

ITEMS OF INTEREST FROM THE FEBRUARY 9, 2012 BOARD MEETING

On February 9th the Board of Directors met in North York. The following are highlights from the meeting.

The **Diploma Course in School Board Administration** offered through the University of Guelph continues to be a regular topic. Enrolment for the course has declined over recent years, however the course continues. There was considerable discussion regarding the program, its role as professional development for members, its role as a part of the S.O. Qualifications and a need for increased awareness of the program with senior decision makers and the Ministry of Education. In an attempt to more widely market the diploma, the OASBO office has sent letters to both the Ontario Principals' Council and the Catholic Principals Council of Ontario asking their cooperation in promoting the program.

The Board approved the **Proposed Budget for 2012-13** which reflects a structured deficit. The budget reflects suggestions from the auditor with respect to the actual line items, and a reduction in our overall reserve. Expenses in a number of areas have decreased such as postage, courier and equipment leases. There has been a re-distribution of funds in areas where it is needed such as Annual Conference costs, Internet services and Teleconferencing. Budgets have remained more or less consistent for Standing Committees for next year, however the Board wishes to emphasize the availability of a \$12,150 budget line intended for special projects. Committees are encouraged to make application for this funding for items above and beyond regular committee expenses (special speakers, enriched PD, etc). Forms are available on the OASBO web site.

An update on the **GSN** consultation was provided by the Executive Director. Four Committees to date have provided input and a few more are anticipated. Input received will be incorporated into a single document being prepared by a member of the COSBO executive. Although the Ministry may not be accepting formal



TOM PECHKOVSKY
OASBO PRESIDENT

submissions from the education sector, we intend to highlight some of the comments in an upcoming meeting with the Minister.

OASBO has received an invitation from the Minister's office for a preliminary meeting in early March. Our agenda is being developed and includes: OASBO as a resource in evaluating recommendations from the Drummond Report, ongoing partnerships and collaboration between the Ministry and school boards, and the University of Guelph Diploma program as a consideration to succession planning and PD.

Nominations are now open for Board of Director positions. A package has been distributed to members with a requested response by March 30. As a reminder, our new process involves recommendations from Standing Committees, which are then forwarded to the Nominations Committee who will evaluate candidates and make a recommendation to the Board. Each Standing Committee is encouraged to have a rep on the Nominations Committee. The announcement of the new Board members will be made at the May 2012 AGM. The Director role is an excellent opportunity to help shape the future direction of OASBO and I encourage all to consider putting their name forward.



PRESIDENT'S COMMUNIQUÉ DU PRÉSIDENT - February/Février 2012

On February 10th Committee Chairs and Directors met for the second time this year. These meetings provide an excellent opportunity to discuss issues and concerns regarding OASBO and our pursuit of the three strategic directions: 1. Facilitating learning opportunities 2. Enhancing our ability to collaborate and communicate and 3. Developing new partnerships.

Throughout the last couple of years we have seen an increase in the cooperation between committees and an enhancement of the linkages which make our organization strong.

In our pursuit for excellence, Executive Director, Bill Blackie, lead an exercise of small group discussions responding to 3 key questions:

1. What the Board /OASBO should be doing and is not doing?
2. What practices should be discontinued? and
3. Are there critical practices/policies that should be continued?

Feedback from the group included:

Continue to: Develop and improve the OASBO website; Submit reports and letters to the Ministry; Forward regular communications from OASBO to the membership; and utilize the Issues Management document outlining Committee activities.

Suggestions for new practices included:

Increasing information to Chairs; Initiating an orientation/ mentoring program for new Chairs; Sharing of best practices among Committee Chairs; Elevating OASBO's profile within the sector and involving French boards; and Pursuing videoconferencing via Adobe Connect.

Overall, the meeting was helpful in bringing together over 15 Standing Committee Chairs and Co-Chairs and the Board to review and discuss opportunities for OASBO to grow and develop.

Plans are in place for the 69th OASBO **Annual Conference and Education Industry Show** based on the theme "New Voices and Communications: Reaching Our Partners.....Nouvelles voix et communications – retrouver nos partenaires" to be held May 9-11, 2012 at the Ottawa Convention Centre. Registration information is posted on the OASBO website www.oasbo.org under "Events". We hope to see many of our members at the event.

In the months to come the education sector will no doubt be impacted by the government's review of the recent report **Public Services For Ontarians: a Path To Sustainability and Excellence**. This is an important opportunity for OASBO and its members to consider. Committees are encouraged to review the recommendations and work with their Ministry counterparts to assist in evaluating the impact of those recommendations to provide insight into possible outcomes to ensure education in Ontario continues to be a leader.

Tom Pechkovsky
OASBO President