



# PROVINCIAL NEWSLETTER

## From the Editor:

**W**e welcomed a new APSSP chapter from Hastings Prince Edward District School Board to our membership over the summer. Thanks to Kathi Page, Dan Milne and Tim Jenkins for their commitment to APSSP and their efforts to assist the Hastings staff in making “their dream come true”.

I would like to encourage chapters to send me articles to be included in the next newsletter. It is a great way to stay informed and in touch with what is happening in the various chapters. So think about us when interesting news or information comes to your attention and send it to me at [kathymiles26@hotmail.com](mailto:kathymiles26@hotmail.com).

*Kathy Miles*



## In this Issue:

- ▶ From the Editor ..... 1
- ▶ Developments & Initiatives ..... 2
- ▶ Pension Success ..... 2
- ▶ Barriers to Learning: ..... 3
- ▶ Annual General Meeting ..... 4
- ▶ SEAC and Board Meetings ..... 6
- ▶ PR in Dufferin Peel ..... 6
- ▶ 2010 Treasurer’s Report ..... 7
- ▶ SWAG ..... 7
- ▶ Social Media ..... 8
- ▶ Upcoming Meeting ..... 8

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

# APSSP Developments & Initiatives

Kathi Page, Provincial President

Welcome back! At this point, everybody is deeply involved in work again. Since last spring, there have been many new developments in APSSP.

We are delighted to welcome a new chapter, #10, in Hastings Prince Edward DSB of about thirty members in professional support services. We were contacted by Hastings Prince Edward staff in the spring and a meeting was quickly arranged in Belleville in early June with myself, Dan Milne, and Tim Jenkins to share information about APSSP with prospective members. The process of signing cards and filing with the OLRB was completed and a vote was held at the end of June. The group voted in favour of joining APSSP and certification occurred in July. Since then, the provincial executive has been assisting them to organize and form their own executive and begin the process of negotiating their first collective agreement later this fall.

Last year, extensive discussions were held to consider organizing the new ECEs in the Early Learning Programs. I want to thank all those members who engaged in the process. It was a valuable exercise to consider the language in our contracts and the possibilities of acquiring a new group of colleagues in APSSP. It was also an opportunity to reflect on our core strengths and purpose as a union. After considerable discussion at Governing Council and among local executives, a decision was eventually made not to pursue the organization of new ECE groups in APSSP. A major factor in making this decision was the need to seriously consider how effectively we could serve the needs of a new group while maintaining our focus as the largest independent union serving professional student service staff in the province. However, our membership will

have an opportunity to work collaboratively with the ECE staff in serving the young students who may arrive at school with additional challenges.

While APSSP has expanded with the addition of Hastings Prince Edward DSB and additional staffing in a few of our Chapters, both Niagara and Durham worked diligently in June to protect their members who had received layoff notices. Despite lobbying efforts and the threat of grievances as a result of potential violations to the staffing enhancement language of the PDT, the Niagara and Durham Boards both moved forward with the layoffs. In Durham, three members working as CDA's were laid off and a re-organization of the professional staff saw the Board hire additional APSSP staff in a different designation. In Niagara, most of the psychology department was laid off without any additional staffing in other areas. As a result, APSSP is vigorously pursuing a grievance as the cut in funding to the APSSP group in Niagara appears to violate the staffing enhancement language of the collective agreement.

This year, we will focus on a few key areas. All chapters will be encouraged, with assistance

from provincial, to increase efforts in their Boards to enhance their profile and the work of our members to ensure we are in a position to articulate the huge cost to the students we serve should there be any attempt to diminish our services. Through the local presidents, chief negotiators and the vice president of external affairs, we need to begin preparations for the next round of negotiations. APSSP provincial has already submitted a report to the Ministry outlining our view of how the next round of provincial negotiations should be structured. It will be up to the membership to begin to articulate the goals we would like to achieve in the negotiations.

APSSP provincial executive members will continue to represent professional support service issues on a number of ministry committees. As well as the continued work on SWAG, various executive members, along with support from individual members, have attended a variety of ministry consultation sessions. We will continue to be a strong voice for school based professional support services and for the students who rely on our services to have an equitable opportunity to be successful.

## Pension Success

Carmela Diano, APSSP Member

Several members in the Toronto Chapter brought forward concerns around not being able to contribute to OMERS while they were on contract/limited term positions. This issue was investigated and I'm very happy to report that this matter has a process in place to ensure an appropriate resolution. Contract members that have worked beyond two years should have been eligible to join OMERS and have their employer pay their contributions as well. There may be other affected members as well. If you think you may be in a similar situation and would like further information, please contact Marieke Favrod, Provincial VP of Grievance & Constitution.

# Barriers to Learning:

## The Case for Integrated Mental Health Services in Schools

Friends and colleagues, Debra Lean and Vincent Colucci, brought their considerable experience and expertise to the writing of their book, *Barriers to Learning: The Case for Integrated Mental Health Services in Schools*. Debra is a former APSSP member and is currently the Chief Psychologist with the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board (DPCDSB); Vince is a social worker with DPCDSB and a current APSSP member. Their book offers a persuasive argument in favour of integrating the mental health and education sectors in order to more effectively address barriers to student achievement and learning. It also presents a model of service delivery, the School-based Integrated Student Support Model (SISSM) that emphasizes the essential role of professional student support personnel.

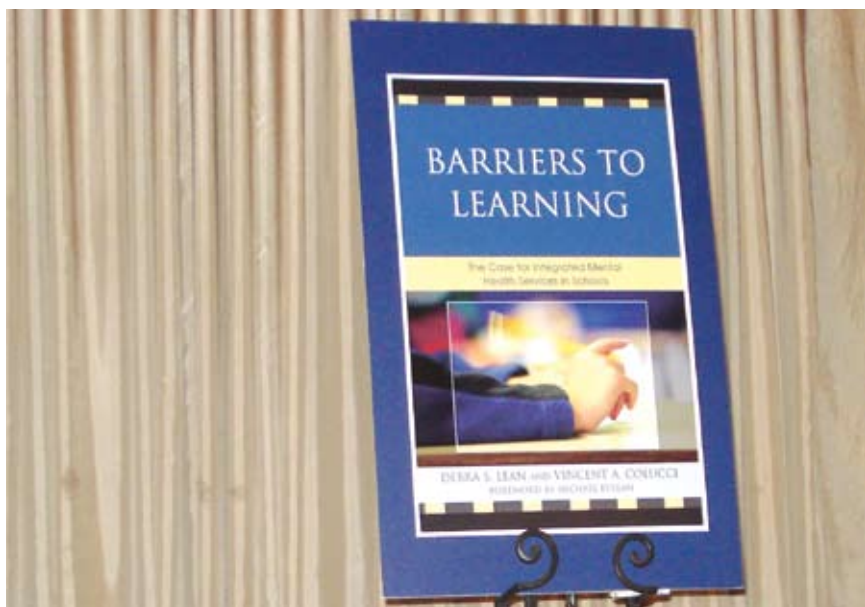
The statistics presented in this book are eye-opening and reveal that although approximately 15 to 20 percent of children have a diagnosable mental health disorder, about 75 percent of this population receives either no treatment or treatment that is substandard. The authors present a sobering review of the negative outcomes that can result when students receive inadequate intervention, including bullying, school refusal, dropping out, addictive behaviours, suicide and school violence.

The book is a valuable reference in that it defines and discusses the prevalence of biological-psychological and environmental-circumstantial barriers to learning, and provides a review of their effect on student functioning in school. The authors note that for students with biological-psychological conditions (including learning disabilities, attention-deficit, anxiety, mood and conduct disorders, speech and language disorders, development disabilities, and autism spectrum disorders), schools tend to focus on academic performance and may be less responsive to co-occurring mental health disorders. The authors also argue that more attention needs to be paid to environmental-circumstantial barriers, including the presence of domestic violence and child abuse, changes in family structure, economic challenges, job loss and social discrimination.

In his foreword to *Barriers to Learning*, Michael Fullan, professor emeritus at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, notes that “this is a must-read book for education reformers”. Given the emphasis placed on school-based support services and the professionals who deliver them, this book is also a must-read for APSSP members.



Debra Lean



Vincent Colucci

# APSSP Annual General Meeting

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The AGM was held on Thursday May, 20, 2010 at the Mississauga Grand Banquet Hall. The evening was a great success and seemed to be enjoyed by the 100 members who attended.

We had the pleasure of listening to guest speakers Debra Lean, *Chief Psychologist* and Vincent Colucci, *Social Worker*, both from Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board. They presented an interesting overview of topics covered in their book "Barriers to Learning: *The Case for Integrated Mental Health Services in Schools.*"

It was a special year as APSSP was very fortunate to honour two Provincial Members of the Year: One being Georgia Steinhart, past President from Toronto; and Rick Townshend, past Treasurer from Dufferin Peel. Both were thanked for their many years on the Provincial Executive and their outstanding contributions to APSSP.

Also during the evening, Honorary Mentions were given to the following members by their local executive members for their hard work and dedication throughout the past year: Deanna Lindsay and John Dougan from Durham, Angela Cook from Halton, Robert Szollosy from Toronto and Cathy MacDonald-Reis from Waterloo.

Elections took place for two positions on the Provincial Executive, Secretary and V.P. of Grievance and Constitution. Andrea Coke was elected to her new position as Secretary and Marieke Favrod moves into her new role on the executive as V.P. of Grievance and Constitution. Congratulations to both of you. Also, we said goodbye to Carmela Diano and wish her the best in her new role as a mom.

Next year's 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.





# SEAC and BOARD Meetings

It is very valuable for APSSP members to attend their school board meetings. The executive and other members should be aware of the issues that are discussed. Board agendas are usually made available ahead of time and hence issues pertaining to APSSP can be known in advance.

Toronto chapter have encouraged attendance by buying supper for a pair of attendees, every meeting.

The Board and its standing committees are a place to be seen. It shows that APSSP is aware of and interested in the issues of the day. Most teacher unions and CUPE send staff to attend these meetings and hence, it is a place to meet and greet the other union executives from our worksite. Senior staff, such as superintendents and department heads of special services, usually attend and

it is yet another opportunity to observe and interact with them. It is also informative to become familiar with your trustees and how they make decisions and vote.

SEAC – the Special Education Advisory Committee is a mandatory standing committee of the board consisting of senior staff (including the superintendent of special education), two trustees and several community representatives from such agencies as Community Living, LDAO (Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario) ABC (Association for Bright Children) and other bodies representing the concerns of children with a wide variety of challenges and special needs.

As an advisory committee, it can research, discuss, receive delegations, and advise the board on issues regarding special education

and budget related items. It is naturally useful for APSSP to have a presence at these meetings because all issues relating to special education are relevant to us.

Dufferin Peel chapter has an observer seat on SEAC. It has been an excellent opportunity to become informed about educational and community concerns as well as participate in work groups that gather information about priorities and recommendations.

Education, public relations, advocacy and awareness are all improved with APSSP's regular attendance at relevant school board and SEAC meetings. Please feel free to contact me about getting your chapter involved in this type of initiative.

*Glenn Webster VP Negotiations: (647) 229-0233 - glenn.webster@sympatico.ca*

## Public Relations in Dufferin Peel Chapter

One of the best ways we can be prepared for negotiations and dealing with membership issues in our Boards is to ensure that we maintain a solid profile within our school board community.

This past year the Dufferin Peel Chapter has been involved in a number of initiatives. In May, we once again took advantage of the opportunity to provide input to the Board on APSSP priorities for the budget. This report is available to other chapters for your information.

In addition, the local chapter continues to have representation at the monthly SEAC meetings. As well as providing an opportunity to give input to questions and issues that

arise, it also allows the chapter to develop contacts with the leaders of community agencies and advocacy groups. These are the very groups who influence the Board in ensuring adequate levels of support are made available to many of the students our members work with.

At the end of last year, the public relations representative on the local executive attended the OECTA dinner. This provided another opportunity to do the important work of maintaining contact with our colleagues in other unions. This is a significant piece of work for an APSSP chapter as this collegial support can prove extremely important when we deal with issues of mutual interest or a crisis in our local chapter.

The chapter has an executive member (public relations representative) attend the Board inauguration meeting. This is a fabulous opportunity to be present with the trustees as they start their important work for the upcoming year.

As well as external public relations, the chapter also works at internal public relations through some of the following initiatives:

- ▶ regular executive up-date reports to keep members informed
- ▶ new member meet and greet
- ▶ participation in the Edvantage Program with a combined Edvantage/APSSP membership card
- ▶ monthly up-dates on the website

# AGM 2010 Treasurer's Report

Tim Jenkins, Provincial Treasurer

I am pleased to report that for the 2009 fiscal year APSSP has realized its 10th. consecutive surplus. This has been achieved with a dues structure that at 1% of gross income is amongst the lowest in the educational sector.

In the last round of negotiations, APSSP was successful in negotiating 4 year agreements for all chapters that included significant wage increases, as well as, staffing and benefit enhancements. While providing members the stability of a 4 year agreement this also gives our Provincial and Chapter executives certainty in enabling them to project future revenue.

APSSP achieved a surplus of approximately \$115,000 for the 2009 budgetary year. This is primarily as a result of savings in the category of consultant fees as APSSP was not engaged in collective bargaining in 2009. It is anticipated that considerable savings will also be realized in 2010 and 2011 in this category.

Chapter Treasurers met at the October educational weekend and provided local input and budgetary suggestions. The 2010 budget was presented to the Provincial Executive in December 2009 and then adopted at Governing Council in January 2010. Incorporated in the budget was a significant increase in support to chapters to purchase technology items, allocation of funds for release time and \$25,000 set aside and earmarked for negotiations in 2012.

At the Strategic Planning and PDT follow up meeting in June 2009, the October 2009 Treasurers' meeting, Professionalizing Our Image meetings in February, 2010, as well as Provincial Executive and Governing Council in 2009 and 2010; the infrastructure needs of APSSP were discussed and at every level it was recommended that Provincial APSSP should move forward in securing office space. As a result, a motion was passed at Governing Council in April 2010 to authorize the Provincial Executive to proceed with the purchase of a provincial office.

I am proud to be a member of APSSP and to be able to serve as your Provincial Treasurer. While APSSP moves forward as a union, I can assure you that we will continue to meet the needs of the membership in a fiscally responsible manner.

## APSSP ONLINE

Find past newsletters and more at [www.apssp.org](http://www.apssp.org)

# APSSP Continues Work at SWAG

The SWAG (Support Worker Advisory Group) continues to provide an opportunity for APSSP to monitor provincial ministry of education initiatives. Members may recall that this is a committee formed from the last round of provincial negotiations for the purpose of continuing to discuss issues that were unresolved during the last round of negotiations and to monitor and provide input to new ministry initiatives.

Dan Milne, the provincial vice president of external affairs, will continue to represent APSSP on this committee this year. There are four scheduled full day meetings with additional sub-committee work.

On June 1st, representatives from APSSP and CUPE met to move forward with a report for SWAG to consider the inclusion of professional student service staff in the education act. This sub-committee has

completed a report that will be presented to the larger SWAG committee on October 5th for discussion and direction. No doubt there will be a significant amount of discussion and hopefully our PSSP colleagues in OSSTF will begin to engage in this work given the large numbers of professional support staff they represent across the province.

Additionally, APSSP submitted a report to the ministry that outlined some important issues, from our perspective, that need to be considered as the province works at determining how best to structure the next round of negotiations. The present provincial agreement runs to the end of the 2011-2012 school year with all local APSSP agreements expiring at that time as well.

# SOCIAL MEDIA: How Does Your Online Presence Reflect On Your Professionalism?

Andrea Benjamin Coke, Provincial Secretary

Your conduct as you work with students and teachers in schools is one thing, but what kind of person are you online? The fast-moving reality of modern forms of communication can be a source of concern for our members. Electronic communications and social media have a great potential for learning, networking and for professional growth. However, the guidelines for their appropriate use are less clear than those found in traditional forms of communication. The task of posting information online without weighing what it says about you as a professional can be challenging.

When it comes to the online world, the most important tool in helping APSSP members maintain their professional image is acknowledging that the Internet is a public space. Once information is posted online, it enters the public domain and may be impossible to retract. Online communication is informal and accessible. In the online world, in theory, anyone can access your information despite privacy settings. Messages can easily be altered, taken out of context or forwarded. Therefore, APSSP members are encouraged to regard email, text messaging, blogs and social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube with appropriate caution. Once we begin with the realization that our online presence is public, we can more safely maintain our professionalism online.

Many of our professional colleges have not yet developed acceptable-use policies or updated advisories with respect to electronic communications. However, all have guidelines on professional boundaries and standards of practice that can be instructive. The standards of communication expected of APSSP members are the same whether we are in the classroom or on the Internet. When using electronic communications and social media, APSSP strongly recommends that members:

- ▶ Avoid posting personal information online.
- ▶ Do not login to social networking sites during work hours.
- ▶ Avoid emailing parents and students. Emailing can easily become informal, inappropriate or misinterpreted.
- ▶ Do not post photos of inappropriate behavior, offensive or off-color comments/jokes, or links to non-professional content. Pictures showing you partying on the weekend, 'tweets' from the cottage when you should be at work or negative comments about co-workers, tend to move quickly in cyberspace.
- ▶ Assume the Board and school community can read everything you write online. If the comment is not suitable for them to see, then don't share it online.



## Upcoming Meetings:

### Governing Council Meetings

- ▶ Sunday, Oct. 24, 2010
- ▶ Saturday, Jan. 22, 2011  
(snowdate Jan. 29, 2011)
- ▶ Saturday, April 16, 2011

### Provincial Executive Meetings

- ▶ November 2, 2010
- ▶ December 7, 2010
- ▶ January 4, 2011
- ▶ February 1, 2011
- ▶ March 1, 2011
- ▶ April 5, 2011
- ▶ May 3, 2011
- ▶ June 7, 2011

### Annual General Meeting

Thursday, May 19, 2011- 5:30 p.m.  
Mississauga Grand Banquet Centre  
35 Brunel Road, Mississauga

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