

President's Message

February 6, 2023

Staff Shortages Poll

In preparation for our upcoming Advocacy Week with MPPs in early March, as well as feedback we have been requested to provide to the Minister, we want to take these opportunities to focus on the issue of staff shortages, as we know all of you are dealing with this challenge almost daily in your schools. To advocate appropriately, we need to collect some data. [Here is the poll](#) we are asking you to complete **by February 19**. Please respond if you are currently working in a school. It will take you about 4 minutes and should not require you to look for any data. We are asking you to provide us with your best estimates regarding staff shortages, based on an average 5-day week in January. We also welcome any suggestions or recommendations you have to tackle this issue. Thank you for your prompt attention to this very important issue.

Ministry of Labour Inspections Have Started

The Ministry of Labour has started conducting focused inspections of schools until **March 31, 2023**. The inspectors are conducting field visits to check that school boards are complying with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* and its regulations. We have developed a [tip sheet](#) to assist you with this process, and have also sent a [letter](#) to the ministry expressing our concerns about some aspects of the process. We are hopeful that by now, your school board has provided you with advice and training in advance of the inspections to ensure that you are adequately prepared. If you have not heard from your board about the inspections, please reach out to your Supervisory Officer. If you have any questions, please contact your Local District or PST to relay your concerns.

Unplug and Unwind with Mindfulness Workshops

Starling Minds will be offering a 4-week workshop, entitled Unplug and Unwind with Mindfulness, to help you learn techniques for better mental clarity, presence of mind and calmness through the power of breath, meditation and more. It will be offered on Tuesdays from February 21 – March 24 at 7:00 p.m. EST. The workshops will help you to

- expand your window of tolerance to stay calm under stress
- understand the impacts of your thoughts and change your internal dialogue
- become more compassionate and kind towards yourself and others
- live a more easeful and peaceful life with mindfulness.

Find out more information and register here. If you have any questions, please reach out to members@starlingminds.com.

Media

- [First female teacher of African descent shares career highlights](#)

- [Online tool helps students learn Ojibwe](#)
- [Noticing a labour shortage? Here's what's going on in the job market](#)
- [Immigrant waits 2 years to be able to teach in Ontario](#)
- [Some boards plan to keep virtual learning in place](#)
- [Toronto board adopts mandatory Indigenous education](#)
- [Ontario fell thousands short of its autism program target](#)

Queen's Park

The House is in recess until February 21.