

President's Message

September 18, 2023

Staff Shortages Poll

In February, we conducted a poll on staff shortages so that we would have accurate information to provide to the Minister about how shortages are affecting you, schools and students. As we begin a new school year, we are hearing that those staffing issues continue to cause challenges in schools. As such, we would like to repeat that poll, to once again have accurate up-to-date data directly from schools. [Here is the poll](#) we are asking you to complete by Sunday, October 1. Please respond only 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 week in September. Thank you for your prompt attention to this very important issue.

EDI Update

As you begin the school year and reset your goals, actions and plans, how will you centre the needs of the most under-represented and under-served students in your school? Their needs have not disappeared, and need to remain at the forefront of your thoughts, especially in the wake of increasing resistance to anti-oppressive learning and attacks on marginalized identities. You can build your support for those students by participating in a range of professional learning opportunities through our Professional Learning (PL) department, by engaging in more learning related to the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action](#) (remember that Orange Shirt Day is Sept. 30th) and by listening to the voices of students and families in your community. Our PL and EDI departments are also here to support you in your learning. In part 1 of a series, EDI Director Irfan Toor reflects [in this blog post](#) on his conversations with Karen Timm (Durham DSB) on supporting neurodivergence in education and for educators who are neurodivergent.

Seeking Members for our Finance Committee

We are seeking OPC Members who have an interest or expertise in budget setting for not-for-profit organizations to participate in an ad-hoc committee, along with a few Provincial Councillors and Executive Members. We will be looking to ensure diverse representation with regard to region, identity, years of experience and panel as we review the committee applications. If you are interested, please complete this [form](#).

Bargaining Survey Coming

As we continue to prepare for the next round of our provincial bargaining, which should start once teacher contracts are concluded, we are working on developing a list of the items that will be our priorities at the bargaining table. To collect this data from Members, a survey is being developed, which you can expect to receive after Thanksgiving. We encourage you to respond, as your input and suggestions will form the basis of our planning going forward.

Quote to Ponder

"You won't do everything perfectly this year. But it's in the imperfection, you may discover your passions." – Love to Know

Media

- [School violence top issue at bargaining table for teachers](#)
- [Mandate letters to Minister directed towards education reforms](#)
- [Students/parents question board's weeding process for books](#)
- [Minister orders Peel board to stop throwing out books](#)
- [Ontario Human Rights Commission Statement – No Room for Hate in Schools](#)
- [Parents call for better air quality in schools](#)
- [Minister urges trustees to get "back to basics"](#)

Queen's Park

The House is in recess until September 25.