

NOVEMBER 2022 ISSUE

# Catholic Teacher

MAGAZINE of the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association

## COMMUNITY OVER ISOLATION



**WOMEN LEADING  
THE PATH**

**PUTTING THE (YO)U  
IN UNION**

**OECTA'S AIDE  
STRATEGIC PLAN**

### **PLUS:**

Know More about #KnowMore  
Overcoming overwhelm  
Discipline panel decision



Classroom Management

Co-operative Education

First Nations, Métis, and  
Inuit Studies



French as a Second Language

Guidance and Career Education

Integration of Information and  
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Kindergarten

Mathematics Grades 7 and 8

Mathematics Primary/Junior

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## INBOX

- 4 PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
- 5 EVENTS
- 6 CALENDAR / UP FRONT

## FEATURES

- 10 WOMEN LEADERS: LEADING THE PATH  
**By Antonietta Chiavaro, Julie Guèvremont, and Tracy Trofimencoff**
- 12 CATHOLIC TEACHERS INVITE ONTARIANS TO #KNOWMORE ABOUT WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR CLASSROOMS  
The Association launches new campaign  
**By Barb Dobrowolski**
- 14 PUTTING THE (YO)U IN UNION  
New school year offers Catholic teachers opportunity for engagement  
**By Barb Dobrowolski**
- 16 AIDE STRATEGIC PLAN  
**By Caroline Chikore**
- 18 TIME TO UNPACK, TIME TO REBUILD  
Thoughts on the June 2 provincial election results  
**By Filomena Ferraro**

## TEACHERS' AID

- 22 INSIGHT  
Conquering overwhelm  
**By Michelle Despault**
- 24 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
Fall into French as a Second Language  
Professional learning with the Ontario Modern Language Teachers' Association  
**By Annette Gagliano**
- 26 CATHOLIC CONNECTION  
"Got your back, Jack"  
**By Shannon Hogan**
- 28 TEACHER ADVISOR  
Communicating by em@il  
**By Bruno Muzzi**

## VIEWPOINT

- 30 FLOW FREELY  
**By Karl Fernandes**
- 32 FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH  
A legend gets his due  
**By Gian Marcon**
- 33 MEMBER MATTERS  
In the matter of a discipline hearing

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Welcome to the first issue of *Catholic Teacher* for the 2022-23 school year!

Following the past few exceptionally challenging years, it is my hope that this summer offered moments of joy and peace, reconnection, and an opportunity to experience life anew. The summer months are always fast-moving, and it is not long before we are met again with the excitement and anxiety of the start of a new school year. New students, new classes, and new challenges make for a rite of passage. It is my wish that this school year provides hope and stability despite the obstacles we may face.

This summer marked a very active reinstatement of in-person events for the Association. This July, after some initial postponement, we were thrilled to kick off the new RISE: Professional Development and Training Program for Catholic Teachers with the highly anticipated, and incredibly successful, Teachers as Leaders conference. Next up was the first-ever French Symposium, while the Educating for the Common Good conference rounded out a summer of coming together to expand our professional learning and renew connections as members of this Association.

As Catholic teachers, community is at the heart of all that we do, and the opportunity to re-establish connection with each other is crucial to our work, both as classroom teachers and OECTA members. This sense of community is essential to rebuilding our networks and connection with each other as we heal from the challenges of the past few years and persevere through this next school year and beyond.

I often reflect on the guiding principle of the OECTA Prayer, which encourages us to choose “community over isolation.” As an Association, we advocate for the welfare of teachers and our students, and promote the principles of Catholic education and the strength of Ontario’s publicly funded Catholic education system, while supporting efforts to achieve social and economic justice. However, the success of our efforts relies on our experience and understanding of OECTA as a community. Collectively, it is every member who contributes to the strength, diversity, and inclusivity of this union.

There is much to look forward to in the year ahead. Amidst what is already shaping up to be one of the more interesting school years with another round of provincial bargaining underway, this will also mark a year of opportunity to become involved, learn together, and advance the good work of the Association.

While the road ahead may not always be smooth, I extend my wishes for a healthy and successful year ahead, one that reinvigorates our activism and ignites our passion as teachers.

In solidarity,

Barb Dobrowolski  
President

## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

If you would like to connect with us to share your thoughts, ideas, or concerns, please reach out to us at [publicaffairs@catholicteachers.ca](mailto:publicaffairs@catholicteachers.ca).  
*There is no voice more important than a member's voice.*

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**Cover:** OECTA members at the 2022 Beginning Teachers Conference.

# Events

INBOX

## / Catholic teachers named OTF Fellows

Each year, the Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF) recognizes a few individuals for their contributions to publicly funded education with recognition as an OTF Fellow. Due to COVID-19, fellowships had not been named the past two years. This past summer, OTF recognized recipients from 2020 and 2021, as well as 2022.

Congratulations to:

- Barb Dobrowolski, OECTA President (2020)
- Brian McGowan, former Department Head of the Professional Development department at the OECTA Provincial Office (2020)
- Susan Perry, current Department Head of the Professional Development department at the OECTA Provincial Office (2021)
- Sean Roberts, OTF Governor (2021)
- Rick Belisle, OTF Governor and President of Nipissing Secondary Unit (2022)
- Mary Lachapelle, OECTA Deputy General Secretary (2022)

## / Meet the new members of the Diversity Advisory Board



In keeping with our commitment as a union to improving accessibility, inclusion, diversity, and equity (AIDE), delegates at the 2022 Annual General Meeting voted to increase the number of representatives on OECTA's Diversity Advisory Board (DAB), from four to eight members-at-large.

The DAB is now comprised of eight members, each of whom self-identify as belonging to one or more of the following equity-deserving and/or identified groups: First Nations, Métis, and Inuit members; 2SLGBTQIA+ members; members with disabilities; and racialized members.

The Association received numerous applications for the four open positions, and would like to congratulate the following successful candidates:

- Teresa Flamand, Huron Superior Unit
- Clayton James Johnson, Toronto Secondary Unit
- Erin van Moorsel, Bruce-Grey Elementary Unit
- Jose Pineda, London Unit

The new DAB members began their two-year term in September. Thank you to all who applied.

## / Summer of learning

This summer marked the return of the Association's in-person professional learning opportunities and the launch of new initiatives under RISE, OECTA's new professional development and training program for Catholic teachers. After two years of pandemic disruption, Catholic teachers were eager to reconnect and take part in the three conferences on offer, volunteering some of their summer to come together as a community and grow their professional knowledge.

To support members across Ontario, the Association also continues to offer a variety of virtual learning opportunities for Catholic teachers.

### SUMMER INSTITUTES

Summer Institutes returned with a two-day, virtual session to unpack the Ministry of Education's new resource, *Effective Early Reading Instruction: A Guide for Teachers*. Participants explored evidence-based reading practices, and shared advice and activities to support early reading instruction. Sessions were designated by grade, with specific workshops for Kindergarten, Grade 1, and Grade 2 teachers.

### MINI-COURSE – FIRST STEPS TO BUILDING EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS

To support Catholic teachers, as we reflect on practices to create safe, affirming, and inclusive spaces, and as part of our ongoing commitment to accessibility, inclusion, diversity, and equity (AIDE) in our classrooms and beyond, the Association offered a new Mini-Course this past August on the First Steps to Building Equitable and Inclusive Schools.

### SUMMER BOOK CLUB

Again, this past summer, the Association offered Catholic teachers the opportunity to engage, learn, and grow together through a virtual Summer Book Club. The book club explored three award-winning, bestselling titles: *White Fragility*, by Robin DiAngelo; *This is How It Always Is*, by Laurie Frankel; and *How to be an Antiracist*, by Ibram X. Khandi.

Participants met twice throughout the summer – first for an opening meeting where they were introduced to the book. Then a second time with their smaller “book talk” groups, after they had finished reading the text.

The book club continues to be a popular and exciting opportunity for members. Details for the upcoming Winter Book Club have been posted to [catholicteachers.ca](https://catholicteachers.ca).



Teachers as Leaders keynote speaker, Bill Hill – a Mohawk, educator, and mental health expert – engages with Catholic teachers, to help us understand the role we must play in creating an equitable school environment.

## / Teachers As Leaders conference

After being postponed from April, the inaugural Teachers as Leaders Conference ran on July 4 to 5, with almost 300 Catholic teachers participating.

The conference was a two-day, in-person event designed to empower participants at any point in their career and provide the tools to engage on important issues – as a Catholic teacher and a union member. Participants who took part in this professional learning opportunity engaged in workshops on a variety of topics, including political advocacy and activism; understanding your collective agreement; accessibility, inclusion, diversity, and equity (AIDE); and much more.

Participants also heard from keynote speakers Bill Hill and Marie Clarke Walker. Bill Hill is a Mohawk, educator, and mental health expert who spoke on the role of educators in creating an equitable school environment. Marie Clarke Walker is a former Executive VP and Secretary Treasurer of the Canadian Labour Congress. Marie spoke to the outcome of the provincial election and what that may mean for Catholic teachers moving forward.

## / French Symposium

On July 11 to 12, 150 Catholic teachers, teaching French in permanent or occasional positions, came together for a two-day, in-person professional development opportunity.

The conference featured keynote presentations from Dr. Carol Campbell, Professor of Leadership and Educational Change at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto, and Kate Davis, a speaker, comedian, and podcast host. Attendees participated in workshops offered in French and English, on topics such as creating a powerful learning environment, effective strategies for assessing student learning, 21<sup>st</sup> Century classroom management, communicating with parents, and experiential learning. Additionally, participants had a unique and valuable opportunity to connect with other French teachers and share their unique experiences, challenges, and strategies.



## / Educating for the Common Good Conference

In late August, 150 Catholic teachers gathered together for two days to explore themes of equity, diversity, and social justice at the Association's annual Educating for the Common Good conference.

Participants engaged in a number of workshops on numerous topics, such as stewardship of the earth, addressing social justice issues in the classroom, 2SLGBTQIA+ inclusion in Catholic schools, incorporating Indigenous perspectives into classrooms, understanding and honouring diversity, and more.

Alvin Fiddler, former Grand Chief of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, who also worked on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, shared his perspectives and experiences with participants around the work of Reconciliation and what Catholic teachers can do to take action in our classrooms and communities. Participants also heard from Sarah Jama, a community organizer from Hamilton and co-founder of the Disability Justice Network of Ontario. Sarah spoke on intersectionality and disability justice and the need to build a world that fits everybody's needs.

## / Papal visit and direct apology for Church's role in residential school trauma

Following advocacy from Indigenous peoples and organizations, and facilitated by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, Pope Francis made a pastoral visit to Canada from July 24 to 29, to make a papal apology directly to Indigenous peoples for the Catholic Church's role in Canada's residential school system.

The week-long visit, which drew on the theme of "Walking Together," offered an opportunity for continued, direct dialogue with Survivors and all Indigenous peoples, and addressed the impact of colonization and the participation of the Catholic Church in the operation of residential schools throughout Canada.

In a statement marking the occasion, President Dobrowolski welcomed Pope Francis's apology as a significant step forward that supports the efforts required to achieve the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, while recognizing that more action is needed. The statement acknowledged the devastation caused by Canada's residential school system, and added the strength of our voice in the advocacy and continued struggle to end discrimination against all Indigenous peoples – including renewed calls for meaningful Reconciliation, with real, immediate, and dedicated truth and action from the Catholic Church and all levels of government.

## / National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and Orange Shirt Day



## OCTOBER

17 International Day for the  
Eradication of Poverty

23 ECE Appreciation Day

24 Municipal Council and School  
Board Trustee Elections

24-28 Media Literacy Week

## NOVEMBER

6-12 Treaties Recognition Week

11 Remembrance Day

16 International Day for Tolerance

20-26 Bullying Awareness and  
Prevention Week

20 Transgender Day of  
Remembrance

20 World Children's Day

25 International Day for the  
Elimination of Violence  
Against Women

25-  
Dec 10 16 Days of Activism  
Against Gender-Based  
Violence

## DECEMBER

3 International Day of Persons  
with Disabilities

6 National Day of Remembrance  
and Action on Violence Against  
Women

10 Human Rights Day

# UP FRONT

## STARLING MINDS MENTAL FITNESS CHALLENGE FOR BURNOUT AND DEPRESSION

The impacts of the pandemic and its variants have created a massive strain on members. According to recent polls, 70 per cent of people struggle with burnout, yet do not have the time and energy to care for themselves.

With the massive success of the Mental Fitness Challenge last spring, Starling Minds is again offering their six-week interactive Mental Fitness Challenge this fall, hosted by their Chief Science Officer, Dr. Andrew Miki, to help Catholic teachers prevent and combat depression and burnout.

The recurring, weekly online webinar challenge starts October 18 and runs every Tuesday at 7 p.m. until November 22.

The Mental Fitness Challenge provides Catholic teachers with:

- guided support to begin Starling Minds' Mental Fitness program;
- weekly live sessions with Dr. Andrew Miki, with an opportunity to ask questions; and
- weekly homework exercises to put learning into action.

After the Mental Fitness Challenge in the spring:

- participants reported depression score improvements of 51 per cent and anxiety score improvements of 43 per cent;
- 81 per cent of members who started the program, noting that they were "unhealthy," showed symptom improvements; and
- 46 per cent of members experienced overall symptom improvements.

If you have any questions, please reach out to Starling Minds at [members@starlingminds.com](mailto:members@starlingminds.com).

Click [HERE](#) to join this exciting initiative.



### **“WEAVING THE STRANDS: THE INTERCONNECTEDNESS OF FSL LEARNING” WEBINARS**

Calling all French as a Second Language (FSL) educators! Are you ready for some exciting professional learning this fall? During the month of October, the Ontario Modern Language Teachers' Association (OMLTA) is offering one-hour live webinars every Wednesday at 7 p.m. These webinars will showcase each of the four modules of “Weaving the Strands: The Interconnectedness of FSL Learning,” corresponding to each strand of the FSL curriculum: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing.

Click [HERE](#) to register online.

The webinars are open to all educators. Sessions will be recorded and posted at [omlta.org](http://omlta.org), along with viewer guides, video overviews for each module, a glossary of terms, and a facilitator's guide.

“Weaving the Strands: The Interconnectedness of FSL Learning” is the third and final phase of the FSL Teacher Recruitment and Retention Project, created by the OMLTA, in partnership with the Modern Languages Council and with financial support from the Ministry of Education.

### **THE NATIONAL FILM BOARD'S MEDIA SCHOOL**

Want to teach your students how to make a digital story? Now you can with the National Film Board's Media School, a new online workshop that walks through the stages of creating a digital story in 11 easy-to-follow modules! Filmmaker Paul Tom will walk you through digital story elements, types of stories, and the importance of a personal connection.

Students will navigate through hundreds of videos and interactive activities related to the different stages of film production. They will acquire the tools to create their own digital stories – dynamic videos composed of photos, narration, and music, using accessible equipment, such as their smartphones and widely available software.

The online workshop is turnkey for educators, and easy to use in-class or online. It allows you to pick and choose from more than 100 hands-on activities, features project-based learning, integrates with several school subjects (arts, social sciences, French and English, etc.), and includes evaluation grids and pedagogical guides. Media School is recommended for students ages 13 to 18.

Click [HERE](#) to learn more at [nfb.ca](http://nfb.ca)

### **OFFICE HOURS LIVE: IN OUR WORDS**

As part of the Association's ongoing commitment to accessibility, inclusion, diversity, and equity (AIDE), the Association is proud to announce a new six-part, Office Hours Live series exploring *In Our Words*, an acclaimed video series developed by the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education Association of Ontario (FNMIEAO).

Focusing on the dispossession of land from Indigenous Peoples, as told through the personal narratives of Oneida and Anishinaabek Elders, and recognized Knowledge Holders, this guided, structured analysis of the *In Our Words* video series provides an opportunity for Catholic teachers to engage in conversations about how this resource can be used in the classroom to support curriculum connections.

This series will also provide an opportunity for participants to ask questions, record their thinking using a shared digital file, and engage in a conversation about how this resource can be used in the classroom.

Additional resources will be shared throughout the sessions to support curriculum connections, such as treaty education resources for Treaty Recognition Week (November 6 to 12).

All sessions run from 4:30 to 6 p.m.

***Understanding Treaties***, October 26, 2022

***The Beginning & The Royal Flush***, November 29, 2022

***Legislated Land Theft***, January 25, 2023

***Robinson Huron Treaty***, February 21, 2023

***Deceit and Deception & Williams Treaty***, March 29, 2023

***The Future***, April 25, 2023

Please be advised that the voices presented in this video series do not reflect all Indigenous Peoples. Communities throughout Ontario have been impacted in different ways by colonization.

Click [HERE](#) to learn more and register online.

# Women Leaders: Leading the Path

By Antonietta Chiavaro, Julie Guèvremont, and Tracy Trofimencoff (Members of the 2021-22 OECTA Status of Women Committee)

Every year, at the start of March Break, the Association holds its Annual General Meeting (AGM). The AGM brings together Catholic teachers to discuss what the organization has done over the past year and to determine what it would like to achieve in the future. Delegates vote on resolutions to update the Association *Handbook*, and hear from various speakers about important topics in education and social justice advocacy, as well as what is going on in the political landscape.

At AGM 2021, the Status of Women Committee held a caucus for women, called “Inspiring Women to Lead,” the goal of which was to create a safe space for women to feel supported and heard, as we shared stories about the barriers women face. In addition, our panelists spoke of their personal experience with their local Status of Women committees, highlighting why every unit should have one.

How beautiful is it when women can come together to share their concerns and opinions, and to feel like their voice matters?

## Local Status of Women committees inspire women to lead

### Dufferin-Peel Secondary Unit

The accomplishments and initiatives of the Dufferin-Peel Secondary Unit (DPSU) Status of Women Committee, continue to grow as they champion the needs of women. As a committee, they have:

- engaged in political activism, getting involved in marches to support disenfranchised women and girls;
- held seminars and presentations, increasing member interest and engagement; and
- emphasized community outreach and involvement, including support for the Period Project, to bring awareness to the lack of resources and funds available for women’s health and well-being.

DPSU’s successful Status of Women Committee did not require a copious amount of effort – these women leaders flourished by setting a few goals, getting involved in a few initiatives, and then by promoting them.

### Hamilton Secondary Unit

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, and being a new committee, Hamilton Secondary Unit’s (HSU) three-person Status of Women Committee has hosted two events, embracing the call of the OECTA Prayer for “community over isolation.”

At one event in November, to support local author Denise Davy and her charity, Purses for Margaret, the committee worked with Hamilton’s CUPE sisters to collect and distribute stuffed purses with essential hygiene products, warm outerwear, and gift cards to support women facing barriers to housing. The charity, and Davy’s work to address encampments, unhoused people, and evictions, was inspired by her book, *Her Name Was Margaret: Life and Death on the Streets*, which chronicles the life of Margaret Jacobson, a woman who died after years of experiencing homelessness in Hamilton.





Although establishing a Status of Women Committee in Hamilton has been challenging, the word is out there and the feedback is positive. The three-member-strong committee hopes to continue to lead and continue the good work they have started, as more women in the unit embrace the value of a women's-only space. Having a local Status of Women Committee is important, as women face very different challenges from men. For the HSU committee members, it has also been an opportunity: to be women leaders, give back to the community, and model the OEFTA Prayer in action.

### Creating a local Status of Women Committee; building a network of women

When the Provincial Status of Women Committee recently reached out to local units, it was discovered that very few had a local committee of their own. We want to change this.

A local Status of Women Committee is empowering, inspirational, and necessary, helping the women members of our Association to become community leaders locally and beyond, as we raise awareness and address the issues that impact women across Ontario.

We know that women face more economic barriers than men, impacting both housing and child care, and that they are called to provide more unpaid work, while having greater family obligations. We know that women face more barriers in the workplace and are found in fewer high level leadership positions. And we know that these inequalities are even more pronounced for women with intersectionalities, such as those who identify as 2SLGBTQIA+, First Nations, Métis, Inuit, Black, racialized, and/or disabled.

A local Status of Women Committee provides the forum to address inequities, to champion local activism, and to challenge the status quo. The pandemic has been an isolating experience, intensifying inequalities for women, and other equity-deserving groups, impacting their home life, health, work, and economic well-being. So how do we reverse this? How do we do better? We start by building a community – an opportunity to create a network of women, to build a safe space where we can amplify our shared voice, and provide the comfort of healing and a supportive power to those who continue to face barriers.

### A guide to building your local Status of Women Committee

- 1- Check your By-laws:** find out what your local unit By-laws say about starting a committee and reach out to your local unit executive to get them on board.
- 2- Recruit:** once the committee is created, start to recruit women to participate.
- 3- Purpose:** determine the focus of your local Status of Women Committee. How do you want to uplift and empower women? What barriers and inequalities do you want to dismantle?
- 4- Get the word out:** share information and resources to educate members and promote the committee's activities on social media, in your unit's newsletter, and at local representative and general meetings.

- 5- See what others have done:** use the infographic below, developed by the Provincial Status of Women Committee, to help get your local committee off the ground.

## TIPS FOR STARTING A LOCAL STATUS OF WOMEN COMMITTEE

### STEP 1: FIND OUT ABOUT YOUR UNIT'S PROCESS TO START A NEW COMMITTEE

- What do the local By-laws say?
- Seek support from the local executive, provide a presentation and/or materials as needed.
- Be prepared to speak to the importance of the committee and how it can support women.



### STEP 2: ESTABLISHING THE COMMITTEE AND ITS PRIORITIES

- Follow through on the local process to create a new committee.
- Recruit members to participate.
- Seek input from other local women and determine what the focus of the committee could be. Part of the committee's mission and/or focus should always include:
  - a. sharing information about and seeking ways to remove barriers for women;
  - b. participating in various campaigns to raise awareness and uplift women; and
  - c. making recommendations to the local executive about local action that can be taken to support women.



### STEP 3: DOING THE WORK

- Hold regular meetings.
- Prepare information and create resources.
- Take action and share with members through your unit's social media.



Antonietta Chiavaro is a teacher at Our Lady of Mount Carmel CSS in Mississauga and a member of the Dufferin-Peel Secondary Unit. Julie Guèvremont is a teacher at St. Patrick CHS in Ottawa, a member of the Ottawa Unit, and was Chairperson of the 2021-22 OEFTA Status of Women Committee. Tracy Trofimencoff is a teacher at St. Mary CSS in Hamilton, and a member of the Hamilton Secondary Unit.

# CATHOLIC TEACHERS INVITE ONTARIANS TO **#KNOWMORE** ABOUT WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR CLASSROOMS

The Association has launched a new campaign to amplify teachers' voices – as when we're heard, and our voices make a difference, students thrive.

By Barb Dobrowolski

It has been a long road. But, finally – hopefully – this school year will be as “normal” as possible.

As Catholic teachers, more than anything, we want our students enjoying the benefits of in-person learning, with all the holistic emotional, social, and academic supports that make our publicly funded education system world class. After several years of disruption and chaos, we just want to be able to focus on what we do best, and love most about teaching: filling our classrooms with faith, love, and kindness, as we help our students to learn and grow.

And while we hope for “normal,” we cannot ignore the impact of the pandemic on our student's mental health and well-being. Nor can we forget the last four years, which has seen publicly funded education in Ontario come under repeated attack.

So much has happened that going back to “normal” is simply not good enough.

As Catholic teachers, *you* are the experts. You know best what your students need to succeed and what our classrooms need to be better than “normal,” which is why we have launched a new, province-wide campaign under our existing **#KnowMore** banner, to highlight *your* expertise, and what teachers like *you* are saying students need to recover from pandemic learning disruptions.

The first stage of our new, long-term campaign harnesses digital content on social media and streaming platforms, as well as radio advertisements, to focus on the importance of your voice, and how when teachers are heard, and the government respects educators' expertise, students succeed.

Featuring testimonials from classroom teachers and OECTA members, the new **#KnowMore** campaign highlights *your* professional experience and knowledge – what teachers like *you* are saying your students need to thrive, and how we can continue to build on Ontario's world-class publicly funded education system.

A tremendous thank you to Renée Kerr, Alison Misa, Michael Oyston, Jamie Philip, and Johnny Soln, the amazing Catholic teachers who volunteered their time this summer to share their classroom experiences. Their voices have been instrumental in amplifying **#KnowMore's** call for real government action and investment, so that we can continue to provide the academic, social, and emotional supports that our students need and deserve.

*Jamie Philip is an elementary teacher and a member of the Dufferin-Peel Elementary Unit.*





It is still early days, but our campaign is already having a big impact. In the first six weeks,

- our social media and streaming ads have made 5,735,717 “impressions,” and counting; and
- our radio ads have been featured on stations across the province, including Virgin 99.9 in Toronto, Move 105.7 in Niagara, and Bounce 102.8 in Hamilton and Kitchener-Waterloo, reaching more than 2.5 million people.

### Next steps: talking to parents

In the next phase of the campaign, the Association will be inviting parents to share their stories: their concerns about pandemic learning disruptions and what supports their children need to recover and succeed.

We continue to hear from our students, parents, families, communities – everyone – that they want the government to listen to their concerns and those expressed by teachers.

Through new ads, shareable content, and direct community engagement, we intend to connect with families across Ontario, highlighting why parents and teachers are calling for smaller class sizes, more one-on-one time with students in the classroom, and meaningful government collaboration with educators.

The OECTA Prayer calls for us to embrace “community over isolation.” Our new **#KnowMore** campaign is just that – forging community to raise the voices of educators, parents, and students alike, so that together, we can realize the supports in our schools that students need to thrive.

### Take action: connect, engage, and join the conversation

Watch for new and exciting ways to get involved, and to share your classroom experiences and what students need to succeed, as our **#KnowMore** campaign progresses and takes action.

---

*Barb Dobrowolski is President of the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association.*

*Michael Oyston is a high school teacher and a member of the York Unit.*



*Renée Kerr is a high school teacher and a member of the Dufferin-Peel Secondary Unit.*

Click [HERE](#) to visit **KnowMore.ca** to see what teachers are saying, watch and share longer cuts of our ads, and sign-up for campaign up-dates.

*Johnny Soln is a high school teacher and member of the Durham Secondary Unit. Alison Misa is an elementary teacher and a member of the York Unit.*



Follow us on **Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube**, and watch for new **#KnowMore** campaign content to share with your communities on social media.

### WE WANT TO HEAR FROM PARENTS, STUDENTS, AND EDUCATORS.

Click [HERE](#) to fill out our quick **survey** and share it with your communities.

Tell us your priorities, and help us reach out to Ontarians, so we can continue to advocate for students and ensure they have the resources and supports they need to realize their full potential.

# Putting the (yo)u in Union

New school year offers Catholic teachers opportunity for engagement.

By Barb Dobrowolski



**I**f you have ever attended an OECTA event – be it the Annual General Meeting or a local unit information session – you have likely heard the OECTA Prayer. At 91 words, it is a succinct expression of who we are as Catholic teachers, and what we strive to achieve:

*Creator God, we praise you, the source of all life. Renew our faith and guide us in our ministry as Catholic teachers. Let us touch the hearts and minds of those with whom we work.*

*Lord Jesus, share with us your counsel, so we may choose knowledge over ignorance, wisdom over waste, peace over injustice, community over isolation, and service over domination.*

*Holy Spirit, nurture our growth. Inspire us to give birth to the creative powers within us. Let us come to the fullness of life promised in the Gospel. Amen. (Emphasis added.)*





## It seems more important than ever that, this year, we “choose community.”

The prayer, which opens all OECTA meetings and events, can become second nature at some point: recited by rote memory, before moving on to the business of the day. However, every now and then, it is helpful to pause and think more intentionally about the prayer's language – not just for what it says about us as Catholic teachers, but also for what it *asks* of us.

Looking at the prayer in this way, the middle paragraph has always stood out as particularly empowering and consequential. In essence, it presents us with a series of choices; paths that we can take, individually and collectively. And in the context of the past two years, one choice in particular, that of “community over isolation,” feels especially relevant.

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented innumerable challenges in our professional and personal lives. And while Catholic teachers have done everything possible to create a positive learning environment for our students, the experience has no doubt taken a toll on everyone.

Several surveys undertaken by the Association and the Canadian Teachers' Federation since March 2020 reveal the heightened levels of anxiety, stress, and frustration felt by teachers across Canada, including Catholic teachers. Among the leading sources of frustration in Ontario was the pervasive feeling of isolation and dislocation caused by repeated school shutdowns and the move to remote or hybrid learning models – a situation exacerbated by the Ontario government's mismanagement of COVID-19 health and safety protocols, which resulted in the longest in-person learning disruption of any jurisdiction in North America.

Certainly, we are all hoping that this will be a more “normal” academic year. But although school doors have opened, many are still struggling with the consequences of prolonged periods of isolation. Early reports suggest an uptick in student socialization issues; and even among educators who are excited to be back in classrooms, it is difficult to shake the notion that we are somehow meeting each other again, for the first time.

Given all of this, it seems more important than ever that, this year, we “choose community.”

So much of what we do and stand for as Catholic teachers is grounded in the notion of community. We believe fervently that our society will be made healthier and more cohesive when *all* Ontarians have opportunities to develop their potential. And while we live and work in all corners of this vast province, we are connected by the values of publicly funded Catholic education, and by the bonds of solidarity, as members of our Association. We are 45,000 strong.

There are many things your Association can and will continue to do in order to foster the bonds of community, and meet the modern needs of Catholic teachers. Some of these efforts are well underway, such as the successful launch of RISE: Professional Development and Training Program for Catholic Teachers, which has already brought together hundreds of Catholic teachers from across Ontario – many of whom had never before attended an OECTA event – to learn and grow, together.

We have also renewed our commitment to improving accessibility, inclusion, diversity, and equity (AIDE) within our publicly funded school system and our union. The enormously successful Connecting with Members Series forums will be entering its third year, as we invite greater numbers of Catholic teachers who self-identify as belonging to equity-deserving and identified communities, into a safe space, to share experiences and provide perspectives on current issues. All the while, the Professional Development (PD) department remains ahead of the curve, offering Catholic teachers the most timely, relevant, and innovative content, using a variety of platforms to connect Catholic teachers wherever you reside.

And this is just the beginning. Over the coming months, the Association will be launching a host of opportunities for you to engage with your union, and with your fellow Catholic teachers, in new and exciting ways.

You will have the chance to learn about our Association's history, as well as the array of resources, programs, and services available to you. There will be opportunities to have your say through member polls and surveys, so that we can continue to best meet your needs. And, grounded in our shared sense of responsibility to make this province a better place for all, we will have the chance to come together – as 45,000 Catholic teachers – to give back to our broader communities. So, stay tuned!

Ultimately, though, community is a two-way street, and is built from the ground up. While the Association will provide countless opportunities to engage, each of us must be willing to take that step and seize the opportunity to (re)connect with each other and our Association. We have before us a challenge and a choice – to engage with your fellow Catholic teachers, with your Association, and with your broader communities.

The past several years have at times been remarkably difficult, but as the saying goes, “A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.” Our collective power has always been our strength. If we come together – if we choose community over isolation – we can fulfil the promise of our OECTA Prayer, and “give birth to the creative powers within us.” We can create something greater than the sum of its parts. The choice is ours.

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*Barb Dobrowolski is President of the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association.*



# AIDE Strategic Plan

By **Caroline Chikoore**

**A**s Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity (AIDE) Lead at the OECTA Provincial Office, I have the opportunity and privilege to collaborate with members from across our Association, in our continued efforts to improve AIDE within our publicly funded school system and our union.

To that end, and after more than a year of hard work, we are proud to present an important step in our ongoing, shared journey: the AIDE Strategic Plan – a compass to champion accessibility, inclusion, diversity, and equity at all levels of the Association, in your classrooms, and beyond.

Developed with input from Catholic teachers, provincial and local leaders, the Diversity Advisory Board (DAB), the AIDE Task Force, and Provincial Office staff, the plan harnesses the Association's collective voices to move forward, together, to realize and address AIDE in all that we do – from governance to leadership to member support – everything.

The AIDE Strategic Plan provides a roadmap for achieving and maintaining equitable participation for all members, placing AIDE principles at the heart of the Association's culture.

Over a five-year period, broken into three phases, the plan harnesses five strategic pillars – Association leaders; departmental leaders and staff; AIDE accountability structures; human resources policies and practices; and Association culture – to reach specific goals and objectives.

The strategy acknowledges that the vision of dismantling forms of systemic racism and oppression is a long-term project, requiring collective action from members, staff, local union leaders, and provincial leadership.

So, where does the process begin? With the recognition and celebration of

Catholic teachers' diversities – their race and ethnicity, gender identity and sexual expression, and abilities and disabilities; whether members are rural or urban, Catholic or non-Catholic; members' teaching status and years as a teacher; and their family status.

Based on the results of our full-scale AIDE audit of the Association, OECTA now has a much greater understanding of the groups of members historically left out of union events, professional development, and advancement opportunities.

With AIDE resource groups, such as the DAB and AIDE Task Force, now activated, work is underway to ensure that diverse members' voices are heard, decision makers are informed, and action is taken. Part of this work has included the AIDE Task Force's pivotal role, reviewing changes to the

Phase	Time frame	Goals and objectives
Short term	Six months to one year	Providing the building blocks for change.
Medium term	Two to three years	Deepening initiatives to tackle systemic barriers.
Long term	Four to five years	Integrating lessons learned for sustainability.



Association *Handbook* and providing recommendations to the 2022 and 2023 Annual General Meetings (AGM).

To continue this critical work, and to make AIDE a part of everything we do as an Association, the plan – in addition to so much more:

- focuses on evidence-based communication to eliminate systemic barriers faced by identified and equity-deserving groups: Indigenous members, racialized members, members with disabilities, and 2SLGBTQIA+ members – those who are often held back by institutionalized racism, homophobia, ableism, and sexism in systems lacking in, or designed without, inclusivity;
- elevates members' voices based on their lived experiences, promotion of self advocacy, and allyship, allowing them to thrive within the Association and our publicly funded Catholic education system;
- champions the need for Association leaders to create inclusive and equitable environments that reflect OECTA's diversity, supported by leadership training programs to enhance cultural competency, and support inclusive leadership practices and the duty of care; and
- harnesses the DAB to curate safe spaces for difficult conversations/

creative solution-finding for identified and equity-deserving groups, organized around social identities: Indigenous members, Black and racialized members, members with disabilities, and 2SLGBTQIA+ members. (Already, various engagement forums are held for these members to interact in safe spaces, such as AGM caucuses and the Connecting with Members Series forums.)

The strategic plan, and what we have accomplished to date, are a step forward, but this is only the beginning. We will continue to refine and expand our resources, training, and supports for members, as we continue to work towards promoting AIDE – for everyone.

It is understandable that some may want to see change happen more quickly. But this process is critical to our Association,

and to our equity-deserving members – we must get this right.

Together, we can ingrain accessibility, inclusion, diversity, and equity into the very fabric of who we are, as an Association and as Catholic teachers.

Click [HERE](#) to access the **AIDE Strategic Plan** and other related resources found in the aide section in the members' area at **catholicteachers.ca**.

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*Caroline Chikore is the Accessibility, Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity (AIDE) Lead at the OECTA Provincial Office.*

# TIME TO UNPACK, TIME TO REBUILD

## Thoughts on the June 2 provincial election results.

By Filomena Ferraro

Hosting a “home centre” on Election Day (E-day) for the first time was a new experience. I had access to information that I was not privy to before as a volunteer or scrutineer in previous elections. I had an inside look at the organization of E-day. For the most part, it was exciting, as well as eye opening.

As the numbers of those who voted came in throughout the day on June 2, it became evident that turnout was exceptionally low, and the day’s outcome looked grim for those of us working to change our government for the better. Seeing this data sent us into panic mode, as we tried to decipher what was happening. Was there something wrong with Elections Ontario? Were the numbers being reported inaccurate? Is it possible that voters were not going to the polls, despite the importance of this election? Doug Ford was clearly on his way to victory again. History bears this out, voter apathy almost always favours the incumbent.

As volunteers, we immediately went to red alert, ensuring we contacted every identified progressive supporter to vote before 9 p.m. We reminded them of how easy it is to vote. We did our part, now it was up to the voters to cast a ballot. Yet, at the end of the night, the Progressive Conservatives formed a bigger majority government than in 2018, with the NDP returning as the Official Opposition, albeit with fewer seats.

Doug Ford’s conservatives won with only 43 per cent of eligible voters casting a ballot, the lowest turnout of any provincial election in Ontario since Confederation. This is not a strong mandate, not for a government proposing to cut public services and jeopardize working families. But will the Ford government acknowledge the reality of how it won? Probably not, so we need to understand how this happened, why, and how we move forward.

### Why did we tune out instead of turnout?

Low voter turnout in the past election cannot be attributed to apathy alone. Voters seemed to have little faith in the system

and little inclination to use the power of the ballot box. Voters felt demoralized, beaten, and *tired*. Whether or not we realized it, this was the feeling in the community, in workplaces, and in our families. In short, we underestimated the impact of the pandemic on people and our communities.

We must investigate this further. And we cannot be afraid to question the objective and actions of our shared labour movement. We need to ask the tough questions of our friends, family, and colleagues. Did you vote? Why, or why not? And who did you vote for, and why?

As a movement, we need to take some time to collect data and reflect. After that, we must strategize on how to rebuild relationships and remind people of the collective power we hold through our engagement and activism.

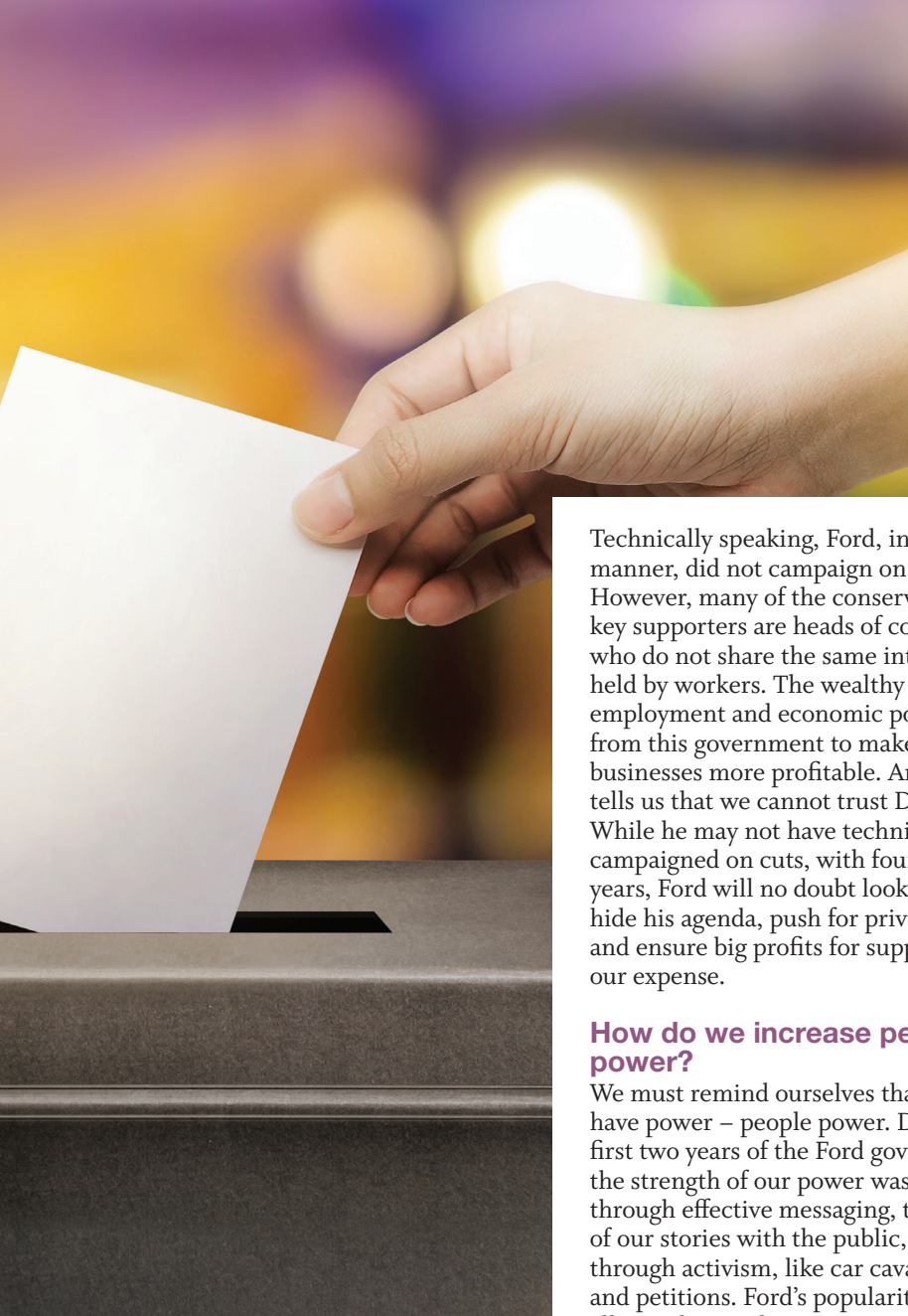
Labour activism in the past election was low. But why? We underestimated how exhausted workers were, due to the pandemic, strained working conditions, and the overall challenges of daily life.

Doug Ford’s campaign strategy was clever and simple. He campaigned to create jobs, grow the economy, and be a friend to labour and unions (some of them, at least). These were things that voters wanted to hear (even if the only jobs he really campaigned on were construction jobs).

Through the campaign, Ford mostly ignored health care and education, both female-dominated workplaces, as well as other public services. Regardless, his support from unionized workers increased from 30 per cent in 2018 to 35 per cent in 2022.

Why was Ford believable? We may not see it, but Ford’s “folksy” personality resonates with the average worker and voter – his crafted image intentionally distanced him from previous Progressive Conservative leaders, like Mike Harris and Tim Hudak.





Technically speaking, Ford, in his folksy manner, did not campaign on cuts. However, many of the conservatives' key supporters are heads of corporations who do not share the same interests held by workers. The wealthy expect employment and economic policies from this government to make their businesses more profitable. And history tells us that we cannot trust Doug Ford. While he may not have technically campaigned on cuts, with four more years, Ford will no doubt look for ways to hide his agenda, push for privatization, and ensure big profits for supporters at our expense.

### How do we increase people's power?

We must remind ourselves that we have power – people power. During the first two years of the Ford government, the strength of our power was evident through effective messaging, the sharing of our stories with the public, and through activism, like car cavalcades and petitions. Ford's popularity hit an all-time low at the Toronto Raptors' championship victory celebration in Toronto in 2019. When the announcer introduced him, the crowd booed. We must look at those years and recapture the messaging that resonated with people.

It is time to break this feeling of isolation and alienation and rebuild community. But how can we do this? To start, we need to regroup, reenergize, and re-envision how to achieve our goals – not unlike how a sports franchise re-evaluates its direction and rebuilds after a failed season, to put itself back on the winning path.

Our short-term goal is to simultaneously hold on to what we have built, and rebuild the essential connections in our workplaces and communities. We

need the public to feel they are part of a more extensive community of people who share the same concerns. We need to ensure that we reach out to members from equity-deserving groups, so that their essential voices are championed. We need to speak with compassion and from the heart, and less about hate and negativity, reminding people about what is at stake. We need to cultivate agency by inviting people to share their stories and making their voice heard without judgment. We need to rebuild from the ground up in our workplaces and communities, so we can take action on the issues that collectively matter to us, and ultimately grow and strengthen our shared movement for the next election in 2026.

This is not the first time Ontarians have experienced back-to-back conservative majorities. We must learn from the past. Working people have won victories, despite the odds against them, through organizing and building grassroots activism. It starts with each of us individually, and then grows collectively. We grow our power when we attend protests, rallies, march in labour day parades, and take action in our communities. Actual power is more than casting a vote on Election Day. When we fight together, we win – achieving economic, social, racial, and climate justice. Remember, we, the people, hold the greatest power.

Hope is what should drive us. I look forward to seeing this power in action when I host another “home centre” during the next provincial election in 2026.

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*Filomena Ferraro is a Staff Officer in the Government Relations and Public Affairs department at the OECTA Provincial Office.*

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**Remember, we, the people, hold the greatest power.**



## CALL FOR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2023 TELLERS

*Applications are being accepted by the Provincial Executive for active or retired OECTA members.*

Click **HERE** to visit [catholicteachers.ca](http://catholicteachers.ca) to apply.

### DEADLINE

**Friday, November 11, 2022**

(Selection will take place early December)

### WHEN

From **5 p.m. on Friday, March 10, 2023** to **5 p.m. on Monday, March 13, 2023**

### WHERE

**Westin Harbour Castle Hotel,**  
Toronto

### WHY

To work under the direction of the provincial staff in order to assist the Annual General Meeting in conducting its business. Tellers will be assigned duties throughout the meeting, including supporting delegates during electronic voting.

You will receive a confirmation email once your application has been received. Please contact [agm@catholicteachers.ca](mailto:agm@catholicteachers.ca) if you have any questions.



*\* The use of Tellers will be based on format and delivery of this event and may change depending on COVID-19 restrictions in place at the time.*

## CONNECTING WITH MEMBERS SERIES

*You are OECTA; building relationships.*

### 2SLGBTQIA+ MEMBERS

Tuesday,  
November 22

### BLACK MEMBERS

Thursday,  
November 24

### FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS, INUIT MEMBERS

Tuesday,  
November 29

### MEMBERS WITH DISABILITIES

Thursday,  
December 1

### RACIALIZED MEMBERS

Tuesday,  
December 6

Click **HERE** to register online.



All sessions will run virtually  
from **4:30 to 6 p.m.**

Presented by





## LONG-TERM DISABILITY COVERAGE DURING LEAVES OF ABSENCE

Long-term disability (LTD) insurance provides a safety net that will replace a percentage of your salary and provide pension protection should you be unable to work because of an illness or injury. The OECA LTD plan recognizes that most members are in a highly vulnerable financial position should they be confronted with a loss of income during a lengthy or permanent disability.

Of course, to receive the benefits of LTD coverage, members of the plan must pay premiums. It might be tempting to cease your premium payments when, for example, you take a leave of absence. However, such a decision could leave you unprotected if you suffer an illness or injury.

If you choose to maintain your LTD coverage and you become disabled while on leave, you are eligible to apply for LTD benefits. There will be no break in your coverage and you will not be subject to a pre-existing condition clause upon your return to work.

However, if you choose to discontinue your LTD coverage while you are on leave, you will not be eligible for LTD benefits. Moreover, although you will be reinstated in the plan upon your return to work, you will be subject to a pre-existing condition clause if you become disabled within 12 months from the date of reinstatement – you will not be covered for a disability arising from an illness or injury for which you obtained medical care during the 90-day period before you became reinsured.

To illustrate the point, let us consider two possible scenarios for a fictional member, Tracey.

1. Tracey is diagnosed with cancer during her leave of absence. While undergoing cancer treatment, her leave of absence ends and she is unable to return to work.

As Tracey maintained her LTD coverage during her leave, she is eligible to apply for LTD benefits. The benefits, payable on or after the date her leave is scheduled to end, will help her replace her income while she is unable to work.

2. Tracey is diagnosed with cancer during her leave of absence. Tracey did not maintain her LTD coverage during her leave, so she is not eligible to apply for LTD benefits to help her replace her income if she is unable to return to work. If Tracey returns to work after her leave ends, her LTD coverage will be automatically reinstated, but if she has to discontinue work less than one year from her reinstatement of insurance date, her benefits will be subject to a pre-existing condition clause. She can apply for LTD, but if it is determined that her medical condition is pre-existing, her LTD application will be declined.

You never know if or when you might need LTD coverage. You should carefully consider your options before deciding to discontinue your participation in the plan.

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*The information for this article was provided by the Ontario Teachers Insurance Plan.*

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT COVERAGE DURING LEAVES OF ABSENCE, VISIT [otip.com](https://otip.com).



It is mid-September, just a couple short weeks since the start of the new school year. Life seems to have resumed some sense of normalcy and I, like many others, have slipped back into the regular

Against this backdrop, I lie in bed one morning, not quite awake, when all of a sudden my dreams are interrupted by the thoughts of an upcoming deadline that I had forgotten. I feel a sudden tightness in my chest as I berate myself for having not been on top of this.

The tightness in my chest moves down to become a large knot in my stomach. OMG, I still have not filed my income tax return! I booked a dentist appointment, but I cannot remember when – did I miss it? Sleep is no longer an option as I become consumed by the thoughts of all the items I am possibly forgetting, missing, or just not on top of, and I feel the anxiety growing inside of me. I jump out of bed, abandoning my attempts at rest and get started on my day, already feeling hours behind.

This is a familiar scenario and feeling for me – I call it “the overwhelm.” It is like a tidal wave of thoughts and emotions that make me feel like I am drowning. Not only does this start my day off on the “wrong foot,” but it can leave me spiralling downward, if left unchecked, as I contemplate all that is not working in my life.

At its heart, the overwhelm is really a manifestation of feeling a loss of control. This is unsettling for many of us because we expect to be in control of everything – how we think, how we act, where we are headed in life. Each of us exercise this control to varying degrees and in different ways. We are meticulous





about our calendars, punctuality, our appearance, the tidiness of our home, or sticking to daily routines. These are all efforts to exercise control and maintain order in our lives, whether we realize it or not. Conquering the overwhelm means taking back the feeling of control, or engaging in activities that reassure us that we still have some measure of control over our lives.

I am a “lists” person. I always keep a to-do list with me – one for work tasks and one for personal or home tasks. This allows me to track and stay present to the things that I must do, both big and small. I also keep a notebook beside my bed, so when thoughts come to me at night, I can write them down (and hopefully increase my chances of getting back to sleep). Jotting down items and tasks provides peace of mind by literally getting the thoughts out of my head and making them concrete.

I keep a calendar where both my work and personal appointments are noted in one place, and I plan out which tasks I am going to tackle that day. Granted, I rarely get through the tasks I set myself each day, but having them written down means they will not be forgotten and can be rescheduled as needed. I also spend a couple hours every Sunday night prepping lunches and dinners for the coming week.

I make my bed every morning and clean up the dishes right after dinner. These activities provide a sense of accomplishment in the moment, but also later – I love going to bed at night in a nicely made bed and waking up the next morning to an empty sink.

All of these actions may seem small, but each has an important impact that can

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**Conquering the overwhelm means taking back the feeling of control, or engaging in activities that reassure us that we still have some measure of control over our lives.**

easily be overlooked. Our daily lives are busy, hectic, and messy. Things do not go as expected and items fall through the cracks. That is to be expected. But when we feel a little more on top of things, even the seemingly small things, it makes it easier to roll with the punches when things do not go as planned. And the things that fall through the cracks will not fall as far.

Of course, control is an illusion. We never really have total control over what happens, how, or when. We can do everything possible, and still not achieve our desired outcome. It is important for us to recognize and accept the things over which we do and do not have control. And in turn, limit our fear and worry over the things we cannot control.

It is also important to have some perspective on what really is worth worry. Unfinished dishes are not something to dwell on all day, nor is it a measure of my self-worth or how well I am coping. Missed meetings and

deadlines might be something I remain concerned about, but only until I have an opportunity to address the issue with the person(s) I am accountable to, and restore my integrity by recommitting to the tasks required of me.

This morning, instead of wallowing in self-doubt, I take back control, jumping out of bed to attack the day. I dress and make my bed. I get my son’s lunch made and bag packed. I get us all out the door, almost on time – I give myself much grace for this! As I travel to the office, I listen to my favourite Spotify playlist, which helps to distract me from my earlier thoughts and puts me in a better mood. When I get to the office, I write down all the things that came to me this morning – I create my to-do list and I start doing the things that need to be done.

These days, when I get the literal “wake-up” calls in the morning, I am appreciative of the guidance they are sending me. I have come to see it, not as an indictment about how much I am struggling with life, but rather as guidance, helping me to be more present and more mindful of what is going on in my life. The stress and anxiety they induce is apparently the kick in the butt I need to get more present in my day to day. And I refuse to let these feelings have power over me.

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*Michelle Despault is Director of Member Communications and Public Affairs in the Government Relations and Public Affairs Department at the OECTA Provincial Office.*

# FALL INTO FRENCH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

## Professional learning with the Ontario Modern Language Teachers' Association.

By Annette Gagliano

**T**his fall, the Ontario Modern Language Teachers' Association (OMLTA), in partnership with the Modern Languages Council and with financial support from the Ministry of

Education, is pleased to launch a series of modules. This series was designed to support French as a Second Language (FSL) educators as part of the final phase of OMLTA's FSL Teacher Recruitment and Retention Project.

In the first phase of the project, three modules were developed:

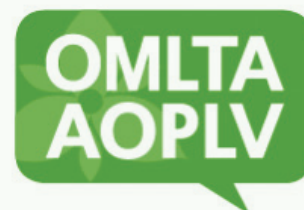
- 1/** Establishing and maintaining a positive FSL classroom environment.
- 2/** Engaging the learner by planning for and implementing authentic tasks and the Universal Design for Learning model.
- 3/** Using assessment and evaluation within the FSL context.

In the second phase, "Dare to Unmute FSL", three additional modules were developed:

- 1/** Exploring equity, diversity, and intercultural awareness through the culture component of the FSL curriculum.
- 2/** Investigating effective instructional practices for in-person, hybrid, and virtual settings.
- 3/** Developing dynamic action-oriented tasks that meet the needs of all learners.

"Weaving the Strands: The Interconnectedness of FSL Learning," is the third and final phase of the project. The series consists of four modules, corresponding to each strand of the Ontario FSL curriculum: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing.

During the month of October, all interested educators can participate in one-hour, live webinars every Wednesday at 7 p.m. The webinars are open to all educators and will showcase each of the four modules.



ONTARIO MODERN LANGUAGE  
TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION  
ASSOCIATION ONTARIENNE DES  
PROFESSEURS DE LANGUES VIVANTES

SINCE / DEPUIS 1886

Click [HERE](#) to register online.



The first module, **Listening**, focuses on exploring the listening strand of the FSL curriculum documents in order to develop language proficiency and confidence for learners. This module addresses possible barriers present for educators and learners while participating in listening activities. It also discusses concrete instructional strategies that will help learners develop listening and interaction skills.

The second module, **Speaking**, is intended to support FSL educators in maximizing oral communication and interaction through high-yield, low-risk strategies. This module explores how to equip language learners to engage in accountable, productive talk, to build confidence, develop oral proficiency, and understand how French is used to communicate.

The third module, **Reading**, builds upon the learners' previous knowledge, skills, and experiences with listening and speaking in French in order to explore the different tools and strategies that learners can use to make sense of the texts they are reading. Through explicit teaching of reading comprehension strategies and language awareness tools, the learner will begin to comprehend a variety of meaningful, inclusive, and diverse French texts.

The fourth and final module, **Writing**, is intended to support FSL educators in maximizing written production and interaction through high-yield, low-risk strategies. With the inclusion of technology in written production and interaction, this module features instructional insights and classroom practices to help educator planning, and to support the learner's independent selection and application of strategies to communicate in the target language.



Recorded webinars, viewer guides, video overviews for each module, a glossary of terms, and a facilitator's guide for "Weaving the Strands: the Interconnectedness of FSL Learning" will be recorded and posted at [omlta.org](http://omlta.org). The resources for the first two phases of the FSL Teacher Recruitment and Retention Project are also available at [omlta.org](http://omlta.org).

Click [HERE](http://omlta.org) to access [omlta.org](http://omlta.org)

The OMLTA is a leader in professional learning and advocacy, inspiring and connecting Ontario's French and International Languages educators. Since 1886, OMLTA continues to foster collaboration amongst language educators and professional partners; deliver practical, user-friendly best practices in language learning; and influence policies and directions that support French and International Languages education. If you are not already a member, consider joining the OMLTA and reaching out to your colleagues to take part in exciting initiatives and to view resources exclusive to members.

*Annette Gagliano is a member of the Halton Elementary Unit and serves on OMLTA's Board of Directors as the current editor of the Association's monthly publication, Communication.*

# “Got your back, Jack”

By Shannon Hogan

*These things I have spoken to you so that they will remain with you.  
But the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things,  
and bring all things to your understanding, whatsoever I have taught you.*

*Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you: not as the world gives, but as I give to you.*

*Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid.*

*John 14:25-27*

As we begin a new school year, a reading of the final discourses of Jesus to his disciples before his ascension into heaven seem appropriate. I have always found it fascinating that the disciples (which included Jesus' mother Mary and all the other women who followed him) saw him in real time after his death and resurrection. There is no definitive understanding in Church teaching what the resurrected body of Jesus looked like, or how he was experienced. We just know that he was there among them, several times before his ascension to heaven. Of that we are certain

I find it so human and tender that Jesus' final words to his disciples are ones of affirming them, giving them courage to endure whatever will follow, and to assure them that he will never really leave them. He states that he will send the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, to be with them always, and to never abandon them throughout their days.

As the New Testament was written in Greek, and a casual form of Greek was spoken in the eastern part of the Roman Empire, the word “paraclete” jumps off the page for me. (Finally, five

years of studying Greek and Latin have paid off!) In Greek, “paraclete” was used to refer to a particular formation of soldiers in battle. What it meant was that as soldiers stood on the field of battle, pairs of soldiers would stand back to back as they fought.

Jesus and his disciples would understand this meaning, and it is a powerful metaphor for what Jesus was sending to his beloved ones. In the vernacular, Jesus was saying, “I’ve got your back, Jack.” I will *literally* protect you with my body, and will sacrifice my life for you. Jesus went further in saying that while I have given my physical life for you, my metaphysical life will remain with you till the end of days. Jesus wanted them to know that the Paraclete would be with them in every moment of their lives – in peace and in war, in struggle and in joy – forever.

To this day, each of us has this same Paraclete that was sent to the disciples. The Holy Spirit has “got our back,” forever, and always, in every moment of our lives; in joy and in suffering, in success and failure, in living and in dying.





What is critical for our understanding of our own place in this life, is that we act as the paraclete for each other – in loving the way Jesus did, we’ve “got each other’s back.”

This metaphor creates for me a powerful image of who we are as OECTA. We protect, care for, and walk with each other as Catholic teachers. We advocate for each other, often in the face of no agreement, for what is right, true, and just in publicly funded Catholic education. Whether on the metaphorical battlefield with any given elected official, or in pursuit of safe and healthy schools for our teachers and students. We are the paraclete that remains when others have gone or have become exhausted by the challenge that this role and responsibility can cost us – physically and certainly metaphysically.

Our challenge is to live as the early disciples lived – in communal care for each other and in fidelity to what we know to be true and good for all. In our recognition of this calling that we all have answered to be Catholic teachers, let us be mindful that we are not alone – we are never alone. We have among us, and within us, the constant paraclete who we can

ask for help when the times are too painful, when we are weary of the challenge, and when we feel we need to hide our mental health needs.

This calls up in us a need to be gentle with ourselves, to be tender in loving ourselves, and to celebrate the paracletes in our lives.

As Jesus promised that he would be with us till the end of time, this includes *our* time and in *our* lives.

How graced and blessed we are – to have this promise fulfilled every day by the Paraclete, who’s “Got your back, Jack!”

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*Shannon Hogan is a Staff Officer in the Counselling and Member Services department at the OECTA Provincial Office.*



# COMMUNICATING BY **EM@IL**

By Bruno Muzzi

Email is a convenient, accessible, and easy form of communication. For many people, email is the primary means by which they communicate for work, and is often the predominant way teachers communicate with parents and guardians. But it can be a source of stress, increased workload, and other issues for teachers.

Like most technology today, there are benefits, but also drawbacks that come with its usage. Expectations have grown among parents and guardians, especially since the pandemic, that there will be regular email updates from teachers on their child's class or their child in particular. While the ease of sending out one message and reaching a number of people, without having to engage in conversation, is convenient, email is not always the best way to communicate, and it has the ability to blur the lines between your professional duties and your personal time.

If you are providing your email address for parents and guardians to communicate with you, here are some guidelines to help protect you and facilitate effective communication:

- **Engage in work-related electronic communication only during the instructional day or normal business hours.**
  - Some teachers report receiving messages from parents and guardians at a variety of times, both during the day and at night, as well as on weekends.

Manage expectations by being upfront about when they can expect to receive a response from you, both in terms of time of day and how long it will take you to respond.

- You can put a note at the bottom of your emails indicating when people can expect to receive communication from you, or you can use an automated response (like an out of office notice) for non-business hours, indicating that you have received their message and will respond during business hours.
- If your regular time for reviewing and responding to messages is in the evening, use the delay delivery tool in your email to have the messages sent the following morning.
- **DO NOT** email at inappropriate hours. This may create unreasonable expectations. Furthermore, the irregular timing of your emails could potentially be used as evidence of your character, if you were ever to find yourself in trouble in the future.
- Managing email inboxes can consume a great deal of your time, so set a regular schedule of when you will review messages and give yourself a time limit.
- **Provide your school board email address, never your personal email address.**
  - School Boards are expected to provide you with the tools that you need to do your job. An email address is

one of those tools and it should be what is used for all work related communication, whether that is to parents, your employer, or your colleagues.

- **Be professional.**

- Use proper sentence structure, spelling, and grammar. Avoid slang or informal language.
- Focus only on the issue being communicated and not on personal communication. Keep in mind the objective for your communication – what is the essence of what you need to say.

Click [HERE](#) to read the Ontario College of Teachers' (OCT) ethical standards for the teaching profession. Members are encouraged to review and abide by the OCT standards.

- **Be concise.**

- Stick to the facts. The tone of email always has the potential to be misinterpreted. Sensitive information should always be delivered directly to parents and guardians (by phone or in person) to avoid misunderstanding.
- If an email devolves into a lengthy back and forth, request to continue the discussion by telephone or in person.



### **Inappropriate use of email can lead to discipline**

Most school board policies make it clear that their email system is to be used for professional purposes only. These policies prohibit attacks on personnel, use of foul or inappropriate language or comments, and exchanges of confidential information about students or personnel. When such material is widely broadcast by the sender or recipient, the damage is compounded. Disapproval about a decision or board action should not be aired through the school board email system.

Should you experience situations where you are being questioned about your use of email or electronic communication, please contact your local OECTA unit office or the OECTA Provincial Office for advice and direction.

### **Click the following links for other resources on this topic:**

**Building positive relationships with parents**

**Appropriate and professional use of electronic communication**

**Ontario College of Teachers advisory on electronic communications and social media**

### **• Maintain confidentiality.**

- All matters and materials electronically communicated are bound by the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)*, which states that unless explicit consent is given, all information is to be kept confidential.
- If you are emailing multiple people at once, ensure that their email addresses are not displayed for others to see. This is easily done by putting the addresses in the “bcc” field. Do not share email addresses with parents and guardians unless the individual gives permission for their address to be shared.

### **Email is NOT private**

Email is not a secure mode of communication. Email messages can be printed, forwarded, forwarded with attachments, and/or copied, often without the knowledge or consent of the author. Once you send a message via email, you lose control and ownership of the message.

Most school boards have a policy on the employer’s right to monitor email. Any such policy will include the circumstances under which third-party access is permitted. Employees should be aware of all policies.

Also, be aware that whoever operates the email system has a right to control the system and establish codes of conduct, ethical standards, and other operating policies to which users must adhere. The Association has encountered many instances in which school boards have accessed a member’s board email records if that member is under suspicion for something.

Lastly, school board email addresses should not be used for personal or union business. Please ensure that the Association has your up-to-date, personal email address to communicate with you.

*Bruno Muzzi is Department Head in the Counselling and Member Services department at the OECTA Provincial Office.*





# Flow Freely

**By Karl Fernandes**

Early one quiet August morning, I sat gazing upon a peaceful stream tucked away in a forest. It was a unique spot, right where the gentle current approached a small drop, creating the mesmerizing sound of rushing water. The morning brought a bright, cloudless sky, allowing the trees to be mirrored in the slow-moving water on one side and a blur of green on the other. A sense of wonder came over me, and then clarity. I thought about the flow of the school year.

For weeks this summer, I mulled my career as an educator. Perhaps you did, too. At some point, we reach a stage where we become keenly aware that the road behind us is longer than the one before us. Our role shifts to gratitude and the desire to help others carry forward. How many students, how many colleagues, teacher candidates, and parents have shared these years with us? How many field trips, concerts, and sports teams have created priceless memories? How many classrooms have become a home away from home?

I marvel at how more than 25 years have somehow raced by in my career. Blessed beyond measure, I rejoice in the experiences, relationships, and lessons which have defined these years. Much like the water, there have been moments of calm and moments of rush.

A new school year allows the chance to reflect on both gentle and rushing water. As educators, we may find ourselves yearning for the gentle waters this year. Quiet, productive classrooms, peaceful interactions, a little time to ourselves during a prep period, the happy buzz of children's laughter floating from the school yard. More often, however, we will likely find the rush of the waters carrying us through the school year. Sometimes exhilarating, sometimes chaotic, we will feel the seemingly inevitable pull of the current.

Being a Catholic teacher in these times is to know the feeling of rushing water. The demands are many, and growing. Called to serve, rooted in our faith, we are required to summon courage to navigate uncertainty.

With time, we realize that we need to flow with both the calm and the rush in a school year in order to learn and grow.

How can we do this? My walk in the forest reminded me to savour both sides of the divide. The calm reminded me of the profound abiding joy found in working in schools. How unique and wondrous the call of teaching – to share knowledge and our life experience in order to help young people discover their own.

But the rushing waters are also to be savoured. They may require more attentiveness, but their appeal is irresistible. I never cease to be amazed at the teachers I have known – new to the profession and more seasoned – who dig so deep to help a student in distress, or who give so much of themselves to plan, mark, coach, cheer, referee, counsel, or console students of all ages and abilities. It is at once breathtaking and heartbreaking to consider all that we do.

A further thought comes to mind, a magic of sorts. Those who practice mindfulness or meditation will recognize the power of the pause between breathing in and breathing out, or stimulus and response. There is magic in this moment. It provides the clarity, the reflection, the grace to hold on before letting go. Think of a roller coaster in the moment before the drop. That pause is indescribable. It is to be cherished.

This school year will be like no other. That much is certain. May there be countless moments of calm and rush. And may we be wise enough to pause, reflect, and savour the flow.

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*Karl Fernandes teaches Grades 7 and 8 at Our Lady of Grace Catholic School in Toronto, and is a member of the Toronto Elementary Unit. Karl is a Professional Development Network facilitator and course instructor for OECTA.*



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# A legend gets his due

By Gian Marcon

**O**n July 15, a 110-year-old injustice was finally rectified when Indigenous American Jim Thorpe, a member of the Sac and Fox Nation, was reinstated as the sole winner of Olympic gold and silver medals for decathlon and pentathlon at the 1912 Stockholm Summer Olympics. When I read the news earlier this year, I was flooded with a number of memories and feelings. Although I had never witnessed Thorpe's phenomenal exploits, I vividly recall my childhood fascination with his legendary accomplishments and, in particular, my first encounter with his story in my elementary school library.

In 1971, I attended St. Jane Frances Elementary School in Toronto. It was there that the teacher-librarian, who had picked up on my love of sports, suggested that I might enjoy a biography that had arrived earlier that week. I was anticipating a story about a famous hockey or baseball player, so I was surprised to receive a book about an athlete I had not heard of before – Jim Thorpe. While the specific title escapes me now, I do recall that part of it referred to Thorpe as the world's greatest athlete. I was immediately intrigued to know more about this titan of sport who had been heretofore unknown to me. I waded in with gusto.

I soon became ravenous for any information about Thorpe that I could

get my hands on. I found two more books about him at the local public library and quickly consumed them. Our Grade 7 teacher then announced that the annual school speech competition was being held in a month's time and that we were to prepare our five-minute speeches on a topic of our choosing. Not surprisingly, I chose Thorpe as my subject. With all the enthusiasm of a 12-year-old sports fan, I set to my task in the hopes that I would illuminate my peers to Thorpe's greatness.

My speech, as I recall, focused largely on Thorpe's exploits as an Olympic athlete, as well as a football and baseball star. I mentioned in passing that Thorpe had been unfairly stripped of his Olympic medals because he had violated some Olympic code pertaining to amateurism. I did not understand the particulars then. But by the time I entered high school, I researched and expounded more informedly on the injustice perpetrated against Thorpe.

Fast forward to 2022, I was heartened to read that Thorpe's reinstatement recognized him as the sole gold medalist in the 1912 Olympic decathlon and pentathlon. Shortly after this welcome news, I came across a review of a new biography on Thorpe by David Maraniss in the *New York Times Review of Books*. I picked it up soon thereafter and I am currently reading *Path Lit By Lightning: The Life of Jim Thorpe*, and it is an absorbing account.

David Maraniss has been a long-time favourite of mine, with critically acclaimed biographies of Vince Lombardi and Barack Obama to his credit. In his latest tome, he breaks

down the nature and scope of Thorpe's prowess, and the roots of the hypocrisy in the Olympic establishment that was all too quick to single out Thorpe. Maraniss compellingly outlines the supposed "infraction" that dated back to Thorpe's time at an Indian boarding school focused on assimilating Indigenous Peoples – Carlisle Indian Industrial School – and articulates how despite his triumphs on the athletic fields, Thorpe's life was marked by sadness and loss.

Thorpe died of a heart attack in a modest trailer at age 64 and never lived to see the travesty perpetrated against him reversed. In a bizarre twist, his death initiated a protracted legal battle over his eventual burial site. Despite this seemingly unceremonious ending to his life, Thorpe's legacy remained in the public eye. He was voted by sportswriters of the day as the greatest athlete of the first half of the twentieth century, and later, the greatest athlete of the century in 2000.

In his preface, Maraniss writes – similar to my experience – that many of his friends first learned about Thorpe from a "book they read in Grade 4," in libraries that, in the 1970s, undoubtedly had a dearth of books on Indigenous Peoples. Thorpe's story, however, transcended and endured. My lifelong fascination with the greatest athlete of all time continues to evolve and as I read Maraniss's account, I can recommend it as an illuminating account of a gifted man and the times in which he lived.

*Gian Marcon is a retired Catholic teacher and former Staff Officer at the OECTA Provincial Office.*

# In the matter of a discipline hearing

## Between:

**The Halton Elementary Unit Executive Members of OECTA** (Complainants) - and -  
**Tina Drakeford** (Respondent)

Before a panel of the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA) discipline board  
September 13, 2022

**Kathleen Gardiner**, Chairperson  
**Carolyn Stevens**  
**Dan Charbonneau**

*\*This is a summary of the Discipline Panel decision.\**

## / ORIGIN OF THE CASE

The General Secretary of OECTA has referred the following statement of complaint to the Discipline Board of OECTA.

The Complainants, the Halton Elementary Unit Executive of OECTA made the following Complaint to the General Secretary filed on June 29, 2021:

The Unit alleged the following Association *Handbook* policies were violated:

Policies, Collective Bargaining, Strikes:

3.54 That during a strike, all members of the bargaining unit(s) on strike join in the strike

approved by the majority or be subject to a complaint under 2.208 to 2.251 for failing to do so.

3.55 That during a strike, no member participate in banned activities as determined by the bargaining unit executive committee(s).

3.56 That a member participating in a banned activity be subject to a complaint under 2.208 to 2.251.

As the complaint was filed on June 29, 2021, the Discipline Panel used the 2020-21 Association *Handbook*.

## / THE HEARING

The Hearing into this complaint was convened at 10 a.m. at the Westin Toronto Airport Hotel, 950 Dixon Road, located in Toronto, Ontario.

The Panel received the following information as evidence:

Exhibit #1	Notice of Discipline Investigation – July 23, 2021
Exhibit #2	Notices of Hearing – February 25, 2022, and May 31, 2022
Exhibit #3	Binder of Documents submitted by the Complainants
Exhibit #4	Binder of Documents submitted by the Respondent

The documents included an agreed statement of facts, and will says from Tara Hambly, Unit President for the Halton Elementary Unit (the Complainant), and



from Tina Drakeford, the member (the Respondent).

The Complainant agreed to have Rose Procopio, OECTA Staff Officer, act as her agent. The Respondent agreed to have David Dolan, OECTA Staff Officer, act as their agent.

There were no preliminary issues raised by either party.

The chair provided an overview of the hearing procedure that would be followed. No objection was raised by either party regarding the Rules and Procedures for the hearing.

Ms. Procopio made a brief opening statement on behalf of the Complainant. Mr. Dolan made a brief opening statement on behalf of the Respondent. Ms. Procopio presented the Complainant's case. The sole witness was Ms. Hambly. Ms. Hambly testified that on March 23, 2021, the Board had informed Ms. Hambly that all the teaching positions at the virtual school for the 2021-22 school year would be posted in the transfer rounds to staff at all the schools for the 2021-22 school year. Ms. Hambly testified that the Respondent applied for a posting at the virtual school during the transfer rounds of April 30, 2021, in contravention of the March 22, 2021, Stage 1 Strike Sanctions of the Halton Elementary Unit (HEU) Administrative Job Action. Ms. Hambly testified that the Board confirmed that the Respondent was the successful applicant. Subsequently, Ms. Hambly contacted the Respondent via email on two occasions.

Mr. Dolan cross-examined Ms. Hambly on the nature of the emails sent to the members. Ms. Hambly confirmed that one email went out to all the members reminding them that applying to the transfer rounds was part of the sanctions imposed.

Similarly, Ms. Hambly confirmed that one email was specifically sent to each of the teachers, including the Respondent, who had submitted their names to the transfer process in contravention of the sanctions.

Ms. Procopio did not re-examine Ms. Hambly.

Mr. Dolan presented the Respondent's case. The sole witness was Ms. Drakeford, the Respondent. Ms. Drakeford testified that she did not believe that she was applying for a transfer because she believed that the virtual school was her permanent placement even though she was listed as a teacher at St. Gabriel's.

Ms. Drakeford testified that she believed that being on the staff list of St. Gabriel's was a typo by both the school administrator and the human resources department. Ms. Drakeford stated that she accessed the board's StaffNet website to seek and apply for positions. When submitting her name during the April 30, 2021, transfer process, Ms. Drakeford testified that she believed she was doing so to change her role at the virtual school, rather than to change her school assignment. For this reason, she did not see that the Board placing her in the posted position was a transfer. Ms. Drakeford also described for the Panel the very difficult family circumstances she was experiencing at the time. Ms. Drakeford testified that, as a result, she was not able to focus well during this time and she was not paying attention to all email correspondence. She also testified that she believed that some email correspondence did not apply to her. Ms. Drakeford explained that she believed there was no need to respond to the Unit's correspondence, dated June 2 and 6, 2021 concerning the violation of the sanctions because she believed that she had not been given a placement under the transfer rounds.

Ms. Procopio then commenced her cross-examination of Ms. Drakeford. Ms. Procopio raised the distinction between applying for a transfer in the staffing rounds that occurred in April and May versus completing a teaching preference form in January. Ms. Drakeford responded that the preference forms were generally done in January but this [2020-21] year was a non-customary year and there had been a non-customary way of doing things that year. Ms. Procopio asked Ms. Drakeford to clarify her understanding on continuing to receive emails from St. Gabriel's if she was not placed at that school, including when there was a new principal at the school. Ms. Drakeford explained that she believed that she was receiving these emails in error because she was on a legacy email list.

Closing remarks commenced. Ms. Procopio highlighted that the Respondent's own testimony confirmed that she had applied through the transfer rounds when sanctions were in place, and that the work-to-rule sanctions required all members not to participate in any of the transfer round process. Ms. Procopio stated by that admission the Respondent was guilty of violating *Handbook* provisions regarding strikes. The Panel asked Ms. Procopio to clarify what the Complainant's request for penalty was. Ms. Procopio clarified that the Complainant was seeking that the member be reprimanded, a financial penalty of no less than \$1,000, that the member have her

Association membership privileges suspended for a period of 3 years, and publication of the decision.

Mr. Dolan made his closing remarks. Mr. Dolan conceded that the Respondent had applied to the transfer rounds, but asked the Panel to consider the Respondent's financial circumstances as a mitigating factor and suggested to the Panel that a letter of reprimand would be a more appropriate penalty. He stated that the Respondent's intent was not to violate the work-to-rule sanctions because she believed that she was not doing anything wrong, and that during that year the Respondent had been focusing on her studies, her teaching duties, and getting healthy.

### **/ DECISION OF THE PANEL**

After considering the evidence and testimony presented, the Panel arrived at the following decisions:

1. The Discipline Panel finds Ms. Tina Drakeford, member of the Halton Elementary Unit of OECTA violated Policy 3.54 of the Association *Handbook*.
2. The Discipline Panel finds Ms. Tina Drakeford, member of the Halton Elementary Unit of OECTA violated Policy 3.55 of the Association *Handbook*.

### **/ REASON**

Ms. Drakeford, the Respondent, admitted to violating the work-to-rule sanctions by submitting her name to the transfer rounds for a teaching position that was listed by the board on April 30, 2021. The Complainant's evidence included documented evidence, published by the school board, that substantiated the violation. Furthermore, both will says and the agreed statement of facts all substantiated a violation of the work-to-rule sanctions.

### **/ PENALTY**

The Panel makes the following orders with respect to penalty:

1. Effective immediately, Ms. Tina Drakeford's membership privileges shall be suspended until August 31, 2025.

2. That the Discipline Panel issue a Letter of Reprimand to Ms. Drakeford arising out of her violation of Policies 3.54 and 3.55.
3. Prior to her reinstatement of membership privileges, but no later than August 31, 2025, Ms. Drakeford shall pay \$1,000 in full, to the Association.
4. This Decision shall be published in the next official OECTA publication.

### **/ REASONS FOR THE PENALTY**

The purpose of the letter of reprimand, fine, and suspension of membership privileges is intended to demonstrate to Ms. Drakeford, and to the membership as a whole, the importance of maintaining solidarity during negotiations and of sanctions as set out in the Association *Handbook*. The evidence established that the members of the Association were able to achieve significant transfer rights in their collective agreement due to their commitment to solidarity. The HEU membership had expressed their desire to achieve significant improvements in their transfer rights under the collective agreement. The HEU bargaining team and Executive led the largest job action ever taken in the Halton CDSB, and they were successful in making substantial gains to their collective agreement. These huge gains were achieved through membership solidarity. Ms. Drakeford is now a beneficiary of that solidarity.

The Panel considered Ms. Drakeford's personal and family circumstances of the 2020-21 school year. Ms. Drakeford testified that these made it difficult for her to direct her attention to the communications with respect to work-to-rule sanctions, received by her from the HEU. However, she further testified that at this time she was engaged in graduate studies, while teaching part-time, and was also able to direct her attention to holding discussions with the school board's human resources personnel and research the board's on-line staffing resource for vacant teaching positions. The Panel concluded therefore that it was reasonable to expect her to stay abreast of the communications sent to her by the Unit.



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