

FEBRUARY 27, 2017
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
OCSTA COMMUNICATIONS ADDENDUM



Ontario Catholic School
Trustees' Association

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Patrick Daly, *President*
Beverley Eckensweiler, *Vice President*
Nick Milanetti, *Executive Director*

February 10, 2017

TO: Chairpersons and Directors of Education
- All Catholic District School Boards

FROM: Stephen Andrews, Director of Legislative and Political Affairs

RE: **Bill 68 Modernizing Municipal Legislation—Submission to the Ministry of Education and Municipal Affairs**

Further to the memorandum dated January 20, 2017 outlining OCSTA's concerns with the proposed amendments to the Municipal Act, Municipal Conflict of Interest Act and other statutes related to municipal government, please find attached OCSTA's submission outlining our recommendations and concerns with regard to Bill 68--*Modernizing Municipal Legislation Act, 2016*.

As you are aware, second reading debate started on December 1, 2016. The legislation will likely pass into law during the first quarter of 2017. The Ministry of Education requested our feedback by Friday February 10, 2017 to assist them with their discussions with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs on the impacts Bill 68 will have on Catholic school boards.

We will continue to advocate for our recommended changes to Bill 68 with the government. We will also prepare a submission once the bill is referred to a Standing Committee of the Legislature for public hearings.

If you have any questions, please contact me – sandrews@ocsta.on.ca / 416-932-9460 ext. 224.

Attachment



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February 9, 2017

Kyle Kubatbekov
Senior Policy Advisor
Leadership Development & School Board Governance Branch
Ministry of Education
13th Floor, Mowat Block
900 Bay Street
Toronto ON M7A 1L2

Dear Mr. Kubatbekov:

Re: Bill 68 Modernizing Municipal Legislation Act, 2016

On behalf of the Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association (OCSTA), thank you for inviting us to comment on Bill 68, *Modernizing Ontario's Municipal Legislation Act, 2016* (Bill 68).

Locally elected Catholic school trustees have throughout the history of the province of Ontario served as stewards and as strong advocates of publicly funded Catholic education. Today these democratically elected men and women represent the over 2 million Catholic ratepayers in Ontario. The 29 Catholic school boards they serve on provide excellence in faith filled education to over 550,000 students in 1,500 schools.

While we support the overall objectives of the proposed legislation, namely, to improve the accountability and transparency of municipal government and school boards, OCSTA has a number of concerns and recommendations with regard to the proposed amendments to the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* contained in Bill 68 and its impact on the governance of Catholic school boards. As a fundamental principle we believe that all levels of local governments including municipal councillors and school trustees should be treated similarly.

Summary of Bill 68:

Bill 68 – *Modernizing Municipal Legislation Act, 2016* proposes to amend certain acts including the *Municipal Act*, the *City of Toronto Act*, the *Municipal Elections Act* and the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*. It proposes to amend the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* and the *Municipal Elections Act* in ways that will impact all municipalities and school boards. Schedule 3 of the Bill proposes the following changes:

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- Require Trustee's to declare any financial interest at any meeting that may conflict with his or her duties and file a written statement of the members financial interest at that meeting or as soon as possible after the meeting.
- Require boards to establish a "registry" of statements and declarations of interests of Trustees that would be available for public inspection.
- Prohibit a Trustee from using his or her office to influence a decision or recommendation being considered by board staff, if the member has financial interest in the outcome of the decision or recommendation.
- Municipal Conflict of Interest Act Penalties: if a judge determines that a contravention of the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act has occurred (that is the Trustee did not disclose a financial interest in a matter at a meeting) then the judge may reprimand the Trustee, suspend the Trustee's pay for up to 90 days, declare the seat vacant, disqualify the Trustee during a period of up to seven years and/or require the Trustee to make restitution.
- Propose amendments to the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*. The term of office is proposed to change from December 1 to November 15 in the year of a regular election. This is to address the lag time from election dates (third week of October) to start date of the term of office.

OCSTA's Recommendations/Concerns:

While OCSTA-supports restrictions on trustees and other elected officials using his or her office to influence board decisions where a financial interest is at stake, we do have concerns about the other proposed changes to the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* and the *Municipal Elections Act*.

Based on consultations with member boards, the following proposed amendments to the *Municipal Elections Act* and the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* we believe are unnecessary and potential disruptive to the optimal functioning of school boards:

1. The proposed amendments to section 8, 9, 10 of the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*, 8. (1) states that "any person may apply to a judge" for a determination of the question of whether a municipal councillor or school board trustee has either failed to file a written conflict of interest statement or used his or her office to influence a decision where they have a conflict of interest. OCSTA strongly objects to this change. Currently the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act states that only an elector or ratepayer within a board's jurisdiction may apply to judge indicating a potential breach of the Act. These are the classes of persons that may be affected by a breach of the Act not any person in Ontario. Allowing persons from outside the board's or municipality's jurisdiction to apply to a judge for potential violations of the Act would invite many frivolous and vexatious claims to be made against councillors and school board trustees. Therefore we believe these sections of the Act should remain unchanged.
2. Changing the start date from December 1 to November 15 in an election year for school boards will impose disruptive changes onto its schedule of meetings and various administrative functions. December 1 has been the start date for municipal and school board terms of office for many decades and the change is unnecessary.

3. Requiring Trustees to file written conflict of interest statements for each board meeting, where the trustee declares his or her financial interest, will impose a significant administrative burden on trustees and school boards. Catholic School boards have policies currently in place whereby at the beginning of each meeting trustees publicly declare conflicts of interest and the reasons for such conflicts. A record is kept in the minutes of each meeting which are available to the public making this additional requirement unnecessary.
4. Requiring School Boards to create and manage public registry of written declarations of a financial conflict of interest for its trustees, is an unnecessary administrative burden. Trustees already declare their financial conflicts at each board meeting and these are noted in the minutes of each meeting which in turn are posted to each board's web site. If the Ministry of Municipal Affairs insists on a public registry and posting of trustee conflicts, then we suggest a quarterly written statement for each financial conflict of a trustee that would be posted on the new registry. This reduces the burden on drafting written statements for each school board meeting, while advancing the goals of transparency and accountability.

Parental and Pregnancy Leave Policies:

One proposed change outlined in other amendments in Bill 68 concerns pregnancy and parental leave policies. The proposed amendment would provide that a council member's seat will not be vacated due to absences related to pregnancy, birth, or the adoption of the member's child for a period of 20 consecutive weeks or less and would require municipalities to adopt and maintain policies with respect to pregnancy and parental leaves of council members. OCSTA would request that this suggested amendment be extended to school boards as well as municipal councils.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to provide the Ministry with our comments and concerns about Bill 68.

If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or Steve Andrews, Director of Legislative and Political Affairs at sandrews@ocsta.on.ca

Yours truly,



Patrick J. Daly
President

cc. Bruce Dewett, Director Leadership Development and School Board Governance Branch



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Patrick Daly, *President*
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Nick Milanetti, *Executive Director*

February 15, 2017

TO: Chairs and Directors of Education
- Catholic District School Boards

FROM: Patrick Daly, President

RE: CUPE Extension Agreement and Crown Regulatory Commitments

CUPE

We are pleased to advise that we have learned today, that CUPE has ratified the Extension Agreement through a double majority ratification process. We can also advise that the CTA has ratified the Extension Agreement. We would like to thank boards for their unanimous support of the Extension Agreement and to extend thanks to OCSTA's Labour Relations Committee, under the leadership of Kathy Burtnik and the Labour Relations Staff. We would especially like to thank boards for providing support through their allowing their staff members to attend and assist at discussions. The support from the field is invaluable and much appreciated.

CROWN REGULATORY COMMITMENTS

Further to the announcement that a tentative Extension Agreement has been reached with ETFO, OCSTA is aware that there were certain commitments made by the Crown which will have an impact on English Catholic school boards. While not contained within the ETFO education worker extension agreement, through the course of discussions the Crown has committed in a letter to ETFO that it will recommend certain regulatory amendments to the Lieutenant Governor-in-Council. These changes will affect Full Day Kindergarten class sizes through imposing a cap of 30 students in the 2017-2018 school year and a cap of 29 students in the 2018-2019 school year with a flexibility factor of up to 10% where one of the following conditions are met: (a) purpose built accommodation is not available, (b) programming will be negatively affected, (c) compliance will increase FDK/Grade 1 splits. Where a school has classes exceeding 30 students and classes under 16 in a single track, Early Childhood educators shall be assigned to both classes. OCSTA advocated that any changes be fully funded by the Crown.

In addition, the Crown has also committed to recommending regulatory changes to the Lieutenant Governor-in-Council with respect to grade 4-8 class size where any board with an average class size

exceeding 24.5 shall reduce the class size average to 24.5. In order to do so, the Crown will provide the necessary funding equally over a period of 5 years commencing in the 2017-2018 school year. Boards above 24.5 shall apply their entire allocation of additional funding to reduce the class size average in each of these school years as required until the average grade 4-8 class size is 24.5. It is OCSTA's expectation that the Crown will fund all boards consistent with this regulatory change, however, only those boards with a class size average over 24.5 will be required to utilize the funds to reduce their class size average.

The proposed regulatory changes are contingent on the ratification of the ETFO agreement(s) and, accordingly, remain confidential until ratification. We will keep boards apprised of any developments with respect to these proposed regulatory changes as we become aware of them.



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Patrick Daly, *President*
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VIA E-MAIL

February 16, 2017

TO: Chairs and Directors of Education
- Catholic District School Boards
OCSTA Directors

CC: Board Secretaries and Administrative Assistants
OCSTA Staff

FROM: Margaret Binns, Director of Administrative Services

RE: 2017 OCSTA Trustee Award of Merit and Student Trustee Alumnus Award

We are pleased to announce that **Andrew Bray**, Renfrew County CDSB, has been selected as this year's recipient of the **OCSTA Trustee Award of Merit**.

We are also pleased to announce the two recipients of a new award: the **OCSTA Student Trustee Alumnus Award**. The winners are **Kristine Soufian**, former student trustee at the York CDSB, and **Ben Verboom**, former student trustee at the Durham CDSB.

These awards will be presented during the Annual Dinner at the 2017 AGM & Conference, which is scheduled for 7:30 p.m. on Friday, April 28, at the International Plaza Hotel and Conference Centre, 655 Dixon Rd, Etobicoke, ON.

We extend our sincerest congratulations to the winners and their respective boards.



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February 17, 2017

TO: Chairpersons and Directors of Education
- All Catholic District School Boards

FROM: Dr. Brian O'Sullivan, MA, Ed. D., Director of Catholic Education

SUBJECT: **Catholic Education Week – April 30 – May 5, 2017**
Catholic Education: *Walking Forward Together*

As we approach Catholic Education Week, we are reminded that publicly-funded Catholic education is a call to service. Regardless of our position or our responsibilities within Catholic education, our role is a call, birthed in our baptism to bring the saving message of Jesus Christ into the lives of those students whom it is our privilege to serve. This year's Catholic Education Week theme is, "*Walking Forward Together*."

The 2017 CEW theme and its five sub-themes are drawn from three contemporary Catholic documents that address the need for reconciliation and renewal – in our lives, with our families, in our relationships with others and in our relationship with our environment and our common global future.

The first is the 2016 response of the Canadian Catholic Bishops to the Truth & Reconciliation Commission, that we need to heal past injustices by "*Walking Forward Together*." The second is the 2015 encyclical, *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home* by Pope Francis, that emphasizes the cultural roots of our ecological problems, and advocates an urgent world collaboration for the care of our global common home. The third document, *Amoris Laetitia: The Joy of Love* is a 2016 Apostolic Exhortation by Pope Francis, which applauds our dedication and concern shown to children, families, migrants, the poor, the elderly and to persons with special needs, as a sign of the Spirit. These supportive relationships are a test of our commitment to show mercy in welcoming others and to help the vulnerable, to be fully a part of our communities.

Our CEW biblical quote "*Do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with your God*" (Micah 6:8), acknowledges the important role of justice and solidarity with our Indigenous peoples, our environment, the poor and marginalized, and all those who work to protect our common global future.

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I would like to highlight several issues leading up to CEW 2017:

- We invite all schools to send in video clips to Ashlee Cabral (acabral@ocsta.on.ca) answering the questions on Catholic faith and education. The deadline for these submissions is **March 6, 2017** and is being organized by our Catholic student trustees (OSTA-AECO).
- Our Ontario Bishops will produce video greetings for CEW in their Dioceses. These videos will be posted on the OCSTA website in late March and you can download the local message to be shown at your local CEW mass.
- Based on feedback from our school boards, the date for your CEW mass will be determined by each local Board of Education – within the week of CEW. Boards requested this change, to provide them more flexibility in planning CEW events. The mass resource package is included in the 2017 CEW Resource Kit. All Catholic schools across Ontario are asked to pray as one group at the opening of the school prayers on **Tuesday, May 2**. The provincial prayer is included in the 2017 CEW Resource Kit.
- Our CEW theme song will be posted on the OCSTA website by early March. Schools and boards can download this copy for their CEW activities.
- Our Social Justice Activity Package has been developed in collaboration with our provincial Catholic student trustees' organization (OSTA-AECO) and Catholic Development & Peace. Your board office will receive mustard seeds for each school, to support small-scale farming world-wide as a solution to world hunger and climate change. These mustard seeds, along with your 2017 CEW posters and prayer cards will arrive next week via Canada Post.
- Please note that our 2017 CEW posters are produced in both English and French in acknowledgement of the collaboration between our English and French Catholic school boards. We believe these posters will be very popular with French programs offered in your school boards.
- All Catholic Education Week materials are posted on our website at: www.goodnewsforall.ca.

I would like to conclude by wishing all of you a wonderful 2017 Catholic Education Week. Please do not hesitate to contact me at: bosullivan@ocsta.on.ca if you have further questions.

Sincerely in Catholic Education,



Brian O'Sullivan, MA, Ed., D.
Director of Catholic Education, OCSTA



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2017:HR02

February 17, 2017

TO: Senior Human Resource Officials, Senior Business Officials and Payroll Managers
- Catholic District School Boards

FROM: Wally Easton, Policy Advisor – Finance and Labour

RE: New Benefits Trusts SharePoint Site

As communicated in the Ministry of Education's memos released in December and January, the Trust Resolution and Action Committee (TRAC) was established as a subcommittee of the Central Coordinating Committee to address and resolve in a collaborative and tactical manner the operational and technical issues that were faced in the Wave 1 transition to the Employee Life and Health Trusts (ELHTs).

Through ongoing discussions, TRAC also recognized the need for an enhanced communication protocol to ensure information was flowing to school boards in a timely, consistent and effective manner. One of the ways TRAC wants to improve communication is through an electronic repository of documents so that school boards have a single access point for up-to-date information relevant to the transition of employees to Employee Life and Health Trusts. This work has materialized into the new benefits SharePoint site, which is hosted on a ministry site and will require approved authorization for access. With the collaboration of all the TRAC members, the SharePoint site will be updated on a regular basis and will include:

- **Memos** – ministry-issued B and SB memos related to benefits, as well as memos or newsletters from OTIP, the Trusts, trustees' associations, and the federations/unions.
- **Wave Information** – information specific to each wave such as timelines, task lists and process maps.
- **Calendar** – access to a calendar that will capture major deadlines and committee meeting dates (i.e. TRAC meetings).
- **FAQs** – a space where boards can find answers to general questions they have posed to members of TRAC.
- **Other Resources** – a library of the current collective agreements, trust agreements, and presentations.

To access the new SharePoint site, each school board is being asked to assign two staff members who will be permitted to use the site. We recommend that each school board nominate at least one staff member in a payroll and benefits role. Once the staff members are identified, please use the enclosed registration form to provide their full name, email address, title, employer name and address and email it to benefits@ontario.ca, **subject line: *SharePoint registration – [school board name]***. Please note that all requests for access will require confirmation through the Labour Relations Policy and the Strategic Initiatives Branch at the Treasury Board Secretariat.

For any questions, please contact Dharsa Sathi (Senior Policy Advisor, Benefits Trust Branch, Ministry of Education) at Dharsa.Sathi@ontario.ca or (416) 325-8860.

Attachment: Benefits: SharePoint Registration Form



8th Annual Silent Auction

to support

Toonies for Tuition

CCSTA Endowment Fund ~ Tuition Assistance Program which helps students to receive faith-based Catholic education in provinces that do not publicly fund Catholic schools.

Friday, April 28, 2017 • 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.
Plaza BC Room, International Plaza Hotel

Silent Auction to include 80+ items

- Home decor items
- Sports memorabilia
- Group of 7 artwork
- Men's and Women's jewelry
- and more

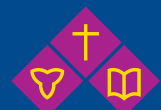
As the co-host Board of the 2017 OCSTA AGM & Conference, York Catholic District School Board Trustees invite all Ontario Catholic School Boards and Trustees to contribute at least one quality auction item per board with a value greater than \$50.00 in support of "Toonies for Tuition". Examples of past gifts:

- Gift certificates to hotels, restaurants, cultural or sporting events
- Jewelry, gift baskets, electronics
- Works of art

Please bring your gift to the OCSTA registration desk when you arrive. Each gift should include the donor name and approximate value.

We thank you in advance for your silent auction contributions to support Catholic education across Canada! For further information, please contact Silvana Greco: silvana.greco@ycdsb.ca

VISA, MASTERCARD AND DEBIT ACCEPTED



Ontario Catholic School
Trustees' Association