

President's Message

November 23, 2020

Census Results

Thank you to everyone who completed our first OPC Census. We know work is extremely busy right now and appreciate the time you took to provide this valuable information to us. The Census was completed by 2,855 Members, or 52% of you. Of our elementary Members, 1,190 or 51% completed it and 623 or 46% of our secondary Members did so. We also had over 300 responses from “other” Members such as those who work in both panels, system principals and those who may be on a leave. Over 1,000 comments were also provided with further information and shared experiences. Stay tuned for more data updates and next steps.

Taking or Returning from a Leave of Absence

If you have recently returned to work from a leave of absence, please notify [Membership Services](#) to update your membership status, if you have not already done so. If you cancelled your LTD coverage during the leave of absence, you will need to reapply for coverage. Medical evidence of good health and insurer's approval may be required. Email [OPC Benefits](#) for more information or to request the application package.

If you started a leave of absence this school year, contact [Membership Services](#) to ensure your membership is not interrupted. Interruptions may disentitle you to historical protective services coverage and eligibility for OPC Group Benefits (LTD, Life, AD&D).

In most cases, [applying for Associate status](#) will maintain your membership in good standing. Some leaves such as parental/pregnancy or long-term disability may qualify for a waiver of membership fees. Documentation from your board or insurer will be required.

School Absence Reporting Tool

Last week the ministry released a memo about the implementation of the [COVID-19 School Absence Online Reporting Tool](#) as the sole source of data for reporting new cases in schools. The tool will be used to monitor the potential impact of the virus. The expectation is that the reporting will be completed by the principal or their designate by 10:30 a.m. every day when school is open. Boards will continue to be in contact with Public Health Units for any suspected cases of COVID-19 in the school community. Please ensure you are following your board's protocols around this tool.

Managing Stress and Anxiety During COVID-19

We want to make you aware of a program related to COVID-19 that is available from [Starling Minds](#). It includes finding strategies to manage stress, maintaining healthy routines and managing worrisome thoughts. The program is free, confidential and anonymous. Log into your account to access these resources. If you have not yet signed up, you can do so by [creating an](#)

[account](#). Select the OPC from the dropdown list, then complete the registration page and enter your OPC Member Number. Please email members@starlingminds.com if you have further questions or concerns.

Media

- [Connecting students to STEM through traditional Indigenous teachings](#)
- [Education is the key to reconciliation](#)
- [Deteriorating youth mental health leaving a generation in distress](#)
- [How teens made Yukon one of the few places to ban conversion therapy](#)
- [No more snow days during pandemic](#)
- [Teacher shortage fueling unheard of recruitment practices](#)
- [Pandemic shows kids aren't as resilient as we think](#)
- [Peel police end controversial program to have officers in schools](#)

Queen's Park

There were questions in the House last week about [collapsed classrooms](#), [College standards and accreditation](#) and [potential shut down of schools](#).