



OFHSA YEAR-IN-REVIEW 2010-2011

The Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations is made up of volunteer parent members across the province, working on behalf of children and youth. The work of these members in their schools, their school boards and their communities must be added to the list that is presented here. The following is a list of some of those activities undertaken over the past 12 months by the executive and board of directors of OFHSA:

Meeting The Needs of Members:

One focus of Federation activity is to provide information, training, resources and support to members to help them with their work. In pursuit of this goal, the Federation undertook the following:

- The Bulletin printed newsletter
 - made available to every Home & School member, directors, education partners and Ontario school boards
- E-newsletter – *Virtually Yours*
 - reaches 2,600+ readers every issue
- Leadership Training Day
 - Information, handouts, networking, Q&A

Annual General Meeting and Conference:

Volunteer members of the Federation worked hard to organize a conference for all members in conjunction with the annual general meeting. Thanks go to Thames Valley Council for this year's annual conference, held April 15-17 in London. Members enjoyed workshops such as, *Social Media, High School Gangs, Wisdom of Grief, Teen Mental Health, and Money Matters*, among others.

Speaking Out:

The focus of OFHSA activities is to improve the education and environment of children and youth. The briefs, responses and letters that we send on behalf of members are an important part of our activities. These responses reflect our policies and member concerns, as well as addressing proposed legislative change, and issues that arise. In the past year, OFHSA has addressed the following issues:

- Bill 129, Remembrance Day
- Discrepancies over school-generated funds
- Support for publicly-funded web-based hub to provide information, support and training for parents

OFHSA also continues to raise the profile of education issues and the concerns of parents through the work of members in their local schools and school boards, and through interviews with the press. Members across Ontario have continued to send letters to the editor and to the Ministry of Education.

Working With Partners:

OFHSA continues to maintain strong co-operative relationships with government and other education stakeholders. Through these links we are better able to understand each other's points of view and identify areas of common interest so that we can improve the results for students. This year, OFHSA members provided advice and support to the following:

- Breakfast for Learning, Ontario Chapter (board member)
- Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO)
 - Assessment advisory committee
 - Website survey of Home & School members
- Ministry of Education Committees
 - Education Partnership working table
 - Grants for Student Needs 2011-12 consultations
 - Curriculum advisory and review committees:
 - Healthy Schools working table
 - Learning-to-18
- Ontario College of Teachers (OCT)
 - Teachers' Qualifications Consultation – Equality & LGBT students
- Ontario Physical and Health Education Association (OPHEA)
 - Achieving Healthier Weights Strategy
- Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA)
 - Violence in the Media coalition
 - Judging of Fred L. Bartlett Award of Merit
 - Annual dinner, Windsor
- Ontario School Bus Association (OSBA), Metrolinx, and education partners
 - SST (Sustainable Student Transportation) workshop
- Ontario Teachers' Federation
 - Judging of OTIP Teaching Excellence Awards
- Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO), Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF) and Ontario Principals' Council (OPC) annual dinners

Canadian Home and School Federation:

As a member of the Canadian Home and School Federation, OFHSA is able to advocate for the health, safety and education of children and youth at the national level. This year as part of our commitment to Canadian, we undertook the following activities:

- Represented Ontario members on the CHSF Board, attending the November mid-term meeting in Ottawa and the 2010/11 AGM in New Brunswick.
- Participated in provincial sharing time at these meetings with parent members from across Canada, including models for parent involvement and funding

Conclusion:

OFHSA members will continue to face challenges and changes in the year to come. Our long-standing history of constructive involvement with governments and educators, our wealth of experience, support and resources, and our dedication to improving the lives of children and youth, will carry us through. We are all proud members of Home and School, as we join together in seeking "The Best For Each Student".