

# agenda

We teach the love of learning

The publication of the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association

AGM 2010

## Bill 242 changes

Marshall Jarvis, OECTA General Secretary, outlined the provisions of Bill 242, the Full Day Learning Statute Law and described the amendments that OECTA is seeking. He also described the Association's strategy for bringing recommendations forward to government and for lobbying if needed. James Ryan, OECTA president, told delegates that both ETFO and AEFO, the teacher unions that represent elementary teachers in Ontario's public schools and teachers in French language schools respectively, share OECTA's concerns. "We will take care of our Kindergarten teachers and we will give them the training they need," the president vowed.

## Government notes concerns

Education Minister Leona Dombrowsky acknowledged OECTA's engagement regarding Bill 242, the *Full Day Early Learning Statute Law Amendment Act*. Following the introduction of Bill 242, discussions were held on March 1, March 9 and a third has been scheduled for March 24, she told delegates. "We have become aware of concerns that OECTA has with respect to the Early Learning Program," the Minister told AGM delegates. Issues include the appointment of supervisors and the

appointment and supervision of people who assist teachers and ECEs in the JK/K classroom; a prescribed class size threshold; duties and responsibilities that could be imposed on teachers; scope of powers that permit principals to delegate responsibilities for the Extended Day Program, and the scope of proposed regulatory authority for induction and performance appraisal of ECEs. Minister Dombrowsky encouraged delegates to participate in upcoming hearings at which Ontarians may offer suggestions and advice about how to improve the legislation.

## Mandatory Native Studies: Fontaine

"Native Studies courses should be mandatory in all schools," the former National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, Phil Fontaine, told AGM delegates. He said that the most important thing that Catholic teachers can do as individuals and as an organization to help Canada's Aboriginal population, "is to teach your students the truth about Canada, about First Peoples and about what the First Peoples mean to Canada." During his address, he enumerated the injustices faced by First Nations communities, related to poverty, treaty rights and the tragedy of the residential school system that, "was designed to kill the Indian in the child."

## Responsibility for GLBT students

Teachers should never accept "gay" as a synonym for "stupid" or "unacceptable" and should always correct gay baiting or homophobic behavior of students against other students, Helen Kennedy, Executive Director of EGALÉ, a human rights organization that advocates for equality and justice for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered people and their families across Canada, told OECTA's Human Rights Caucus on Saturday evening. She made her suggestions for making schools safe places for these students as part of a three person panel that included Kevin Welbes-Godin, Helen Kennedy and TSU's Dave Szollosy. "Gay and lesbian students are present in all classrooms, all day and every day," Welbes-Godin said. [www.egale.ca](http://www.egale.ca)

## Teachers oppose misuse of testing

OECTA is participating in the push-back against the misuse of assessment tools in schools, both provincially and locally. James Ryan told delegates that governments across Canada, the United States and the Commonwealth have continued to rely on testing data. "Teacher federations oppose this superficial agenda."

## Labour friendly

Ken Georgetti, president of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), called on all OECTA members to join the CLC campaign to elect labour-friendly municipal candidates and school trustees. Local Labour Councils are already looking for candidates who share labour's values, to create a list of labour-endorsed candidates, he said. "We need OECTA's help to find and support good people who are willing to serve as school trustees. After the election we will support them with research and training."

## H1N1 action

OECTA took aggressive action to protect members from H1N1 virus, by ensuring boards took all appropriate precautions to prepare for a potential pandemic. OECTA provided timely and thorough information to teachers in all schools, the Association president reported.

## "Speak About Catholic Schools"

Communication and Public Relations Committee members distributed brochures that address the integral role played by Ontario's Catholic schools in Ontario education and answer questions about its history and unique qualities.

# What Happened

## Priorities and Challenges

OECTA's General Secretary Marshall Jarvis outlined the key priorities and challenges that the Association's provincial office is tackling during the 2009-10 year, including the program to develop the next generation of OECTA leaders. In 2009-10, 120 teachers are participating in foundational training for OECTA's new Leadership Training Program that is being delivered over four days, in November and April. Jarvis cited PD initiatives that are evolving to meet changing member needs, such as the Occasional Teachers' Workshops, Common Good and Beginning Teacher conferences, as well as the expanding AQ courses, "that equip teachers to work in twenty first century classrooms." He also described an ambitious video training project produced by the Contract Services Department, that began with an arbitration simulation that was staged at the November Grievance Officers Workshop.

## OCT Report

"Teachers asked us to offer more up-to-date subjects in the AQ catalogue and we listened," said Liz Papadopoulos, chair of the Governing Council of the Ontario College of Teachers, to AGM delegates on Saturday morning. "You'll now see new AQs such as mentoring, outdoor experiential education and teaching, and learning through e-learning. Technological education, inclusive education, and Aboriginal teacher education are a few other areas that have been enhanced," she said. OECTA has provided helpful

input with recommendations regarding AQ qualifications.

## Support for Catholic Education

In his report to members, OECTA President James Ryan told delegates that teachers are working with parents, trustees and clergy to reinforce Catholic community support for the Catholic school system. One of the first undertakings of the Friends and Advocates for Catholic Education (FACE) project, was to deliver numerous letters and submissions to the NDP task force on education funding, supporting Catholic schools.

## Outreach

Many OECTA activities are "answers to a Gospel call," OECTA President James Ryan told AGM delegates in his report to members. Projects that the Association has supported include: sponsorship of the Canadian Aboriginal Festival; sponsorship of the Literacy Camps at Onigaming First Nation run by Frontier College; underwriting construction of the St. Vincent de Paul School in Haiti, in memory of David Fernandes; partnering with Art for Aids International to support women and children living with Aids in Africa; participating in Project Overseas, a project of the Canadian Teachers' Federation to share professional expertise with teachers in developing nations; solidarity and support for locked out and fired maintenance and engineering employees of Cadillac Fairview, a corporation partially owned by the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan; and finally, solidarity and support

for steelworkers at the Vale-Inco Copper Cliff site in Sudbury, who have just entered the seventh month of a strike.

## CTF President

"Each and every one of you has a voice in the Canadian Teachers' Federation," said Mary-Lou Donnelly, CTF President, in her remarks to delegates. Through CTF, OECTA is making real contributions to improve education for children in Canada and in many developing countries. In Canada, CTF lobbies the federal government on several fronts, such as reducing child poverty, supporting refugee immigrant children and, enhancing Aboriginal education. On March 10, CTF released a groundbreaking study on Aboriginal teaching and learning, available on CTF's website

[www.ctf-fce.ca](http://www.ctf-fce.ca)

Since Project Overseas began in 1962, OECTA has sponsored 144 teachers in 206 placements to provide in-service training to teachers in developing countries. This summer, seven teachers will head to Dominica, Mongolia, Uganda, Grenada and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. When natural disasters struck in Haiti, Chile, Louisiana and South East Asia, OECTA responded to

urgent appeals, through donations and support to CTF, to assist teacher colleagues and play a role in rebuilding the education system.

## Awards

OECTA celebrated its 66th Anniversary, which was also an evening to honour six members for their outstanding leadership roles.

### Life Membership Awards

Wayne Cornack

Donna Marie Kennedy

James Smith

### Honorary Membership Award

David Bloom

### Marion Tyrrell Memorial Award of Merit

Kathy McVean

### Pearse Shannon Memorial Association Award

Bernie Dupuis

## Teachers' Union

Delegates did not approve a resolution to change the OECTA Constitution to make it possible for OECTA to organize ECEs who will be working with Kindergarten teachers. The resolution received support from 65 per cent of delegates but required 90 per cent support to change the Constitution.

## 2010-2011 Provincial Executive

President: James Ryan

Past President: Elaine Mac Neil

First Vice-President: Kevin O'Dwyer

Second Vice-President: Chris Karuhanga

Third Vice-President: Ann Hawkins

Treasurer: Sonia Di Petta

Councillors: Andrew Donihee, Louie Trinchi

OTF Governors: Tom Doyle, Reno Melatti, Julie Pauletig,

Micheal Wozniak, Chris Cowley

OTF Table Officer: Reno Melatti