FDK Class Size Committee: Memo to Directors released July 5, 2016 (regulation pending)

- 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 (regulation pending)

- 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, EWA0, 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: Draft recommendations developed

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

THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES HAVE COMPLETED THEIR WORK: CONT//:

OSSTF ECE Committee: Draft recommendations developed

- 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.

FOLLOWING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2014-2017 COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS, THE WORK OF THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES IS ONGOING:

Provincial Health and Safety Work Group

- With a mandate to address and implement key recommendations contained in the ETFO MOU Provincial Health and Safety Task Force Report and Recommendations, terms of reference have been established and the focus of this committee is the prevention of workplace violence. Best practices will be shared with boards.

CUPE Education Workers Diverse and Inclusive Workforce Committee

- A summary document is in development related to research around best practices that support diverse and inclusive workforces.

Regulated Support Staff Compensation Sub-Committee

- This consolidated sub-committee (EWAO and OSSTF Education Workers) is analyzing a data request sent to boards and the work of this committee is ongoing.

OSSTF Hiring Practices (Regulation 274)

- In abeyance.

Long Term Disability (LTD) Plan Working Groups

- Work of the ETFO and OSSTF Education Worker Work Groups, and the consolidated Work Group for CUPE, EWAO and OCEW continues to gather data related to LTD plans.

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

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

ADDITIONAL COMMITTEES TO BE FORMED AS PART OF THE 2017-2019 CENTRAL EXTENSION AGREEMENTS ARE:

OSSTF Adult Day School Teachers

- Assess the implications of additional funding for achieving wage parity with regular day school teachers.

CUPE Apprenticeship/Professional Development

- Develop an application process related to system investment funds for on-the-job training for employees as apprentices and/or provide skills upgrading opportunities.

OSSTF Education Worker Apprenticeship

- Develop an application process related to system investment funds for on-the-job training for employees as apprentices.

COMMITTEES AND WORKGROUPS ARISING FROM COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

PRINCIPAL AND VICE-PRINCIPAL COMMITTEES ARISING FROM PROVINCIAL DISCUSSIONS:

Future Role of the Principalship

- Focus groups to be conducted following review of survey details related to supports for single administrator schools. Proposals and pilot projects being considered which are related to other issues.

Recruitment and Retention Strategy Working Group

- A working group has been established and is reviewing retention statistics provided by the Ministry of Education. As well, discussion related to recruitment and retention strategies is ongoing.

Crisis Support for Principals and Vice-Principals Working Group

- Best practices related to crisis intervention and support has been collected from school boards. Additional information has been gathered from Principals and Vice-Principals by way of a questionnaire.

Long Term Disability (LTD) Plan Working Group

- Review of current school board LTD plans continues.

Benefits Transition Committee

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

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 Conference, and has established or maintains participation in:

COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES' ASSOCIATION (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 Labour Relations Council (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 (OPC) 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)

The Public Council of Ontario Directors of Education (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)

This workgroup 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)

The Canadian Education Negotiators (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)

The North American Association of Educational Negotiators (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.



OPSBA'S 2016-2017 PRIORITIES

EDUCATION FINANCE

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

- Advocacy for a full and complete review of the funding model grant categories to ensure that they support the current needs of school boards
- Resolution of pressing problems in funding such as transportation, Special Education, full-day kindergarten, and the impact of the School Food and Beverage policy
- Advocacy for expanded supports and services to support children and youth mental health and well-being
- Continued advocacy for full funding by the Ministry of any new initiative
- Support for the impact on boards of ongoing funding formula changes
- Promote full collaboration among the four school board systems and enhancement of partnership among boards
- Continue to advocate for action to address the federal-provincial discrepancy in equitable funding for First Nation students
- Advocacy for infrastructure funding including flexibility in funding approaches, transparency in the approval process for capital projects and alignment between government priorities and capital funding
- Advocacy for the Ministry to review the current Education Development Charges (EDC) regulation to allow boards more flexibility in terms of capital funding
- 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.
- Advocate for the importance of Community Schools to community sustainability

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Provided regular input to the Ministry in advance of development of the 2017-2018 Grants for Student Needs (GSN), culminating in a detailed written submission in January 2017. The submission was also provided to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs as part of the 2017 pre-budget consultations.

- Continued to be actively involved in the financial implications of implementation of central labour agreements, including the Employee Labour Health Trust.
- Continued to have ongoing dialogues with Ministry staff with regard to the impact for boards of funding formula changes such as special education and school board administration and governance, as well as the issue of transparency in the administration of capital programs.
- Monitored policy implications stemming from the committee implementing recommendations from the Student Transportation Competitive Procurement Review.
- Continued to monitor implementation and support member boards with regards to the Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline (PARG), particularly with the release of the new Guide to Pupil Accommodation Reviews in early 2016.
- Provided regular B & SB Memo updates to Senior Business Officials. A regularly updated summary of the memos is available on the OPSBA website.
- Through the Ontario Education Services Corporation (OESC) and its School Energy Coalition, OPSBA continued to be very involved in energy interventions at the Ontario Energy Board on behalf of member boards.
- OPSBA continued to play an active role in the Council for Ministers of Education, Canada Copyright Tariff Proceedings Sub-Committee and provided updates and advice for member boards whenever appropriate.
- Supported the federal private member's Bill C-241, An Act to Amend the Excise Tax Act (School Authorities), throughout 2016.

FINANCE ISSUES

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

In 2016-17, OPSBA staff submitted a brief during the Ministry's consultations regarding the development of the 2017-18 GSN. A modified version of the brief was later shared with the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs during the

provincial 2017 Pre-Budget Consultations. While recognizing the financial constraints facing the government, OPSBA advocated for commitment to funding for the key fiscal issues affecting our member boards, including before-and-after-school programming for six to 12-year-olds, facility operations, collective agreements, capital funding and special education. OPSBA renewed its recommendation for ongoing review of the funding model as a whole.

FINANCE DATA BASE & 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.

The site provides school board financial information from 1993 to present. Updates are added as they become available from the Ministry of Education. OPSBA staff continue to negotiate with the Ministry to allow access to its new financial database, which when established would enable individual school boards to review provincial financial data on all school boards and to benchmark and compare their data for all aspects of their operation.

Total 2017-2018 GSN was \$23.8 Billion.

Some highlights: *(full summary report available at www.opsba.org/advocacy-and-action/education-funding)*

- Per-pupil funding is projected to increase in 2017–18 to \$12,100 – an increase of 68 per cent since 2002–03.
- The 2017-18 GSN reflects implementation of recently ratified labour agreements and regular updates to the GSN, informed by recent engagement sessions and ongoing technical discussions.

New funding included:

- Salaries (\$257.2 million) and professional development (\$85.7 million);
- Employee health, life and dental benefits changes;
- Specific funding enhancements for special education and adult education (\$218.9 million);
- Community use of schools (\$800,000);
- Human Resource Transition Supplement (\$10 million);
- Reduction of class size in full-day kindergarten (\$16.7 million) and Grades 4 to 8 (\$39.6 million);
- School condition improvement and school renewal (\$1.4 billion in total);
- Greenhouse gas reduction (\$200 million);
- Indigenous education (enveloping per pupil amount of \$25.3 million);
- School administration;
- Student transportation (2 per cent increase);
- Utilities including natural gas, insurance, electricity etc. (2 per cent increase)

The Ministry will proceed with a multi-stakeholder consultation process regarding student transportation including funding and future policy development. Funding for school authorities will be adjusted as appropriate to reflect changes in funding to district school boards as detailed above.

On April 12, 2017, the Ministry of Education released a memorandum including information about Education Program – Other (EPO) funding, which will continue in the upcoming school year to support school boards' ability to implement targeted initiatives that meet the needs of its student demographic. The Ministry will continue to strive to simplify the reporting processes and requirements for EPO transfer payments. The goal of this is to reduce administrative burden, improve financial resource management and better support the renewed vision. The Ministry will also continue to examine opportunities to streamline EPO, such as by transferring programs to the GSN.

To facilitate school boards' budget planning for the 2017-18 school year, the Ministry confirmed that \$140.4 million of EPO funding will be allocated to school boards and school authorities to support Ministry priorities. Within this amount:

- \$101.4 million is allocated by program and by school board in this memorandum; and,
- \$39 million has been allocated by program, with school board allocations to be confirmed later in the year.



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.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT WORK TEAM

Members of the Policy Development Work Team (PDWT) dedicated the majority of their work this past year to support legislative and education initiatives that aligned with the OPSBA priorities, The Whole Child and Student Well-Being, Advocating for the Role of Trustees as Members of the Board and Building Leadership Capacity, and Education Finance.

The PDWT was heavily involved in the Association's legislative submissions over the course of the year, meeting several times in person as well as consulting over teleconference, Adobe Connect and through many email discussions. Topics covered included: School Transportation (bus driver shortages), Ontario Ombudsman oversight, Funding (emphasis on Capital Funding), Before-and-After School Programming (for children ages six to 12), Trustee Honoraria, the Ministry of Education's Well-Being Engagement Paper, the Early Years Framework Consultation, Community Hubs, School Board Governance, an upcoming Middle Years Strategy, and Healthy Schools, including updating the policy for Daily Physical Activity (DPA).

In addition to legislative and education initiatives, the PDWT had several guest speakers attend meetings throughout the year. These included:

- Irwin Elman, Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth
- Jane Cleve, Ministry of Child and Youth Services, Director, Specialized Services and Supports Branch
- Julie Williams, Ministry of Education, Manager of Program Policy and Coordinated Services, Special Education Policy and Programs Branch
- Shannon Fuller, Assistant Deputy Minister, Early Years Division
- Mary Lee, Senior Policy Advisor, Early Years Division
- Garfield Dunlop, PC Education Advisor
- MPP Peggy Sattler, NDP Education Critic
- Laura Kirby-McIntosh, Vice-President, Ontario Autism Coalition

On an as-needed basis, the PDWT and staff connected with OPSBA's Health and Safety Liaison, Chris Broadbent, regarding Occupational Health and Safety issues.

OPSBA SUBMISSIONS:

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

- May 15, 2017 – OPSBA Submission re: Bill 114, *Anti-Racism Act*
- April 26, 2017 – OPSBA Submission re: Bill 65, *Safer School Zones Act*
- April 3, 2017 – OPSBA Submission re: Bill 68, *Modernizing Ontario's Municipal Legislation Act*
- March 17, 2017 – OPSBA Response to the Ministry Consultation on the Well-Being Engagement Paper
- March 8, 2017 – Joint Association Submission to Standing Committee on General Government re: Bill 92, *School Boards Collective Bargaining Amendment Act*
- Feb. 10, 2017 – Joint Association Letter to Minister Hunter re: consultation on the *School Boards Collective Bargaining Act*
- February 1, 2017 – OPSBA Submission re: Building a Better Future - Early Years and Child Care Discussion Paper
- November 28, 2016 – OPSBA Submission re: Bill 45, *Election Statute Law Amendment Act*
- November 23, 2016 – OPSBA Submission re: before-and-after-school care for kindergarten to Grade 6 draft policies and guidelines for school boards
- October 20, 2016 – OPSBA Submission regarding proposed amendments to the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change's *Safe Drinking Water Act*, Ontario Reg. 243
- October 11, 2016 – OPSBA Submission to the Consultation re: Gender and Sex Information on Government IDs and Forms

The PDWT also provided input on the following matters that have financial implications for member boards:

- January 11, 2017 – OPSBA Brief to the Ministry of Education Regarding 2017-18 Education Funding Engagement Guide / GSN
- January 18, 2017 – OPSBA submission re: the 2017 Pre-Budget Consultations

AREAS FOR ONGOING CONSIDERATION

Next year, the work team will continue to delve deeper into the following issues:

- 2018 Municipal and School Board elections
- Community Hubs
- Student Transportation
- Code of Conduct template review
- Trustee appointments and by-elections

POLICY DEVELOPMENT WORK TEAM

MEMBERS

Donna Edwards, Durham, Central East
Shelley Laskin, Toronto, Central East
Jeanne Gray, Halton, Central West
David Green, Peel, Central West
Mary Hall, Hastings and Prince Edward, Eastern
John McAllister, Upper Canada, Eastern
Sheryl Evans-Price, Algoma, Northern (E)
George Saarinen, Lakehead, Northern (W)
Cheryl Lovell, Greater Essex County, Western
Arlene Morell, Thames Valley, Western
Howard Archibald, Ontario Northeast, First Nations

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL LIAISON

Cathy Abraham, Second Vice-President, Kawartha Pine Ridge

ALTERNATES

Linda Busuttil, Upper Grand, Central West
Tom Mahoney, Limestone, Eastern
Jennifer Sarlo, Algoma, Northern (E)
David Kircher, Rainy River, Northern (W)
Colleen Schenk, Avon Maitland, Western
Michael Brant, Hastings & Prince Edward, First Nations

* Central East alternate position vacant as of February 2017

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 2016-2017.

THE WHOLE CHILD AND STUDENT WELL-BEING – WELL-BEING STRATEGY
EPWT developed a survey for school boards to complete in order to create a comprehensive response to the Ministry of Education's Well-Being Engagement Paper. The comprehensive report was submitted to the Ministry in March 2017. OPSBA staff and work team members also attended consultation sessions around the province to listen to other perspectives and provide input.

THE WHOLE CHILD AND STUDENT WELL-BEING – POVERTY REDUCTION
EPWT continued its emphasis on the connection between the social determinants of health and student well-being and achievement, highlighting poverty as a key driver in report submissions and Ministry committee meetings. OPSBA's partnership with Campaign 2000 is on-going.

THE WHOLE CHILD AND STUDENT WELL-BEING AND NEW GENERATION EDUCATION – SPECIAL EDUCATION
EPWT continues to monitor the impact of the changes to the formula for the Differentiated Special Education Needs Amount during the four-year phase-in period. The work team and OPSBA staff have met with Ministry special education staff to share concerns. In addition, OPSBA has continued to advocate for the FASD provincial strategy, more special education supports for rural and remote areas, especially in the northern school boards and continued and expanded supports for students on the autism spectrum.

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. In May 2017, the Coalition held a follow-up meeting with Directors from the Ministries of Education, Health and Long-Term Care, Children and Youth Services, and the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skill Development. These 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 submitted a comprehensive response to the Ministry of Education Well-Being Strategy Engagement Paper. Planning for the fifth Summit on Children and Youth Mental Health in 2018 is underway with a theme of *Beyond Collaboration: Towards Integrated Systems for Supporting Child and Youth Mental Health*. Speakers and exhibitors will share evidence-based strategies and approaches that participants can review and implement within the context of their own community and school context. The Summit will be held on April 12 and 13, 2018, in Toronto.



THE WHOLE CHILD AND STUDENT WELL-BEING AND NEW GENERATION EDUCATION – FIRST NATION, MÉTIS AND INUIT EDUCATION

EPWT advocates for the implementation of Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Committee’s Final Report with regards to curriculum. A First Nation 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 13 of this report.

THE WHOLE CHILD AND STUDENT WELL-BEING AND NEW GENERATION EDUCATION – FRENCH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (FSL)

The work team drafted and submitted a concept paper proposal to the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development to request funding to investigate the labour market need for qualified French language teachers and support staff to support the significant growth in the demand for French Immersion and other French language programs. The Work Team is currently awaiting a decision on the proposal. 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 a Board’s ability to deliver high-quality and sustainable programming and instruction.

NEW GENERATION EDUCATION – EQAO

The OPSBA Discussion Paper *EQAO and Large Scale Testing in Ontario* was finalized and distributed to education partners and presented to the Minister’s policy staff. EPWT is advocating for a dialogue with education partners to discuss the recommendations within the report.

NEW GENERATION EDUCATION – EXEMPLARY INDIGENOUS EDUCATION STRATEGIES

The work team selected exemplary Indigenous education strategies as the focus of its 2016-17 survey of member boards. This survey builds on the OPSBA website repository of effective practice. In the 2015-16 school year exemplary elementary

mathematics practices that have an impact on student learning were posted at www.opsba.org.

NEW GENERATION EDUCATION-HIGHLY SKILLED WORKFORCE

The work team reviewed recommendations from the Highly Skilled Workforce Expert Panel that applied to education. The feedback received has been used to inform the work at the Ministry Initiatives Highly Skilled Workforce Sub-committee.

EDUCATION PROGRAM WORK TEAM

MEMBERS

Tom Henderson, Ontario North East, Northern (E)
Trudy Tuchenhagen, Lakehead, Northern (W)
Caroll Carkner, Upper Canada, Eastern
Marjorie Adam, Renfrew County, Eastern
Jan Johnstone, Bluewater, Western
Judy Cairncross, Avon Maitland, Western
Loralea Carruthers, York Region, Central East
Patrice Barnes, Durham, Central East
Kathi Smith, Waterloo Region, Central West
Marty Fairbairn, Upper Grand, Central West
Mary Lynch-Taylor, Kawartha Pine Ridge, First Nations

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL LIAISON

Jerry Chadwick, First Vice-President, Toronto DSB

ALTERNATES

Louise Clodd, Trillium Lakelands, Central East
Alex Johnstone, Hamilton-Wentworth, Central West
Keith Penny, Ottawa-Carleton, Eastern
Carol Stevens, Near North, First Nations
Bob McEachren, Algoma, Northern (E)
Mark Mannisto, Superior-Greenstone, Northern (W)
Julia Burgess, Greater Essex County, Western





LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

OPSBA is proud of its expertise and track record in the area of effective advocacy.

The Association is a respected voice in the province on every issue that affects the education agenda and has been fully engaged this year in creating and influencing positive change.

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, draw media attention.

OPSBA monitors all 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 also sends regular Legislative Updates to all member boards.

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 are also contributing members on a number of government/ministry advisory groups including:

- Minister's Early Years Advisory Committee
- Minister's Education Partnership Table
- Minister's Advisory Council on First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education and associated Working Team
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission Curriculum Steering Committee
- Early Years Advisory Group
- 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)
- Kindergarten Program Document and Addendum to Growing Success Implementation Working Group
- Trillium List Advisory Committee
- Ministry Transformation Table
- Ministry Initiatives Committee
 - Highly Skilled Work Force Ministry Initiatives Sub-Committee
 - Collaborative Professionalism Ministry Initiatives Sub-Committee
 - Renewed Math Strategy Ministry Initiatives Sub-Committee
 - Student Well-Being Ministry Initiatives Sub-Committee
- Student Well-Being and Advisory Committee
- Community Hubs Capacity Development Reference Group (Ministry of Infrastructure)

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 & Safety Association
- Ontario School Bus Association
- OMERS

In areas such as copyright or First Nations education, the CSBA gives its members a national voice and opportunities for influence beyond the provincial level. President Laurie French represents OPSBA on the CSBA Board of Directors.

We continue to strategically collaborate with many other education partners to strengthen the impact of our influence on key education issues. We are pleased to acknowledge our fellow trustee associations, the Council of Directors of Education, the Ontario Principals' Council, the Council of School Business Officials, the Ontario Association of School Business Officials, Ontario Student Trustees' Association, Teachers' Federations, the Ontario College of Teachers, the Education Quality and Accountability Office, The Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations and other supportive groups. OPSBA is proud of its role in the expansion of the Ontario Coalition for Children and Youth Mental Health and the growing profile of the Coalition as a source of professional expertise in matters affecting student well-being.

The past year has demonstrated that our strong capacity for effective advocacy positions us to work successfully for students and for public education through challenging times. We will continue to invest our energies in building on this track record in the coming year.

MUNICIPAL

OPSBA continued its advocacy for school boards and trustees with the promotion of Local Government Week which occurred October 16 to 22, 2016. The goal remained to increase youth and public awareness about the important role local government plays in our communities. Through the PDWT, 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 students
- Online resources and video links

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.

The next Municipal and School Board election will be held on Monday, October 22, 2018.

PROVINCIAL

On a regular basis, OPSBA provided Legislative Updates to all members with regards to activities at Queen's Park. The Legislative Assembly of Ontario was in session from September 12, 2016, until June 1, 2017. In July 2016, MPP Mitzie Hunter (Scarborough—Guildwood) became the Minister of Education. In August 2016, MPP Indira Naidoo-Harris (Halton) became Associate Minister of Education (Early Years and Child Care). In January 2017, building on her previous role as Associate Minister, Naidoo-Harris became the Minister Responsible for Early Years and Child Care. Minister Hunter attended the September 2016 OPSBA Board of Directors meeting, and a separate regional meeting with trustees from Northern boards in December 2016. Both Minister Hunter and Minister Naidoo-Harris presented at the Public Education Symposium in January 2017.

Throughout the year, changes were made by both opposition parties and their shadow cabinets. Currently, Lorne Coe, MPP (Whitby—Oshawa), is the PC Associate Critic for Education and Peggy Sattler, MPP (London West), is the NDP Critic. Both parties participated in a joint work team meeting on May 12, 2017.

The next Ontario general election is scheduled to be held on or before June 7, 2018.

FEDERAL

As a member of the Canadian School Boards Association, OPSBA examines provincial and federal legislation that affects Ontario students and our member boards.

Currently, OPSBA is monitoring governance-related legislation in Quebec and a recent legal ruling regarding school board funding in Saskatchewan. The Association is also following the details for 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).

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)*. This includes providing ongoing advice on use of the *TeachAble Project* to promote educator awareness of accessibility issues and ensuring that boards are kept informed of accessibility requirements as they come on stream.

In 2016-17, OPSBA partnered with the Ontario Student Trustees' Association to produce a bilingual accessibility-themed film, entitled *By Any Measure*, showcasing the success of accessibility in Ontario schools.



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 2016-2017 year was an intensely active and productive year for OPSBA in achieving sustained media coverage on a variety of issues. Throughout the year, OPSBA president Laurie French was a valued commentator, interviewed by the mainstream media on issues that impacted public education.

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. 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 were regularly distributed to all trustees, directors of education, senior human resources and finance officials, and communication officers. Some of the additional communication resources initiated by the Association included:

- Labour Relations Updates, which provide current and relevant updates on the latest in provincial negotiations
- An extensive range of feature stories in OPSBA's flagship magazine *Education Today* touched on issues including: the value of school boards across Canada, digital citizenship, coding, and a special issue on brain research and education

The Communications Networking Group, which brings together school board communications officers, continues to be a valuable gathering for developing and sharing approaches to positive



communications with the public around student achievement and well-being. This network also includes communications staff from other education partner organizations such as the Ontario College of Teachers and the Ontario Principals' Council.

At the networking session at the Public Education Symposium in January, Shawn McKillop of the Grand Erie DSB and May Moore of OPSBA discussed school board communications strategies for Pupil Accommodation Reviews. Peel DSB's Ryan Reyes' "Let's Talk About Sex" presentation gave an outstanding breakdown of that board's communications strategies during the rollout of the Revised Health and Physical Education Curriculum.

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.



OPSBA IN THE MEDIA: VOICE OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

OPSBA is the first and most consistent point of contact for reporters and columnists when they are looking for a provincial perspective on education issues. This past year, there were many major stories featuring OPSBA commentary.

Here are some media excerpts of OPSBA’s President Laurie French in 2016-17:

Trustees deserve support, not trashing
Letter to the Editor, Toronto Star, April 19, 2017
 Re: School trustees have lost public trust — and outlived their role, Cohn, April 17

Once again, a giant and unjust leap of logic on the part of Martin Regg Cohn. His latest column, as have two previous ones, takes the reader from his fair criticism of the actions of some trustees in a school board to a universal call of “off with their heads!” for all 700 school trustees in Ontario.

Once again, he ignores and misrepresents the role and accountability of boards as the only level of government directly and legally responsible for student achievement and well-being. It is a level of government that is local and accessible and doesn’t require attending the legislature to draw attention to a worthy issue.

Rural Ontario school closings hit communities hard
By Kristin Rushowy, Toronto Star, Jan. 22, 2017

Laurie French, of the Ontario Public School Boards’ Association, said with changes to remote and rural school funding, boards are now asking for a “local priorities grant” that could help fund things like caretakers or a principal or secretary to keep small schools open.

Province offers education unions contract extensions
By Kristin Rushowy, Toronto Star, Oct. 4, 2016

The Ontario Public School Boards’ Association said it expects to be contacted by the government “now that there is clarity of the unions’ interest in exploring an extension.”

“If this becomes a concrete proposal, OPSBA will consult with its member boards,” added president Laurie French.

OPSBA ON TWITTER

Twitter has continued to be an important digital tool for the organization throughout the year. 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 2016 OPSBA AGM (#OPSBAagm) and the 2017 Public Education Symposium (#PESym17).

Significant social media campaigns included Twitter strategies regarding Education Week, education funding, religious accommodation issues, the value of democratically elected school trustees, and the OPSBA Awards.





2017 OPSBA AWARDS

Each year, the Ontario Public School Boards' Association honours individuals who have made significant contributions in the field of education. While it is impossible to honour all those special people who make a difference, the recipients of these awards represent the many who contribute to the creativity and hard work that make our schools and education system leaders in the world.

AWARD OF MERIT AND AWARDS OF RECOGNITION IN MEMORY OF JACK A. MACDONALD



The winners of these student awards are selected on the basis of a sound academic record throughout their career, accompanied by outstanding community service and leadership. This year's Award of Merit was presented to Riley Beam, Chippewa Secondary School, Near North DSB. A Certificate of Recognition was awarded to Rachel Stripp, Pineland Public School, Halton DSB.

OPSBA AWARD OF EXCELLENCE AND ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

The OPSBA Award of Excellence and the Achievement Award are presented by the local board to volunteers for outstanding, exemplary and/or unique contributions to the overall well-being of the school or community through in-school, board-wide, extra-curricular and/or volunteer activity. This year's Award of Excellence was presented to Eileen Haven, Executive Secretary, Lakehead DSB.

The Achievement Award was presented to the following individuals:

Martha McClelland
PARENT VOLUNTEER
Agnew H. Johnston Public School, Lakehead DSB

Sheila Marcinyshyn
VOLUNTEER AND SPECIAL
EDUCATION ADVISORY
COMMITTEE MEMBER
Lakehead DSB

Kelly Matyasovszky
VOLUNTEER AND SPECIAL
EDUCATION ADVISORY
COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR
*Valley Central Public School,
Lakehead DSB*

Eileen Haven
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
Lakehead DSB

THE PRESIDENT'S AWARD



This award recognizes trustees who have given 25 or more years of service to public education. This year's recipient was Gale Simko-Hatfield, Greater Essex County DSB.

FRED L. BARTLETT MEMORIAL AWARD



This award is given to an active or retired member of the teaching profession for outstanding contribution to education in Ontario. This year's recipients were Sonya White, Stacey Giffen, and Jennifer Jager, Itinerant Teachers of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Upper Grand DSB. They were instrumental in production of the recent OPSBA/OSTA-AECO bilingual accessibility-themed film *By Any Measure*, showcasing the success of accessibility in Ontario schools.

RETIREMENTS

OPSBA thanks retiring Executive Director Gail Anderson and Director of Communications Jeff Sprang for their many years of service to Ontario's public education sector.



Since 1987, Gail Anderson has played a key role in school board associations and in 1989 helped amalgamate three associations, becoming one of the founders of the Ontario Public School Boards' Association. Under Gail's energetic leadership, OPSBA has embraced innovation and created environments where staff and students can achieve their full potential. Over her 20 years as Executive Director she has steered OPSBA through adversity and triumph, and always with integrity and compassion.



Jeff Sprang has been a deeply respected member of OPSBA's staff for close to 20 years. He has been an insightful leader in strategic thinking on education issues, communications, government relations, media relations and labour relations. Throughout his career Jeff has built a deep trust and respect with media, school boards and government officials. His is a voice that was always listened to.



ONTARIO EDUCATION SERVICES CORPORATION

Ontario Education Services Corporation (OESC) is a non-profit corporation that was established by all 72 Ontario school boards through the four Trustees' Associations and the Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE) in 2002 to provide the highest quality services and programs to all boards that meet demonstrated needs in the sector at prices below what boards would pay individually to purchase or provide the service internally. The delivery of services by OESC in this manner on behalf of school boards is effective and efficient. OESC has established and maintains an excellent reputation in the Ontario education community and is governed by a Board of Directors comprising the Executive Directors of the four Trustees' Associations and CODE and a representative from the Council of Senior Business Officials.

SERVICES

Behaviour Management Systems

An ongoing OESC program, Behavioural Management Systems (BMS), has been implemented in a majority of Ontario boards, with very positive feedback. This much-needed non-violent crisis prevention and intervention training program has resulted in more than 400 certified board trainees. The BMS service is substantially less expensive than similar programs and is the only one tailored specifically to the needs of school boards within the Ontario context. The expansion of this program continues with new boards becoming clients. We now serve about 85% of all school boards.

Centre for Governance Excellence: Governance Training

OESC, the four School Board Associations and CODE have partnered with the Ministry of Education to provide a professional development program for trustees. It offers modules that have been well-received by all four school systems. The latest module, Internal Audit and the Role of Audit Committees, is now online. In addition, OESC is in the process of updating its Strategic Planning Module (Module 6) to align with the release of the Ministry's new Guide on Multi-Year Strategic Planning.

Compass for Success

Ownership of the Compass for Success (C4S) service was assumed by OESC in January 2013. The service provides a data warehouse and sophisticated analytical tools that boards, principals and teachers can use to gather and analyze data on student achievement and well-being over time. C4S is a very cost-

effective option and the number of Ontario school boards using this service is expanding annually.

Conscious Classrooms

This is an innovative and practical training program for teachers and other professionals in the strategies to work effectively with challenging behaviour of students. The pilot project has concluded in four school boards. In the spring of 2017, additional boards expressed an interest in this ground-breaking initiative.

Equity and Inclusive Education

OESC has concluded a project with the Ministry of Education to produce a video and background resources for Directors of Education. In addition, the corporation has completed a "Student Voice" companion video. These resources are part of the work with Human Rights and LGBTQ students.

OESC is also close to completing video modules on LGBTQ issues and supports for students with each of the three provincial principals' associations.

School Energy Coalition

As the official intervenor representing all school boards at the Ontario Energy Board, OESC, through the School Energy Coalition (SEC), works to protect the interests of all boards in reducing and stabilizing energy costs. The OESC status report to school boards in March 2017 noted that total savings in the first quarter of 2017 were \$670,000. The cumulative savings to Ontario school boards since 2004 is approximately \$172 million. In the coming months, OESC will be acting in the major Ontario Power Generation case.

Website

OESC intends to launch a redesigned and updated website in the summer of 2017.

New and Emerging Work

- A partnership with the Ministry of Education to assist Boards in establishing and sustaining multi-year strategic plans. Work will establish a roster of trainers who will serve as support to any board in Ontario.
- Potential partnership with the Ministry of Education to develop trustee resources in governance for the 2018 Municipal and School Board Elections.
- Potential work with the Ministry of Education on the four prevalent medical conditions for students.

Ten good reasons why School Boards belong in OPSBA

- 
- 
- Effective advocacy on issues that make a difference for students: education funding, child care, Indigenous education, community hubs, children and youth mental health, special education, technology in teaching and learning, 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 (OESC)
 - Practical support for complying with legislative and regulatory change including deliberations regarding early years education, education funding, and amendments to the *School Boards Collective Bargaining Act* and *Modernizing Ontario's Municipal Elections Act*
 - Strategic relations with education partners across Ontario and Canada
 - Effective leadership in collective bargaining
 - OPSBA is seen as a respected source of consultation by the Provincial Government for education initiatives



BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2016-17*

Cathy Abraham
SECOND
VICE-PRESIDENT
Kawartha Pine Ridge DSB

Carrie Andrews
CENTRAL WEST
Peel District School Board

Michael Barrett
PAST PRESIDENT
Durham District School Board

Patrice Barnes
CENTRAL EAST
Durham DSB

Micheline 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

Carol Chan
CENTRAL EAST
York Region 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

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

Tiffany Ford
CENTRAL EAST
Toronto District School Board

Laurie French
PRESIDENT
Limestone District School Board

Peter Garrow
FIRST NATIONS
Upper Canada District School Board

Tom Henderson
NORTHERN (EAST)
District School Board Ontario North East

Susan Humphries
EASTERN
Renfrew County District School Board

Robert Hunking
WESTERN
Avon Maitland District School Board

Alex Johnstone
CENTRAL WEST
Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board

Jan Johnstone
WESTERN
Bluewater District School Board

Parthi Kandavel
VICE-PRESIDENT,
ENROLMENT
Toronto District School Board

Gerald Kleist
NORTHERN (WEST)
Keewatin-Patricia District School Board

Shelley Laskin
CENTRAL EAST
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

Mark Mannisto
NORTHERN (WEST)
Superior-Greenstone District School Board

Cecile Marcino
NORTHERN (WEST)
Keewatin-Patricia 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

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

Doug Pratley
VICE-PRESIDENT,
WESTERN
Avon Maitland District School Board

Matt Reid
WESTERN
Thames Valley District School Board

Suzanne Ruttan
EASTERN
Limestone District School Board

Dave Shields
VICE-PRESIDENT,
EASTERN
Renfrew County District School Board

Carol Ann Sloat
CENTRAL WEST
Grand Erie District School Board

Linda Stone
CENTRAL EAST
Durham District School Board

Ruth Tisdale
WESTERN
Thames Valley District School Board

Rick Williams
VICE-PRESIDENT,
ENROLMENT
Peel District School Board

Kathleen Woodcock
CENTRAL WEST
Waterloo Region District School Board

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 & 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

NORTHERN

SUB REGION WEST

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



OPSBA Associate Director of Communications May Moore at PES 2017.



OPSBA Executive Council, 2016-17.



OPSBA President Laurie French (centre), First VP Jerry Chadwick and Second VP Cathy Abraham thank Past President Michael Barrett at the 2016 AGM in Ottawa.



The Glee Club from Peel DSB performs at PES 2017.



David Usher speaks at the 2016 OPSBA AGM.



Laurie French
PRESIDENT
*Ontario Public School
Boards' Association*



Gail Anderson
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
*Ontario Public School
Boards' Association*

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