

President's Message

March 28, 2022

Provincial Council Meeting

Last week we held our Council meeting, with a hybrid of in-person and virtual attendance. Thanks to all Councillors, Local Leaders and EDI reps who participated, took part in important discussions, brought local issues and concerns to the provincial table and represented their colleagues. We also held our Annual Awards Dinner, honouring our new Life Members, Difference Makers and the Outstanding Award in Education. Highlights of the meeting will be sent to all Members later this week.

Staying Within the Boundaries

School leaders navigate murky waters, make difficult and often unpopular decisions and supervise students and staff while operating within professional ethics, school board policies and the law. You also face the risk of overstepping boundaries and becoming subject to scrutiny, investigation and possible discipline. Three of the more common areas where Members may experience boundary challenges are social media and electronic communication, school leaders as parents and relationships with staff. We encourage you to familiarize yourself with the information contained in this [Register article](#) on Staying Within the Boundaries.

Advocacy Week at Queen's Park

During the week of March 7-11, our Executive took part in a virtual advocacy week with MPPs. We have held this event in person for the past 20 years. Over the course of the week, we met with [39 MPPs](#) from all parties. We shared the pre-election [policy paper](#) developed over the past couple of months; had meaningful discussions about the issues, challenges and concerns we continue to have; answered questions; and renewed our offer to support them with their work related to education.

6-Week Mental Fitness Challenge

Starling Minds will be offering [a new webinar series](#) on Thursdays from April 7 – May 12 at 7:00 pm EDT. It will incorporate deeper Cognitive Behavioural Therapy training techniques in managing stress, anxiety and burnout. It will include guided support, weekly live sessions, a Q and A and exercises to put learning into action. To take part, [register](#) with access code OPCMEMBER, take your check-up before the first session and attend and participate in the various interactive activities throughout the challenge. Learn more about the Startling Minds program through [this video](#). If you have any questions, contact members@starlingminds.com.

Media

- [Government plans to download health support services to educators](#)
- [Students protest end of mask mandate in schools](#)
- [Some students choosing to continue wearing masks](#)
- [Lifting of masks no light switch for pre-pandemic life](#)
- [Teacher will keep her mask on until last student does](#)
- [Photo series shows what love means for people with Down Syndrome](#)
- [A principal's harrowing escape from Ukraine](#)
- [Board warns of extraordinary development needs of Kindergarten students](#)

Queen's Park

There were questions in the House last week about the [removal of climate change](#) from the new science curriculum, [principals struggling during pandemic](#), [child care agreement](#), [mental health needs of students and staff in schools](#), [needs-based funding system for Autism supports](#) and [reinstating EQAO testing](#).

The ministry announced \$550,000 in initiatives to help [keep kids safe in class and online](#). The funding will support programs that combat sex-trafficking, violence against women, bullying and cyberbullying.