

## President's Message

April 11, 2022

### EDI Update

Last month we welcomed District EDI reps to our Provincial Council meeting. They are part of each local executive providing support and guidance on issues related to equity and anti-oppression. Over the past few weeks, several affinity groups for OPC Members have been launched for Black, Jewish, 2SLGBTQ+, Muslim and South-Asian Administrators. Two more will be starting in the next few weeks for East-Asian Members and for Members with a disability. The groups are an ongoing process in response to requests and in collaboration with community. More information on joining new and continuing groups is available on the [Affinity Spaces section](#) of our website. In this month's [EDI Director's Blog](#), Irfan collaborates with two educators on how schools can better support Muslim staff and students during the month of Ramadan and throughout the year.

As we continue our work towards transforming our systems and structures and fulfilling the recommendations from the [Census Report](#), we invite expressions of interest for the new Policy and Governance sub-committee. This group will examine, review and make recommendations related to current OPC policies (including our Constitution) and practices and also propose new policies and practices that can be considered and adopted by Provincial and Districts. Members who are interested are invited to [complete the form](#) by April 19. If you recently submitted an application for the EDI Advisory Committee, you can have that submission applied to this opportunity by contacting [Irfan Toor](#) or [myself](#).

### Learning to Recharge Live Webinar

Canada Life, our benefits provider, is sponsoring a live event on Wednesday May 4 at 1:00 p.m. (EDT) entitled *Don't Let Work and Life Drain You – Learn to recharge*, in recognition of Mental Health Week. The presenters will share tips and insights on exploring strategies and resources to recharge and find balance; brainstorming actions that could prevent or reduce workload stress; talking about workload management; and exploring activities to help you relax, calm your mind and find energy. No registration is required – just click on the [event link](#) just before the start time. As this is a Microsoft Teams Live event, you'll need to download the [Microsoft Teams app](#) before the webinar.

### Media

- [Extent of impact in schools of next wave of pandemic remains unclear](#)
- [Children and teens with autism faced long waits during pandemic](#)
- [First Nations students share messages of hope and fear](#)
- [Schools to keep reporting absences until end of June](#)

- [Union says 6<sup>th</sup> wave is driving teacher absences](#)
- [School violence remains a troubling issue](#)
- [Transgender kids says schools need to do more to protect them](#)
- [Ottawa trustee proposes motion to continue mask wearing](#)
- [Canadians get a failing grade in Civics](#)

## Queen's Park

There were questions in the House last week about the [mental health and addictions services covered by OHIP](#) and the [wait list for Ontario Autism Program](#).

The government announced [additional support for students with special education needs](#) with funding to the Down Syndrome Association of Ontario, the Child Development Institute and Children at Risk. It is also expanding summer 2022 learning programs for students with special education needs.