

ITEMS OF INTEREST FROM THE SEPTEMBER 27- 28, 2012 BOARD AND JOINT MEETINGS

Happy fall OASBO members! The start to this school year has certainly been interesting and extremely 'brisk' to say the least. Try to keep your spirits energized and your focus on supporting our students. They benefit from our expertise and count on us each and every day to be at our best.

Your committee chairs and board members met in September in downtown Kitchener to engage in our first of two joint meetings this year. Following is a summary of the highlights of the meeting.

Discussion took place on the **OASBO Website**. A website sub-committee has been busily working on identifying our needs and proposing solutions that will move us forward. The Board adopted a model based on a social networking platform called NING. This platform will enhance our ability to interact with each other and will also allow us to store and share documents – a feature that has not always worked as expected on the existing site. In addition to this new platform, we are moving toward 3rd party registration for workshops, conferences and memberships. Since this functionality already exists elsewhere, we will be looking at partnerships that will allow us to transition quickly. The target for the change-over is the end of the December.

The Board agreed that a sub-committee be struck to review the **Business Associate Membership** – its benefits, challenges, and opportunities. Work will be done to establish policy and guidelines for presentation at the November Board meeting. The issue of distributing information provided by Business Associates to the membership will also be examined.



SHESH MAHARAJ
OASBO PRESIDENT

It was recommended that a **PIM** (Privacy & Information Management) Network be created and that Committee Chairs be engaged in the project. The network would exist to support the resource needs of all committees and would exist independently of the IMPAC Committee.

Considerable discussion took place on whether the annual **Support Staff Conference** fits into OASBO strategic plan. Attendance has been dwindling and deficits have been incurred over the last few years. The board does not expect future increases in attendance since PD budgets are being reduced at most school boards. Further, the costs of running the conference have been increasing very quickly. We looked at alternative venues, but in the end there was no material difference in costs. Although the organizing committee is to be commended for doing an outstanding job, it seems that the event has run its course. It is for these reasons, the Board agreed to discontinue running the Support Staff Conference.



PRESIDENT'S COMMUNIQUÉ DU PRÉSIDENT - September/Septembre 2012

A brief discussion was held regarding a possible theme for the **2013 OASBO Annual Conference** (to be held May 8-10) in London, Ontario. The subject of public procurement and Canada's future were highlighted. It was agreed that the following theme "***Embracing Innovation and Creativity in the Education Sector***" will be presented to the Annual Conference planning committee in late fall.

Committee Chairs and Directors reviewed the existing OASBO Strategic Directions.

Following considerable discussion, the **Purpose Statement** of OASBO was amended and reads as follows:

OASBO brings together dedicated professionals who are committed to the collaborative development, sharing, and promotion of leading business practices in support of our students.

The **Strategic Directions** were also updated as follows:

1. Facilitate relevant learning opportunities through meaningful professional development.
2. Continually enhance internal collaboration and communication.
3. Identify, build and sustain external relationships.

The **Objectives** were set as follows:

- a. Facilitate information sharing.
- b. Strive for continuous improvement in our operation and organization functions.
- c. Promote, encourage and facilitate learning.
- d. Collaborate with new and existing partners to ensure that the objectives of

members and their boards are best served.

- e. Generate and foster awareness of OASBO with internal and external stakeholders.
- f. Serve as a vehicle to advocate informed positions on relevant issues.

Each committee chair reviewed their top **Issues Management** items for 2012-13. There are some issues which impact on multiple committees and provide opportunities for collaboration. The updated document will be posted on the OASBO website.

Some discussion took place on the topic of **Video-Conferencing**. A list of boards that have conferencing facilities was shared. A short guide on video-conferencing etiquette, procedures, and how to connect as a participant will be developed by a member of the ICT Committee and shared with other Committees.

Finally, OASBO has been involved in pursuing representation on the **OMERS Sponsorship and Administration Boards**. This representation would support OMERS members in our sector (not our employers, who are already represented) and other members in certain other sectors who are not currently under-represented. OASBO members are encouraged to visit the OMERS website (Sponsors section) www.omers.com to view the **Specified Plan Changes** which may impact on rates of contribution, benefit changes, and investment returns.

Our next meeting is scheduled for the end of November. Until then,

Best wishes,

Shesh Maharaj,
OASBO President