

## President's Message

March 21, 2022

### Supporting Student Mental Health Professional Learning Network

Where do you find the time, energy and resources to lead with a focus on student mental health? Join us on March 29 at 3:00 pm EDT for a [75-minute virtual PLN](#) with provincial colleagues to support you in lightening your leadership load in using School Mental Health Ontario (SMH-ON) resources and building a mentally healthy school. You'll have an opportunity to explore several discussions including how to work with your Mental Health Lead, how to incorporate mental health into your School Improvement Plan and how to consider equity when supporting students' mental health.

### People for Education Report

Today People for Education released its [Annual Ontario School Survey](#). It focuses on the ongoing challenges of the pandemic and reports that

- 90% of principals report that coordinating staffing is a top challenge.
- Less than half of principals believe their school has the resources necessary to support the mental health and well-being of their students.
- The hybrid learning model is resulting in increased workload, stress and anxiety; less ability to support students with special needs or disabilities; unrealistic expectations on teachers; lower rates of student attendance, participation and engagement; and minimal advance notice provided by the government for planning.
- The pandemic has widened the achievement and engagement gaps for students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, racialized students and students in rural areas.
- The consistent lack of consultation and communication between the government and school leaders has left many principals feeling overlooked, overworked and undervalued.

We took part in an [interview with the Toronto Star](#) about the findings. During this very busy time, we want to thank all those who took part in the survey. Your front-line experience is critical to ensuring this data is available and up-to-date.

### 2021 Membership Tax Receipts

If you pay OPC membership fees by cheque or credit card, paid retroactive fees by cheque or credit card during 2021, are employed by Renfrew or Superior-Greenstone or are a Term Member, your 2021 membership tax receipt is available on our [website](#) under My Profile, Member Tax Rec, 2021. If you pay by payroll deduction, use the amount recorded in box 44 on your T4 slip. Claim the amount on the T4 slip **or** on your OPC membership tax receipt, **not both**. You do not need the receipt, but you can keep a copy for your records. Associate fees are not tax deductible, but copies are available on our website under My Profile, Associate Rec, 2021. For information or questions, email [membership@principals.ca](mailto:membership@principals.ca)

## EDI Affinity Groups

We are pleased to announce that several affinity groups for Members are ready to begin in the next few weeks. Please see [our website](#) for more information. There are still several groups that are in development, but if you are interested in supporting one or would like to request a specific identity-based group, please contact Irfan Toor, Director of EDI at [itoor@principals.ca](mailto:itoor@principals.ca) or [equity@principals.ca](mailto:equity@principals.ca).

## Media

- [OHRC report looks at English speaking students only](#)
- [Teens need Holocaust education](#)
- [Sick Kids lobbies for masks in schools to stay](#)
- [Science curriculum gets an update](#)
- [Students take aim at period poverty](#)

## Articles requiring a paid subscription

- [Government stands firm on ending masking in schools](#)
- [What “normal” will look like in schools post restrictions](#)

## Queen’s Park

There were questions in the House last week about a [childcare deal with the federal government](#), [mental health and addiction services](#), [waiting list for mental health treatment](#), funding for the [Ontario Autism Program](#), [removal of mask mandates in schools](#), [student safety and COVID-19 measures](#) and [keeping mask mandates in schools](#).