

## President's Message

April 4, 2022

Last week, Pope Francis offered an apology to residential school survivors, saying he was sorry for the serious and lasting harm caused by some clergy members who operated the church- and state-sponsored residential school system. We acknowledge the importance of this first step to Indigenous survivors, their families and communities, and support the request that the apology be offered directly to Indigenous communities by the Pope during a visit to Canada. We all have a shared responsibility to continue to learn and acknowledge the intergenerational impact of residential schools on Indigenous communities as we seek to honour truth and reconciliation.

### Are You Retiring This Year?

If you are retiring at the end of this school year, email [membership@principals.ca](mailto:membership@principals.ca) with your retirement date so we can record your employment status change, as your school board does not share that information with us.

If you have **LTD coverage**, you are not eligible to maintain it after retirement. Complete and submit the [Application to Terminate LTD Coverage form](#) to [OPC Benefits](#). Premiums are non-refundable. For boards where LTD is a condition of employment, proof of retirement will be required prior to termination. If you have **optional insurance** (life, accidental death and dismemberment), indicate on the [Application to Terminate or Maintain Optional Insurance Coverage form](#) whether you wish to terminate or maintain it. You can maintain this coverage up to age 70 if you become an OPC [Associate or Term Member](#) within 30 days of retiring. If your premiums were paid through payroll deduction, you'll need to complete the [Pre-authorized Debit Agreement](#) and submit a void cheque for premium withdrawal from your bank account.

We also have a [tip sheet](#) (login required) with general guidelines for retirement. You can also check the [retirement section](#) under PST resources for additional information.

### Student Mental Health Opportunity

Applications are now open through Student Mental Health Ontario for ThriveSMH, a provincial [student reference group](#). This is a group of students working within School Mental Health Ontario to amplify the voices of students and support equitable school mental health, focussing on ways to reduce stigma and promote mental health. The group is looking for students in grades 7-11 from publicly funded schools across Ontario. Students with identities that have been historically disadvantaged, oppressed and marginalized, including those that self-identify as Black, Indigenous, racialized, a person with a disability, diverse bodied and/or 2SLGBTQI+ are encouraged to apply. The application is open until April 13, 2022.

### Media

- [Federal and provincial government sign child care deal](#)

- [How educators are navigating masks in the classroom](#)
- [Board Chair seeks help with decline in student mental health](#)
- [Trustee seeks clarity on powers of schools boards on health and safety issues](#)
- [Truth, justice and healing – Métis and Inuit delegates meet with Pope](#)
- [NDP promise universal mental health care](#)
- [Students need flexibility and understanding when returning to school after a concussion](#)
- [Hamilton board asks government to review school holidays](#)
- [Students are driving conversations about truth and reconciliation](#)

## **Queen's Park**

There were questions in the House last week about [lack of communication between ministry and schools on ongoing changes](#); [additional child care spaces](#); [waiting list for Ontario Autism Program](#); [waits for children's mental health supports](#); [Ontario Autism Program waiting lists](#); [increased pay for ECEs](#); [additional funding for youth mental health services](#); and [PPM 81](#) (medical downloading onto educators).

The government announced funding to develop new services and supports that respond to the distinct needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, Two Spirit and queer [\(LGBT2SQ\)](#) children, youth and families in the child welfare system.

The government also announced [funding for student mental health and well-being](#) programs with funding to the Women's Brain Initiative, School Mental Health Ontario, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, MADD Canada and Ophea.