

The Ontario Federation of  
Home and School Associations



*"The Best for Each Student"*

# ANNUAL REPORT

April 2017 – April 2018

# ABOUT OFHSA

## Mission Statement

The Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations, a province-wide network of dedicated members, is committed to informed and proactive involvement in our homes, our schools and our communities, to obtain **“The Best for Each Student”**.



## OFHSA Is

- An independent voice of parents actively supporting public education at the school, school board, and provincial level.
- An organization of volunteers committed to ensuring that the education, health, safety and social well-being of children and youth are a priority for all.
- A network of members providing support, training, resources and advice developed over a long history of involvement.

## Mandate

OFHSA speaks on behalf of members across Ontario. Input and concerns are communicated at the school level by individual Home & School Associations and, at the district level by Home & School Councils. Resolutions are presented by members at the annual meeting of the Federation. Upon adoption, these resolutions become OFHSA policy. Federation responses represent the collective voice of members.

# 2017-2018 OFHSA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**President:** Eugema Ings, Murillo

**1st Executive Vice-President:** Arlene Morell, Strathroy

**2nd Executive Vice-President:** Gene Myers, Windsor

**Past-President:** Sandra Binns, Hamilton

**Hamilton-Wentworth Council President:** Bobby Chaggar, Hamilton

**Thames Valley Council President:** Sarah Thomson, London

**CHSF Representative:** Arlene Morell, Strathroy

Sandra Binns, Hamilton (December 2017)

**OFHSA Awards:** Teresa Blum, London

**Parent Communications:** Robin Harvey, London

**Parent Resources:** Karen Berlet, Heidelberg

**Conference Planning:** Laura Gonzalez & Sarah Thomson, London

**Finance:** Arlene Morell, Strathroy

Gene Myers, Windsor (December 2017)

**Leadership & Membership:** Veronica Coombs, Hamilton

**Virtually Yours:** Adam Lowe, London

**Policy & Education Advocacy:** Jeff Reynolds, Hamilton

Sandra Binns, Hamilton (December 2017)

**Strategic Planning:** Board of Managers

**OFHSA Bulletin:** Anna Davey, Hamilton

Robin Harvey, London (December 2017)

## Federation Meetings

All levels at the Federation held meetings throughout the year. The OFHSA Board of Managers met twice during the year, the OFHSA Executive Committee met four times during the year and the OFHSA Board of Directors met six times. Throughout this year, the OFHSA Board of Directors meetings were held at the Federation office, at the Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB) Education Center, or Directors could also participate in the meetings through an online meeting platform. Throughout the year, Helen Maltby, Paris, fulfilled the role of Treasurer for the Federation.

# OFHSA ADVOCACY

OFHSA participated in:

- Teleconference with Ontario Ministry of Education's Transformation Steering Committee
- Consultation regarding education funding (Grants for Student Needs)
- Consultation on a new vision for student transportation
- Consultation titled *Ontario: A Learning Province*, an independent review of student assessment and reporting
- Promoting school-based Home and School Associations with principals, superintendents, directors of education and trustees

***OFHSA Representatives explore the many avenues where it is possible to experience the inside workings of the ministry or school board, to meet new and interesting people and to make a contribution to the education system.***

***At the provincial level, invitations to collaborate with education partners provides an opportunity to represent the voice of OFHSA members.***

#### **OFHSA Education Partner Committees:**

- The Minister's Partnership Table
- EQAO Advisory Committee
- Student Achievement Division Working Table
- Healthy Schools Working Table

## **Representing the Voice of Our Members**

- Letter to the Minister of Health regarding OFHSA policies that support nurses in schools
- Letter to the Minister of Transportation and various ministries regarding school bus transportation
- Submitted a collective response regarding education assessment in Ontario
- Response regarding the *Pupil Accommodation Review Guidelines (PARG)*
- Response regarding the *Community Planning and Partnerships Guidelines (CPPG)*
- Letter of introduction and to welcome Minister of Education, Indira Naidoo-Harris, (January 2018)

# ADA COURTICE

## The Home and School Vision Continues

OFHSA founder Ada Courtice saw 'the home and school' movement as a movement intended to educate parents for the betterment of children, of education, and ultimately, for Canadian society as a whole. And now for over a century, OFHSA has played an important role in the lives of students, families and public education across the province.

OFHSA promotes the involvement of parents in a way that reinforces the deep-rooted importance of parent engagement. Directors continue to promote Ada's vision in communities, correspond with members and visit associations to provide guidance and support.

As leadership and times change, the Federation and its Directors team together to consider ideas and discuss goals that place our organization as the provincial resource for parent leadership and education advocacy.

## OFHSA's Priorities

- To ensure the continued existence of OFHSA as an effective advocate for parents and children
- To identify and meet the needs of the members
- To increase membership in OFHSA
- To ensure ongoing strong leadership for the Federation
- To strengthen OFHSA partnerships

# WELCOMING NEW ASSOCIATIONS

Every year OFHSA engages more parents and families across Ontario. Once an Association forms, OFHSA supports the school community and provides leadership in advocating for “The Best for Each Student.”

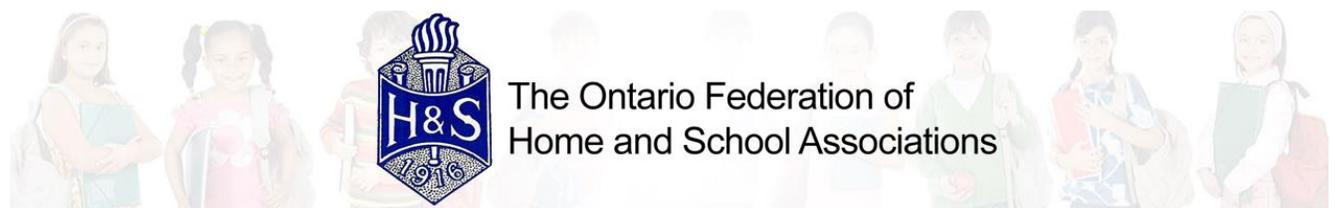
In 2017-2018 the following new Associations formed:

## Greater Essex District School Board

- Giles Campus

## Thames Valley District School Board

- Arthur Ford
- Byron Northview
- Byron Southwood
- Dunwich-Dutton
- East Oxford
- Emily Stowe
- Hillcrest
- June Rose Callwood
- Louise Arbour
- Nicholas Wilson
- Port Burwell
- River Heights
- Roch Carrier
- Sir John A. Macdonald
- Southwold
- Sparta
- Stoney Creek
- University Heights
- Winchester Street



# PARENT ENGAGEMENT

OFHSA's parent engagement month included:

- Sharing information throughout the month of April to promote parents as partners in education;
- Sharing Federation publications with our provincial partners in education, including OFHSA brochures and resources.

OFHSA Directors corresponded with members and visited Associations to provide guidance and support. The Leadership Workgroup continues to guide extension and development in communities and also continues to compile ideas for webinars and resources that support member needs and align with OFHSA's strategic goals priorities.

- *The OFHSA Bulletin* is published three times each year: September, January and May. Members contributed articles to *The Bulletin* related to events happening at their Associations.
- *Virtually Yours*, the OFHSA electronic newsletter, was issued to over 3400 subscribers three times this year.



**OFHSA is a member of the Canadian Home and School Federation (CHSF) and, as such, OFHSA sends one representative to participate in the CHSF spring mid-term board meeting and the fall board and annual meeting.**

**CHSF advocates for the education, health, safety and social well-being of children and youth at the national level.**

# RESPONDING TO OUR MEMBERS

OFHSA responded to member needs by sharing both Federation and Association information, in a timely manner, through e-mail, Facebook posts, tweets and discussion topics in our Google Group. Members were encouraged to share their thoughts and experiences with other members.

Over the past year, the OFHSA Board of Directors supported members with OFHSA *Leadership and Learning* sessions held in Hamilton and London. Orientation materials, training manuals and other resources were distributed in hardcopy and digitally with the assistance of a *PRO (Parents Reaching Out)* grant from the Ministry of Education.

OFHSA continues to offer a number of resources to our members electronically through our Google Group and a shared file (Dropbox). In particular, *Tools for H&S Executives*, *Association Guidelines*, *Executive Skills Handbook* along with other OFHSA procedure guides and the *H&S Communications binder/USB* are of the utmost importance to members.

## OFHSA Social Media

The Parent Communications Workgroup connected with Home and School members from across the province using multiple communications tools, including social media, while sharing the work of the Federation and bringing awareness of the efforts of members at all levels of the organization: Association, Council and Federation.



## **A Thank You from the OFHSA President**

Thank you to the Board of Directors and Executive Secretary for your contributions to OFHSA and to all the members for your contributions to your Associations and Councils. This year has been quite busy for everyone across the province.

I challenge all of you to come together and find what needs to be changed in your community and enact upon it! If what you choose affects others across Ontario, then bring forth a Letter of Intent for a resolution for the OFHSA Annual Meeting.

As my term has come to an end, I would like to say thank you to everyone! Keep carrying the torch striving for “The Best for Each Student.”

*Eugema Ings*



# **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

## **ANNUAL REPORTS**

APRIL 2017 – APRIL 2018

## President

This year has gone by swiftly. In order to remain informed of what was occurring within OFHSA, as well as preparing for various meetings (Executive, Board of Managers, Board of Directors and Annual Meeting), communication between the office and various board members occurred on a weekly basis. Due to the distance between directors and the office, e-mail, phone calls, free online platforms and text messaging were utilized to complete tasks. Our Board meeting prior to Conference was held using a paid online platform that worked well for all.

This year we had to make some tough financial decisions within our budget. We reduced expenses at the Federation by placing a freeze on reimbursements for travel, kept spending as tight as possible and looked at options for increasing revenue.

Throughout the year I participated in the following:

- I attended and participated in person at the last round table for Public Engagement on Education Assessments in Ontario.
- Congratulation letters were drafted throughout the year to different Ministers and or Partners moving into new positions.
- Teleconference and/or phone discussions occurred with various agencies and Ministries such as KidsNow Canada, Minister of Education and Partners, various school bus companies, Policy Advisor to the Minister of Education, Transformation Steering Committee – Minister of Education, People for Education, and of course with some of our members.
- E-mails were sent to Home and School members, KidsNow, school boards, trustees and the Ontario Principals' Council.
- Proposal was sent to the Ontario College of Teachers for OFHSA to participate as a speaker at their Conference; unfortunately, our proposal was declined
- Drafted the 2018-2019 PRO Grant
- Letters of advocacy, as well as general letters of support, were sent throughout the year.
- In order to ensure that we had a resolution come forward to this year's Annual Meeting, I stepped in to assist during the initial phase of the Letter of Intent process while our Policy Workgroup Leader was on leave.
- Helped cover off duties of other vacant director positions
- Chaired all meetings: Executive, Board of Managers, and Board of Directors.
- Organized and chaired the OFHSA Annual Meeting
- Prepared and presented an advocacy workshop at Conference with Karen Berlet

Respectfully submitted by,

*Eugema Ings*

## 1<sup>st</sup> Executive Vice-President

I am pleased to share my leadership activities aligned with the key areas of focus in the OFHSA Strategic Plan related to my work in supporting members and, promoting OFHSA locally, at the district and provincial levels.

### **To ensure the continued existence of OFHSA as an effective advocate for parents and children:**

- Identified key opportunities for OFHSA advocacy
  - A Learning Province – Education Assessment in Ontario
  - Ontario's Plan to Strengthen Rural and Northern Education
    - Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline (PARG) – draft scheduled release for January 2018
    - Community Planning and Partnerships Guideline (CPPG) - draft scheduled release for January 2018
  - Grants for Student Needs – Education Funding Consultation
- Raised awareness related to continued existence of OFHSA as a provincial voice

### **To identify and meet the needs of the members:**

- To inform my leadership practice I attended Thames Valley Council meetings, engaged in dialogue with members, listened to concerns and provided supports to local associations
- To stay connected with members at the local level, I attended school events, seminars and Association meetings
  - shared OFHSA resources and promoted best practices
- Supported and worked with school administration
- Supported local associations in positively resolving conflict
- Continued to support the leadership of local Home & School Councils

### **To increase membership in OFHSA:**

- Promoted OFHSA with superintendents of Student Achievement
- Supported the formation of school-based Home and School Associations

### **To ensure ongoing, strong leadership for the organization:**

- As a lifelong learner, I completed the course study at Western University Continuing Education Studies;
  - Effective Boards, Best Practices, Governance and Administration
  - Fundamentals of Financial Management for Not-For-Profits

### **To strengthen OFHSA partnerships:**

- OFHSA Representative to the Canadian Home and School Federation
- Dialogued with Superintendents and school site administrators promoting increased confidence in the Federation, the local Home and School Association and its members who operate in schools

Respectfully submitted by,

*Arlene Morell*

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Executive Vice-President

What an amazing year it has been serving as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Executive Vice-President of OFHSA. There have been many challenges and many new experiences this year. However, with the help of some great people around me, I have learned so much and I am looking forward to this upcoming year. Some of the projects I undertook this year included:

- Overseeing the writing of a letter of agreement for our Executive Secretary
- Attending all Federation meetings throughout the year
- Taking the lead in our Financial Workgroup
- Budget deliberations and preparing a budget for 2018-19 with the assistance of our Treasurer
- Numerous meetings in person and online
- Task of creating and reporting on the Membership Survey addressing concerns of increasing fees. Honoured to deliver those results at our Annual Meeting.
- Presentation at Conference
- Expanding Associations within my local Home and School Council
- Editing Bylaws for Associations
- Supporting local associations in positively resolving conflict
- Assisting with duties of some Federation Workgroups as needed
- Completing new grant application for the Federation

I look forward to another exciting year and am honoured to be serving as your 2<sup>nd</sup> Executive Vice-President for another term!

Respectfully submitted by,

*Gene Myers*

## Past-President

It has been my pleasure to participate in learning opportunities for community members and to represent the voice of members provincially and locally this year as Federation Past-President.

Thank you to the members of the 2018 Conference Planning Workgroup who delivered an inspiring, interesting and informative experience for OFHSA members.

I am so very proud of each OFHSA Director for the work they do with and for our members. Directors from each OFHSA workgroup put significant energy into connecting members at every level of the organization to guide this organization to achieve another 100 years of advocating to obtain 'The Best for Each Student'!

I was thrilled to see a Trillium Service Award presented to Robin Harvey, Helen Maltby and Eugema Ings in honour of their outstanding service to the OFHSA Board of Directors.

In recognition of her distinguished services in the promotion of the work of the Federation, the Board of Directors presented Arlene Morell with a Life Membership in the Federation to honour her work in the advancement of Home and School.

At the Federation level, I continued to lend a hand with administrative responsibilities at the federation office, as well as liaise with the Leadership/Membership and Parent Communications Workgroups throughout the year.

This year has been challenging in many ways and due to unforeseen circumstances; I took on duties as the interim Policy Workgroup Leader. *A mountain of work was accomplished this year with the help of other Directors.* A heartfelt thank you to all of them! Members approved amendments to Federation Bylaws, marking a bold change of governance that will modernize the corporate structure of this great organization and support the H&S movement into the future. The policy resolution adopted by members at the annual meeting of the Federation is a bold statement on our digital world.

OFHSA continues to show our support of public education. As a member of the Board, I participated in:

- Face-to-face meetings with members to provide support to current H&S Associations and H&S Councils
- Extension and development of potential H&S members / Associations
- Developing internal and external communications
- Education Funding Consultation re: Grants for Student Needs
- Leadership Days that focused on the development of members as parent leaders
- Education Partnership Table meeting
- Planning for new Director training and transitions
- Charity/Not-for-Profit governance and operational information webinars

I look forward to continuing my service to the Federation as a Past-President, acting as a resource whenever called upon at the Board of Directors table. Representing the voice of members in support of public education and dedication to advocacy for children and youth is a privilege and a pleasure. It is my belief that the H&S movement makes a valuable contribution to the education system by speaking out on public policy on behalf of its members, while keeping students as the lens for the best outcomes of the next generation in our society.

Respectfully submitted by,

*Sandra Binns*

## Hamilton-Wentworth Council

It has been an exciting year for Hamilton-Wentworth Council (H-W Council) as we try to expand and reach out to our current associations and try to create more within our region.

We've had many of our associations reach out for information and direction of their Home and Schools, many of them needing information on: updating their Bylaws, Policy on Rentals, Election Process, collaboration of Home and School/School Council. H-W Council has attended meetings and given the direction and information needed to continue being successful associations. We have encouraged networking between associations to continue beyond Conference.

We have Home and School members that continue to be a strong presence at P.I.C. and were part of the Calendar Committee and an amazing team to write our next year's PRO Grant.

H-W Council has had the pleasure of attending and being part of the Communications Workshop with Shawn McKillop, advocating for Home and School and the Directions of Communication between Parents and School Administration.

We were honoured to support Thames Valley Council of Home and School Associations (TVCHSA) with the London Conference. It was a great success.

H-W Council submitted a Letter of Intent to the OFHSA Board of Directors to host Conference 2019 and was granted this wonderful event. We are ecstatic and have begun planning for next year.

Our goals for the upcoming year include: continuing to support our associations by attending meetings and workshops, to provide them with the information needed to be successful and confident in what they do for the children in Hamilton-Wentworth; forming new associations at our schools within our region, to build Home and School as a stronger presence within our school system.

We look forward to seeing you next year!

Respectfully submitted by,

*Nancy Raymond*

## Thames Valley Council

What a great year for OFHSA in Thames Valley. We have grown so much this year and we finally achieved our long time goal of establishing an Association in Elgin County. Thames Valley continues to be the largest council in OFHSA, a point of great pride. I am in awe of the dedication to our Federation that is seen throughout our area. What an incredible feeling it is being a small part of something so huge. I have enjoyed getting to know more members this year and being able to support them as they work tirelessly for the benefit of the children in Thames Valley.

Being an OFHSA Council President comes with the distinct privilege of sitting at the OFHSA Board of Directors table. Through many hours of meetings and individual time, the directors work to ensure our continued existence, to increase our membership, to identify the needs of the members, and to provide strong leadership.

In March, we hosted a family engagement evening with Dr. Debbie Pushor. Debbie brought forth research and ideas that support what we know in Thames Valley to be true: parents and educators working as partners is the best winning combination for student success.

In April, we hosted the 2018 OFHSA Conference. What an incredible experience it was organizing Conference. I highly suggest that members do get involved with this at least once in their OFHSA lifetime. We, as the Conference Planning Workgroup, really enjoyed planning around our Superhero theme. We were very pleased watching the members connect during the workshops and activities.

It was a pleasure to serve as the President for Thames Valley Council. I look forward to my next challenge as OFHSA 1<sup>st</sup> Executive Vice-President. My address and my heart remains in Thames Valley and I will still be around to assist Associations when needed. I look forward to learning more about our Federation and helping in other areas of Ontario.

As we all look towards next year and what roles we are considering, I leave you with my favourite quote by Thomas Paine: "Lead, follow or get out of the way".

Respectfully submitted by,

*Sarah Thomson*

## Windsor Council

Windsor Council of Home and School Associations is still working on spreading parent engagement throughout Greater Essex County.

This year we did increase our Association membership when Giles Campus Home and School formed! We welcome their Association to our Windsor Family.

We are currently making plans for next year where we will be hosting our “Meet the Candidates” meeting. This is an event we host every municipal election year where we invite all candidates running for a trustee position within our school board (Greater Essex County District School Board). We feel that this gives the voters of Windsor an opportunity to meet those running for trustee, a portion of the election that typically is slightly overlooked in our community.

We hope that this year’s addition of a new Association is just the beginning and that we can expand more next year.

Respectfully submitted by,

*Gene Myers*

## Canadian Home and School Federation (CHSF)

### Fall Meeting 2017

A report was provided by the Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations (QFHSA) at the Canadian Home and School Federation (CHSF) Fall Meeting giving the results of the Charity Audit of QFHSA conducted by the Canadian Revenue Agency (CRA). The findings have potential implications for Home and School Federations who also operate as a charity.

OFHSA will explore, as per the fiduciary duty each Director carries, considering that:

- It is likely that CRA could conduct a similar audit of OFHSA
- Potential audit findings could result in similar action steps
- OFHSA Directors could consider pro-active action steps

Election Results at the November AGM:

President: Diane Power

Vice-President: Arlene Morell

Secretary: Deb Couzens

Treasurer: Leola Langille

Past-President: Cynthia Richards

An extensive 'To Do' list was compiled for directors to investigate communications, promotion and partnership opportunities.

### Spring Meeting 2018

During the CHSF Spring Board of Directors meeting the CHSF President, Diane Power, along with Vice-President, Arlene Morell and Secretary, Deb Couzens had the opportunity to meet with Senator Nancy Greene Raine at her office on Capitol Hill in Ottawa.

Provinces brought new policy resolutions for consideration at the Fall AGM and the policy document was reviewed for housekeeping. Chris George, Copyright Advisor, The Copyright Consortium of the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) was invited to present the latest updates and future plans and shared some materials.

### Looking ahead

2018 Fall Board Meeting and AGM – November 16 to 18, 2018 in Halifax, Nova Scotia

Respectfully Submitted by,

*Arlene Morell* (to November 2018)

*Sandra Binns* (from December 2018)

## Awards Workgroup

This year the awards nominations received continued to decline. There were *Citizenship Award* nominations in only 5 of the 8 categories (Grades 5-12). Approximately 10 years back, more than 40 nominations would be received for this award. This is very distressing as only one category had more than one nomination and both candidates were worthy of a win. OFHSA went to a great deal of work to send out countless e-mails for awards to remind associations to get their nominations in. This did not help if the numbers are reflective of the response to these e-mails.

However, there were three nominations for *OFHSA Educator* and one for the *Col. R.S. McLaughlin Memorial Award*. This is not unusual. It is concerning that the schools that took the time to nominate an Educator did not nominate any students for *Citizenship*. There were also three submissions for members who completed their *Volunteer Skills Portfolio (VSP)*.

Due to the lack of *Citizenship Award* submissions, it was recommended by this workgroup at the April Board of Directors meeting that this award not be used in the current format and that a committee be formed to review the award and find a new format which would hopefully increase submissions by associations.

The recommendation to form a committee to review the *Citizenship Award* was carried and at this time the current award is on hold and a committee has been formed and will bring their recommendations back to the OFHSA Board of Directors. This award is felt to be an integral part of our organization and supports our motto of "The Best for Each Student", as having students work toward this goal in all schools will help make them the best they can be and help them to be the best leaders among their peers.

Respectfully submitted by,

*Teresa Blum*

## Finance Workgroup

The Finance Workgroup (FWG) manages the financial responsibility and stability of the Federation, monitors the Endowment Fund Investment strategy, any funds available for investment and the Federation budget.

This was a year of learning and understanding the business side of OFHSA. Our Board of Directors had to make some tough decisions with the OFHSA budget this year in order to address budget concerns and fiscal stewardship of the Federation going forward.

Over many meetings, keeping in mind our fiscal responsibility to our membership, Directors agreed on a work plan to move issues of financial survival forward to the membership through a survey. OFHSA requested membership input, analyzed their responses and presented the facts and the consensus for solutions at the OFHSA Annual Meeting where the membership had final say. Voting members chose to keep the annual *Membership Fee* steady at \$15 and approved an annual *Association Insurance Fee* for Associations at \$100. A motion was also unanimously carried to increase the cost of *Association Life Memberships* and *Council Life Memberships* from \$50 to \$100.

In preparing the OFHSA budget, the FWG continues to look for efficiencies in the face of declining revenues in certain areas and changing grant funding parameters.

The Board of Directors would like to thank all of our membership for participating in the difficult task of making change to support the health of our organization.

Auditor - OFHSA Executive Committee members were pleased with the excellent service provided by J. Baetz from Millard, Rouse & Rosebrugh during the audit process for the 2016-17 fiscal year. The Charity return and HST return were prepared by the auditor and a refund was received for the two years submitted. Journal entries from the auditor have been completed.

The 2016-17 Audited Financial Statements were approved by the membership at the 2018 OFHSA Annual Meeting and BDO was appointed by members to perform the annual financial audit of the Federation for the years ending August 31<sup>st</sup> 2018, 2019, and 2020.

Banking and Endowment Fund Investments - Considering the challenges OFHSA faces, the FWG is confident in the excellent advice and service with our current financial institution, TD Canada Trust.

With support from our representative, as interest rates remain at an all-time low, the FWG uses a three-year Investment Laddering Strategy as the best choice to ensure that OFHSA will receive optimum return on investment for the McLaughlin Endowment Fund. Interest income accumulated from three matured investments totaled \$3,801 through to June 2018.

I would also like to thank everyone who assisted the FWG, not only for their help but their patience as I navigate this new chapter in my OFHSA career. Without you, there would not be a successful team taking on this challenging task.

Respectfully submitted by,

*Gene Myers*

## Leadership and Membership Workgroup

It has been my pleasure meeting so many H&S members during this past year as the Leadership and Membership Workgroup Leader. The activities of the Workgroup included:

- Face-to-face meetings with members to provide support to current H&S Associations and H&S Councils
- Extension and development of potential H&S members / Associations
- Input for developing internal and external communications
- Leadership Days that focused on the development of members as parent leaders

The leadership development objectives of Members' Cafés offered in the fall of 2017 and June 2018 were to:

- Form partnerships that work to promote the same information for student success through school improvement goals.
- Learn with others to develop and strengthen parental self-efficacy, leadership potential, student and family well-being
- Work with your community and other H&S Associations to find successes to increase income at your association

A Leadership Toolkit was developed using OFHSA leadership resources, composed of H&S fundamentals for skill building, effective meetings, Association structure and governance and provided in print and digital form.

Part of this year's PRO grant included Communities of Practice: Turning parent knowledge into parent engagement practice with a focus on student achievement. Leadership and Learning Session topics:

- Engaging Parents @ Home & School and School Council
- Welcoming newcomers to our schools
- Healthy Schools
- Well-Being: the whole child
- Shared successes that increase income at your association
- Charitable Donations
- Lottery License information

The membership table at Conference this year was busy with various questions from members regarding:

- Volunteer Skills Portfolio (VSP)
- Translated documents
- H&S Communications
- Procedures
- Membership drive experiences
- Home and School at the local level
- Awards and pins
- Association support
- Policies and elections
- Insurance
- Donations
- Chairing meetings
- Required paperwork

The OFHSA Leadership Workgroup believes that local Home and School members make a significant and direct contribution to public education and the local community.

Respectfully Submitted by,

*Veronica Coombs-Donegan*

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## Parent Communications Workgroup

This year as Parent Communications Workgroup Leader, I focused on engaging and interacting with parents, Home and School members and the community at large, through our multiple social media platforms and discussion forum. During the past year, I created more than 160 posts on Facebook, sent more than 175 tweets/retweets and shared more than 50 photos on Instagram. I felt dedicating my time to sharing OFHSA information and other resources with our members and the public was very important in my role at the provincial table.

As a member of the Board of Directors, I also took time in answering various questions from members regarding charitable donations, membership voting, conducting meetings, H&S Communications, updating membership lists, election nominations, conference, becoming Alumni members and requests for Google Group access.

This year, I offered my expertise as a web/copy editor, to serve as an editing resource for OFHSA communications to parents, members and the public, which included correspondence to the Minister of Education, the Ministry of the Attorney General, edits for multiple OFHSA documents, the 2017 Annual Report, a membership survey, Association Mailings sent by e-mail from the OFHSA office, *Virtually Yours/OFHSA Bulletin* editions, the Annual Meeting package, the agenda for the Annual Meeting, various reports, the Parent Engagement Month flyer, as well as numerous suggested changes and updates to the OFHSA website.

I attended three online webinars through Charity Village: Volunteer Recognition: Individual Social Responsibility; How Can We Achieve Program Sustainability?; and Creating a Content Strategy for your Nonprofit Website.

It has been an incredible experience to connect with so many H&S members from across the province during my time at the OFHSA table. Thank you for the opportunity to be a voice at the provincial level.

Respectfully submitted by,

*Robin Harvey*

## Parent Resources Workgroup

This year was another busy year at the OFHSA table. I remained on the OFHSA Board of Directors as the Parent Resources Workgroup Leader. This year there were some vacancies on the board in the fall and the work of those directors was picked up by other board members, working together to keep things running as smoothly as possible. It was a challenging year fiscally as well, as the board had to make some tough decisions with the budget to ensure OFHSA remains a viable parent organization going forward.

The following tasks were accomplished by the Parent Resources Workgroup:

- Updated many internal and external OFHSA resources, brochures, forms and other documents (ongoing); recommended documents for archiving (ongoing); assisted with the development of a resource list database; continued standardizing the format of resources with templates, blue colour theme, and adding copyrights to all materials as updated
- Throughout the year - suggested updates to the OFHSA website
- Throughout the year - proofread various documents and resources for the OFHSA office and other board members, as requested, prior to final distribution. These included meeting minutes, external letters sent from the Federation, miscellaneous flyers and booklets, *OFHSA Bulletin*, *Virtually Yours*, etc., in order to ensure accuracy, correctness and that OFHSA standards were being adhered to.
- Provided office support to the Executive Secretary with respect to resources, documents and standards (ongoing)
- Continued with updates to OFHSA's *Terms of Reference* document as admin procedures and the roles and duties of the board/executive/workgroups continually change
- Attended all Board of Directors' meetings throughout the year, either in person or via an online platform; provided input and made many recommendations throughout the year
- Attended a November working meeting in London with some other board members to review and propose possible solutions to OFHSA's fiscal challenges
- Assisted with the final draft of the Membership Survey re: Fees sent to our members
- Attended the 2018 Conference and Annual Meeting; assisted as requested throughout the event
- Prepared and presented the *With Great Power Comes Great Responsibility* workshop at the 2018 Conference with Eugema Ings
- Proposed, prepared and presented five bylaw amendments for the 2018 Annual Meeting in consultation with the Policy Workgroup and the OFHSA Board of Directors
- Completed my *Volunteer Skills Portfolio* and received the *Ada Courtice Certificate of Leadership and Learning* and the leadership pin at Conference

Respectfully submitted by,

*Karen Berlet*

## Policy Workgroup

This year has been challenging for the OFHSA Policy Workgroup. Directors were saddened when the appointed Workgroup Leader withdrew for health reasons. As a result, I was asked to take on duties for the interim, and with the help of other Directors there has been a mountain of work done this year.

Once a year, members of this unique organization gather to review, revise and revitalize bylaws and policies. The Annual Meeting report to the members underlined the importance of understanding that timely and current policy and raising that red card as the representative of the association. The report also spoke to the superpower of the OFHSA Policy Document - each policy gives weight to comments that members of OFHSA bring to the table. OFHSA is unique in that the policy document to which a representative looks to for guidance on any issue, is the common beliefs and goals of members bound together by benefit of belonging to a provincial organization.

The policy resolution for debate at the Annual Meeting of the Federation brought a bold statement on our digital world for the members to consider as a policy statement. Members adopted the policy *'that the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Children and Youth and Ministry of Long-term Health, to develop guidelines for healthy screen time and appropriate device use for students in the classroom.'* Thank you to Sandra Huculiak and Tisha Joy, from Prince of Wales Home & School Association for their time, energy and fantastic job bringing this resolution forward this year. Members approved the OFHSA Executive to again petition the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Children and Youth and Ministry of Long-term Health, to develop guidelines for healthy screen time and appropriate device use for students in the classroom (2018). With the provincial election behind us, all advocating to various Ministries that have the authority to direct and implement the operational pieces of our brilliant policies will begin with the announcement of MPs appointed by the new government.

The Board of Directors has embarked on a bold change to Federation governance through bylaw changes that will modernize the corporate structure of this great organization and support the Home & School movement into the future. At the Annual Meeting, members agreed to formally dissolve the Federation's Regional Level and thereby the Regional Bylaws, in accordance with Regional Bylaw, Article XI, Dissolution and Dormancy, 3 and remove any references to Regions, or amend to 'the Federation' as applicable, throughout the Association, Council and Federation Bylaws of the OFHSA Constitution & Bylaws document. Members also agreed to add a 3<sup>rd</sup> Executive Vice-President as an elected officer of the Federation with amendments to any Federation Bylaws necessary within the corporate structure.

Again, my thanks to the Directors who were instrumental in bringing this busy year to a successful close.

Respectfully Submitted by,

*Sandra Binns*

## Strategic Planning Workgroup

When practicing good governance, the OFHSA Strategic Plan lays out the priorities of the Federation in a multi-year plan, where each year a report of accomplishment is shared with members.

Yearly, the Strategic Plan is reviewed to determine goals (usually three goals, or one goal per priority) and the outcomes for each goal. Once the goals are agreed to by the Board of Directors, an operational plan is developed to:

- Align the budget to the strategic plan as a tool that provides monitoring and oversight
- Determine the workgroups required to accomplish working goals of OFHSA
- Direct the priority tasks/action items for each workgroup based on yearly goals

The OFHSA Board of Directors continues to focus strategic goals on the importance of parent engagement. These goals will position OFHSA as THE choice for parents to become active advocates for the next generation at every level of public education.

OFHSA workgroups have put significant energy into modernizing resources and connecting members at every level of the organization. From brainstorming and meeting updates, workgroups have considered, planned and implemented action items that work to support strategic objectives. The OFHSA Executive works diligently to support the ideals of the members:

- To ensure the continued existence of OFHSA
- To identify and meet the needs of the members
- To increase memberships
- To ensure ongoing, strong leadership
- To strengthen OFHSA through partnerships

OFHSA Strategic Plan Accomplishments:

Improving supports to members and Associations with digital correspondence

- Regular e-mail communications providing OFHSA resources

Increased fiscal stewardship of OFHSA resources

- Regular monitoring and oversight
- Members survey conducted regarding fiscal pressures

Increased membership through formation of new Associations

- Over 20 new Associations formed

Promoting provincial parent voice and advocacy on behalf of members

- Participation on a teleconference with Ontario Ministry of Education's Transformation Steering Committee
- Attended provincial consultation related to: Grants for Student Needs, student transportation and the independent review of student assessment and reporting

Lead by Arlene Morell, the June orientation meeting brought a chance to evaluate the work done over this year and focus on where the work will be done in 2018-19. The Board of Directors continues the work of developing a comprehensive list of actions to ensure the Strategic Plan objectives are being met using priorities to guide the objectives and evaluate the action items.

Our overarching goal is to achieve another 100 years of advocating to obtain 'The Best for Each Student'!

Respectfully submitted by,

***Strategic Planning Workgroup***

## Virtually Yours Workgroup

It has been a pleasure for me to have spent my first year as a member of the OFHSA Board of Directors. Being part of such an essential group is a great privilege and the transition has been made easier by having the support and guidance of other directors with so much knowledge and experience to share. Thank you to all.

It has not only been a transition year for myself but also for *Virtually Yours*. We have started using a new platform and attempted to revitalize the newsletter by giving it an updated look by using more modern tools for its creation.

I look forward to creating more newsletters and using the analytical tools provided by the platform to enhance the productivity of the newsletter and increase interaction by our members to ensure *Virtually Yours* becomes a vital communication tool for OFHSA.

Respectfully submitted by,

***Adam Lowe***