



# PROVINCIAL NEWSLETTER

## From the Editor:

I would like to thank everyone for their continued efforts in writing articles and submitting them for the Newsletter. This is a way to keep all members informed of the important work that is being done by members throughout the year on behalf of APSSP.

Welcome to the Parenting and Family Literacy Staff Facilitators of the Toronto Catholic District School Board who recently joined APSSP.

Mark your calendars for the upcoming AGM at the Mississauga Grand Banquet Centre on May 19, 2011. Elections will be taking place for the following positions on the Provincial Executive: V.P. External Affairs, Treasurer, V.P. Negotiations and President. We look forward to seeing everyone there. Please let me know if you have any members you would like to recognize for their dedication and work on behalf of APSSP. Please contact me at kmiles@hotmail.ca.

*Kathy Miles*

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## APSSP Provincial Executive

|                               |                      |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| ▶ President                   | Kathi Page           |
| ▶ Treasurer                   | Tim Jenkins          |
| ▶ Secretary                   | Andrea Benjamin Coke |
| ▶ VP Negotiations             | Glenn Webster        |
| ▶ VP Public Relations         | Kathy Miles          |
| ▶ VP External Affairs         | Dan Milne            |
| ▶ VP Grievance & Constitution | Marieke Favrod       |

## Provincial Chapter Members

- ▶ Bruce-Grey Catholic District
- ▶ Dufferin-Peel Catholic District
- ▶ Durham Catholic District
- ▶ Halton Catholic District
- ▶ Hastings Prince Edward District
- ▶ London District Catholic
- ▶ Niagara District
- ▶ St. Clair Catholic District
- ▶ Toronto Catholic District
- ▶ Waterloo Catholic District

# President's Corner: APSSP Moves Forward on Initiatives

In the past two years, APSSP has put considerable effort into strategic planning as well as significant consultation with members, particularly through Governing Council and special planning sessions. As a result, we have moved forward to professionalize our image and business structures, have outlined next steps to support our work, continued to use and develop our network of professional consultants, and have moved ahead on projects to expand our membership in traditional and new directions. We have also begun to consider our negotiation issues and strategies for the upcoming round when our 4-year contract ends in August of 2012.

Last year, we gave serious consideration to including the new Kindergarden ECEs in APSSP, but in the end this initiative was not pursued due to practical and logistical complexities. However, as one door closes, another often opens and as you all know, we were able to add a new chapter in Hastings-Prince Edward right at the end of the last

school year. They have been working hard this year to complete the negotiations for their first APSSP contract. We learned a lot last year about identifying our core focus, and about organizing and supporting new members. Consequently, some chapters did discover other new potential members who were added to their groups. In particular, a recent arbitration with TCDSB, has brought Parent and Family Literacy Staff Facilitors into the Toronto Chapter. They are currently working out the details of incorporating their newest members into the existing contract.

While consultation and planning have been important goals, our members have also indicated an interest in more training and understanding of their executive roles. Our professional consultants help us in specific cases and have provided training in various areas over the years. In October, we learned about the history of the union movement in Canada. Recently, the focus was on the Grievance Portfolio and Mary Hart provided us with a thoughtful overview of the history

and concepts with an emphasis on creative thinking and problem solving. There will be follow up in the fall and chapter executives have been asked to provide specific feedback around their concerns and needs to help focus the session. The sessions have been informative and inspiring, and it has been great to have representatives from all chapters working together and involved in developing skills to further the work of APSSP for its members.

Your provincial executive continues to meet monthly as well as attend additional meetings and events for different chapters. We try to work closely with chapters as they face significant challenges dealing with issues and the current realities. A great deal of thought and discussion occur in the background around current and potential future issues and members should know of the exceptional commitment of many of your APSSP colleagues towards providing service and leadership to the organization and to individuals both provincially and locally.

## Provincial Election 2011 – Pay Attention

While APSSP is focused on advocating for our members and the students who depend on our services to have a chance to be successful in school, the Association knows we do not do this work in a vacuum. Our ability to do our work depends on our funding source. With the evolution of both funding and money issues in collective bargaining with the province, the government we elect at Queens Park has the potential to impact our work more than any other time in the past.

While APSSP does not endorse any political party or candidates we urge our members to be attentive to the direct and subtle messages that may come our way during the campaign. APSSP members are encouraged to ask questions to all candidates about what their plan is for education. Do they recognize and support the work done by

the professional student support staff in supporting our at risk and vulnerable students?

The present government has paid significant attention to the education portfolio. APSSP has noted an increased level of interest in the work of professional student services personnel. The Ministry of Education has worked hard to consult and include the stakeholder voices in education in developing new initiatives. APSSP had a seat at the provincial negotiations table and has participated in an on-going fashion through SWAG.

No matter which provincial party forms the next government, the fall-out from the economic downturn will impact their ability to invest in government services, let alone maintain present service levels.

# APSSP Members Attend Angel Foundation Gala

By: Anne Seniw-Martelli, Vice-President –Public Relations, Toronto Chapter

Many of the Toronto Chapter's members were on hand to support the Angel Foundation for Learning, as they hosted their annual gala dinner, auction and dance -- *An Evening to Feed the Soul*. The Foundation has been involved in great work benefiting the families and children that we work with. Through the Foundation, breakfast and snack programs, summer camps, bursaries and scholarships for our graduating students, assistance for eye glasses and hearing aids, as well as emergency funds to cover situations is provided, often where no other relief is available. Given the scope of the great work covered by the Foundation, it is no wonder that our members and others, without hesitation, participate in this event every year. Many took the opportunity to walk the red carpet, and have their picture snapped, while others bid on items like jewellery and art.

Two of our members honoured our Association by donating their works of Art. Both Odette Fernandes, with her breathtaking *Dockside Advantage*, and Enza Provvionato, with her inspiring *ballet pas de tout*, were winners, as their work was much appreciated and marvelled at, and garnered funds for the foundation through silent auction bidding. Another member, Nancy Murdocca donated an exquisite ring, eventually having one woman feeling very lucky that she attended this Special Evening.

Overall, a fantastic evening, enjoyed by all, with Executive Members seated at a corporate table, featuring the APSSP logo prominently displayed, and other APSSP members in close proximity involved in lively discussion and good fun already looking forward to next year.



By APSSP Member and Artist  
Enza Provvionato



# Education and Planning Weekend October 2010

We are pleased to note that 68 members came out and participated in our Education and Planning Weekend.

We had the pleasure of listening to Mary Hart and Larry Robbins as the speakers for the morning. Mary Hart, one of our legal consultants, gave an inspiring and motivating overview of Unions and the benefits they provide to their members. She also spoke about the history of Unions and how they are evolving. Larry Robbins, our labour consultant, spoke further about the history of Unions. He also shared his views on government changes and looking at negotiations for APSSP in 2012.

The later part of the morning was lead by Dan Milne, V.P. External Affairs, Marieke Favrod, V.P. Grievance & Constitution and Kathi Page, President. They highlighted the book *Barriers To Learning: The Case for Integrated Mental Health Services in Schools*, written by Debra Lean, Chief Psychologist and Vince Colucci, Social Worker, both from Dufferin - Peel Catholic District School Board. The discussion centered on the importance of our various disciplines within APSSP, who work with students in schools with mental health issues, as well as other difficulties that interfere with student achievement and well being. Debra and Vince are willing to do presentations and advocate for our positions and multidisciplinary approach within the education system through sharing the outcomes of their research, which is documented in the book.

In the afternoon, all Chapter and Provincial Executives broke into small groups to discuss issues and share ideas relative to their portfolios. This was a great opportunity for Chapter Executive members to network and talk about current issues and challenges.

Members also enjoyed a delicious dinner and time to socialize with their colleagues from around the province. We are looking forward to seeing everyone at our next Education & Planning weekend, which will be held from October 22 and 23, 2011 at the Best Western Cairncroft, Niagara Falls.

The AGM will be Thursday May 19, 2011 at the Mississauga Grand Banquet Hall. We are looking forward to another great evening. Hope to see everyone there.





# APSSP Hosts Grievance Training

**ON** Saturday, February 5, 2011, APSSP Provincial hosted a Grievance Training Session in St. Jacobs, Ontario. Chapter Presidents, Vice-Presidents of Grievance and Vice-Presidents of Negotiations gathered for an informative overview of the *why-to's* and *how-to's* of the grievance process. The workshop was presented by barrister and solicitor Mary Hart, who has provided advice and representation to APSSP on many matters. Mary has worked in labour law on behalf of trade unions and their members since 1987. Her practice has also included representation of health care professionals on professional discipline matters.

The workshop covered a variety of topics, starting with a brief overview of Section 48 of the Ontario Labour Relations Act, which requires that every collective agreement signed in Ontario contain an arbitration procedure. This procedure, which Mary views as “the cornerstone of every collective agreement”, provides all parties with access to neutral third-party resolution of collective agreement disputes.

Attendees were taken through the essential process of gathering information prior to filing a grievance. The “Five W’s” of writing a grievance were outlined, and the audience learned how to prepare for meetings with management. The

importance of effective communication was addressed and included tutorials on how to argue and the art of persuasion.

According to Mary, the vast majority of grievances do not proceed to arbitration. She advocates taking an open and collaborative problem-solving approach in trying to find resolutions “both within and outside of the grievance procedure”. This approach requires the ability to think creatively, offer innovative solutions and formulate plans that benefit both parties.

## In a Nutshell

Collective bargaining is the process of negotiating terms and conditions of work between an employer and a union, which negotiates on behalf of the union members. The agreement reached between an employer and a union is called a collective agreement (CA), and a grievance is an allegation that the CA has been misinterpreted or misapplied.

Grievances are usually filed by the union, although management has an equal right to file. Most grievances filed by unions are filed on behalf of an individual employee (individual grievance) or on behalf of a group of employees (group grievance). A third type of grievance is the policy grievance which deals with issues that affect all employees.

In current labour relations, the grievance arbitration process has become a compulsory statutory requirement whereby the disputing parties are required by law to try and resolve their collective agreement dispute through the grievance arbitration process. Expedited arbitration and grievance mediation can also be used to help resolve workplace grievances and can be less expensive and speedier alternatives to the conventional grievance process. *CanadianLabourRelations.com*

## Membership Directory

**It's** that time of year again... the arrival of spring coincides with the arrival of the new APSSP Membership Directory. The information contained in the Membership Directory allows APSSP to communicate with you directly about important information and to notify you of upcoming events such as the Annual General Meeting. Your personal information is held in strict confidence and is never shared with any person or agency outside of APSSP's local and provincial Executive Committees. Members can be confident that their information is protected.

The secretary of your local chapter of APSSP has been busy collecting updated information for inclusion in the APSSP Membership Directory. A big thank you to those who provided changes to their local chapter Executive as well as new employees or change of addresses of present employees. As our association grows, keeping contact records up-to-date is very time consuming for local secretaries, so each year we try to be more efficient at this huge task. This year, streamlining the administrative task of updating information was achieved by use of a database program which will allow us to have a more professional and up-to-date member list. It will also enable us to more readily sort the member list for example, by chapter and/or by discipline. And just as our association has grown, so also has our use of cell phones, email, etc. (Really, when is the last time you used your home phone to make a call?) You will notice, then, that our newest APSSP Membership Directory reflects these changes.

If your name and address are out of date or not currently listed in the APSSP Membership Directory, please contact your local Secretary. Members, please remember it is your responsibility to inform your chapter Secretary if any of your contact information has changed so that he or she can in turn inform the Provincial Secretary. See you at the AGM!

# Support Worker Advisory Group

The Ministry of Education's Support Worker Advisory Group (SWAG) continues to meet on a regular basis. As most of the APSSP membership is aware, this is the committee made up of members of the support worker unions which signed off on the Provincial Discussion Agreement in the last round of negotiations. It serves as a provincial equivalent of a joint consultation/staff liaison local Board committee to follow up on issues identified at the negotiating table during the last round of negotiations and to respond and provide input on emerging Ministry of Education initiatives which may impact our membership.

Dan Milne, provincial Vice President of External Affairs, serves as the APSSP representative on the SWAG committee. Early this year, the committee dealt with a report prepared by APSSP and CUPE regarding the inclusion of professional student service staff in the Education Act. While all

the union groups in SWAG supported this recommendation, it was not supported by the management representatives. The Minister of Education determined that she would not be moving forward on this issue at the present time. APSSP will continue to monitor this issue and work strategically with our colleagues who share an interest in continuing the evolution of mainstreaming the work of school based professionals within the education sector.

As well as the PSSP in the education act issue, the SWAG committee moved forward on a recommendation related to access to student OSR's for professional student service staff. This recommendation did receive support from both the union and management representatives on SWAG and appears to be moving forward.

APSSP has been actively engaged through SWAG in working with Queen's University on a Ministry funded project looking towards

improving labour relations in the education sector. Both Dan Milne and Joe O'Connor, President of London Catholic APSSP, participated in interviews related to this work. These interviews have been used by the Queen's University research team to develop a comprehensive survey which will be completed by a wide and representative group of both management and union staff. APSSP's role has been to ensure that this process is inclusive of the perspective and role of professional student service staff.

As SWAG moves into the new year, it will no doubt be impacted by the political landscape in Ontario as an election is scheduled for October and the education sector is approaching the end of the 4 year agreements negotiated at the provincial table. APSSP will remain vigilant through its involvement in SWAG, ensuring that the membership of the Association is well represented at the Provincial Level.

## Two New Groups Join Toronto Chapter

During the early part of last school year (2009-2010), the Toronto APSSP executive realized that the Parent and Child Drop-in Centres were in their third year and could no longer be considered temporary. We met with their supervisor who described their duties and scope of practice and read the Board literature on the centres and the qualifications for staff. We realized they were doing work that was within the Toronto APSSP recognition clause. After consultation with Larry Robbins, we sent a letter to Human Resources, asking that they be included in APSSP. After considerable delay, the Board refused our request, so we filed a grievance which was denied and then later filed for arbitration.

Early in the current school year, we were surprised to hear that CUPE had organized the same staff and that a vote was being held the next day. We applied to the Labour Relations Tribunal and had the vote sealed. It was clear that CUPE and APSSP had no idea of the others' actions and there was an honest misunderstanding.

We attended an arbitration hearing and in February, the arbitrator agreed with APSSP's position that the PFLC facilitators were properly a part of APSSP and engaging in activities within our scope of practice and covered by our recognition clause.

The PFLC (Parent and Family Literacy Centres) are run by facilitators, many of whom have ECE (Early Childhood Education) qualifications. They are drop-in centres where parents (and other caregivers) may bring their children, mostly pre-schoolers and kindergarten age. They are not child or day care centres, nor are they connected to our all-day schooling kindergarten programmes. Parents stay with and supervise their children. The centres are usually open for 4 hours per day.

They attract parents and their (soon to be school age) children to our schools. They participate in early identification of possible at-risk students and work closely with our social workers and speech pathologists. They are doing outreach with parents and promoting literacy at the same time. They are new to us and we are still learning about their work.

Recently, we had a reception and welcome for them in late February. We gave a brief presentation about APSSP and had a "Q and A" session. They are a well qualified group and we are very fortunate to have them as new members. We begin negotiations very soon to integrate them into our Collective Agreement which we expect to be completed in the next few months.

# APSSP Member Supports Teen to Fulfill his Dream

**Fernando Costa**, Child and Youth Counsellor, HCDSB

Fernando Costa from the Halton Catholic District School Board has been working with Alex Don a grade 12 student at Assumption Catholic School.

The journey began about a year ago when, after a trip to Australia, Alex brought his idea for the "P" program to Mr. Costa. The "P" program would require all novice drivers to display a "P" sign on their vehicles, indicating that the person driving has a provisional license.

Through hard work and determination, this initiative received the backing from City of Burlington Councillors, five MPP's and the Chief of Halton Regional Police Services.

Most recently, Alex and Fernando went to Queens Park on March 10, 2011, where a Press Conference was held to introduce the bill. It later passed first reading as a Private Member's Bill. Alex and Fernando presented at the Press Conference along with: Ken Lewenza, CAW President, who spoke eloquently about the need to make changes like the "P" Plate; and the Trauma Coordinator from Hamilton Health Sciences, Barbara Klassen, who was there to speak to the horrific problems of accidents and young people.

We are hoping this passes second reading and becomes law in the near future.

*"Neither Alex or myself thought this would have made it this far, however we are grateful that it has."*

## APSSP Website Updates

A meeting was held on February 15, 2011 to discuss improvements to be made with the current APSSP website.

The committee members were Dan Milne, V.P. External Affairs, Tim Jenkins, Provincial Treasurer, Kathy Miles, V.P. Public Relations. Also attending the meeting was Gerry Chamberland from Niagara District School Board and Jim Steinhart, our current webmaster.

Different ideas and concepts were shared and discussed regarding design changes and possibilities for developing an information-based site with the option of member log-in for obtaining and sharing information specific to APSSP members and Chapter Executives. We are excited about this project, as this is another step towards professionalizing our image, and hope that all members will use and benefit from the upgrades.

Thanks to everyone who participated and to Jim and Gerry for sharing their expertise in this area.

## Upcoming Meetings:

### Governing Council Meetings

- ▶ Saturday, April 16, 2011  
Stone Crock Restaurant,  
St. Jacobs
- ▶ Sunday, October 23, 2011  
Best Western Cairncroft,  
Niagara Falls

### Provincial Executive Meetings

- ▶ May 3, 2011
- ▶ June 7, 2011

### Annual General Meeting

Thursday May 19, 2011- 5:00 p.m.  
Mississauga Grand Banquet Centre  
35 Brunel Road, Mississauga

Elections will take place for the following positions:

- ▶ President
- ▶ Treasurer
- ▶ V.P. External Affairs
- ▶ V.P. Negotiations

### Education & Planning Weekend

October 22 & 23, 2011  
Best Western Cairncroft  
Niagara Falls

How to Contact Us:

### ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL STUDENT SERVICES PERSONNEL

60-8 Bristol Rd., East, Suite 737  
Mississauga, ON L4Z 3K8

Tel: 905-460-6629

E-mail: [info@apssp.org](mailto:info@apssp.org)

[www.apssp.org](http://www.apssp.org)