

REPORT OF THE CHAIR'S COMMITTEE

2020 October 20
12:05 p.m. – 12:56 p.m.

MEMBERS

A. Morell (Chair) J. Bennett
M. Ruddock B. Yeoman

Regrets: C. Rahman

ADMINISTRATION AND OTHERS

M. Fisher B. Williams

The Chair's Committee met virtually using the TEAMS platform.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved by motion.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST – none declared**3. REVIEW UPCOMING BOARD MEETING AGENDAS**

The in-camera and public Board meetings agendas for 2020 October 27 were reviewed and discussed.

4. PUBLIC INPUT REQUEST

The Committee reviewed four public input applications received. It was agreed to schedule all applicants for the 2020 October 27 Board meeting.

5. CAPITAL PLANNING AND FACILITY COLLABORATION MEETING

Associate Director J. Pratt and Superintendent C. Lynd joined the meeting to gather feedback from the Chair's Committee regarding plans to host a Capital Planning and Facility Collaboration meeting in December. One virtual meeting be held with the municipalities and the City of London rather than hosting four meetings. It was suggested the incoming Chair or Vice Chair of the Board chair the meeting and that the Director provide opening remarks.

Questions of clarification regarding invited participants to the meeting were addressed by J. Pratt and C. Lynd. A date for the meeting is to be determined.

6. OSTA-AECO 2020-2021 MEMBERSHIP FEE

The invoice and related correspondence regarding the 2020-2021 Ontario Student Trustees Association (OSTA) membership was received (CC-1)

The following recommendation was moved and CARRIED:

That membership to the Ontario Student Trustees Association be renewed.

The membership to OSTA will be paid in the amount of \$4,773.35.

7. TRUSTEES' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT REQUESTS

The following motion was moved and CARRIED:

That Student Trustees M. Dhaliwal, N. Keller, T. Rahman be approved to attend the OSTA fall General Meeting scheduled for 2020 October 22-25.

It was noted the conference will be held virtually this year.

8. OTHER BUSINESS**a. FNMI PROFESSIONAL LEARNING UPDATE**

A. Morell provided an update on plans for the First Nation, Metis, and Inuit professional learning. The planned blanket exercise is on hold, but plans to move forward with presentations from the three communities and indigenous experts is intended to move forward. Potential dates in November are being considered and will be communicated once confirmed.

9. UPCOMING EVENTS/INITIATIVES - none

10. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for 2020 November 3, 2:00 p.m.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 12:56 p.m. by motion.

RECOMMENDATION:

That membership to the Ontario Student Trustees Association be renewed.

ARLENE MORELL
CHAIR



INVOICE

OSTA-AECO

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BILL TO
Thames Valley DSB

s.kilbourn@tvdsb.ca

Invoice Number: 898

Invoice Date: July 30, 2020

Payment Due: October 1, 2020

Amount Due (CAD): \$4,773.35

Product	Quantity	Price	Amount
OSTA-AECO Base Membership Fee	1	\$750.00	\$750.00
OSTA-AECO Variable Membership Fee \$0.05 x Projected Enrollment (80,467 students)	1	\$4,023.35	\$4,023.35

Total: \$4,773.35

Amount Due (CAD): \$4,773.35

Note: All membership projections for the 2020-2021 academic year are based on the Spring 2020 Ministry of Education enrollment projections. If you have any questions, please contact Prasith Wijeweera at prasith.wijeweera@osta-aeco.org.

School Board Membership Guide



Academic Year 2020–2021



September 2020

A letter from our Presidents

on behalf of the OSTA-AECO Executive Council

Directors of Education, Board Chairs, and fellow Trustees,

On behalf of the Ontario Student Trustees' Association (OSTA-AECO), we would like to congratulate your recently elected student trustees on officially beginning their terms of office with your board. The role of student trustee is invaluable to amplifying the student voice at the school board level and we look forward to seeing their accomplishments throughout the academic year. OSTA-AECO has been the official voice for students across Ontario for the past 20 years. We are honoured to be a strong advocate for education in Ontario, and the largest student stakeholder group in the province, representing over 2 million students.

At the beginning of each year, our executive council develops a strategic plan and advocacy initiatives based on the needs of Ontario's students. In line with our vision, [The Students' Vision for Education](#), released in 2019, we strive to enhance equity within our schools and create an environment that fits the needs of every student throughout the 2020-2021 academic year. The executive council works with the board council cabinets, working groups, and general assembly to foster student voice and create tangible change within our education system. OSTA-AECO's Catholic Board Council plans to use faith as the guiding light of their advocacy for a year founded on three pillars: Student Well-Being, Family in Faith, and Ecological Education. Along with the commitment of "putting students first," the focus of the Public Board Council will be to amplify local student trustee led initiatives, aid students with the transition back to school, and improve professional development resources for Ontario's student trustees.

We will continue to support student trustees through our 3 annual conferences. These conferences provide your student trustees with world-class professional development, networking opportunities, and knowledgeable guest speakers. Student trustees also have the opportunity to engage in interactive roundtable discussions, work in their designated working groups, and engage with board council-specific advocacy initiatives, all of which will aid them in enhancing their leadership abilities. By attending our conferences, you are helping your student trustees unlock their full potential as leaders, allowing them to be equipped in their roles throughout their term.

As we begin the 2020-2021 academic year, we look forward to your school board's ongoing support of our vision and advocacy work. We appreciate you taking the time to review this membership package and trust that you will recognize the benefits of becoming an OSTA-AECO member board. With your assistance, we look forward to continuing to serve Ontario's students and working with your school board in the upcoming academic year. Thank you, as always, for your help in amplifying student voice across the province.

Yours in education,




Justine Mackay
President,
OSTA-AECO




Mahek Dhaliwal
President,
Public Board Council




Teresa Siby
President,
Catholic Board Council

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Updates from our board of directors

Renewed commitments to accountability, collaboration, and transparency

For twenty years, OSTA-AECO has been an integral stakeholder in the education community, and we've built a name for ourselves by advocating for the students of Ontario on the provincial stage. However, we recognize that we have more work to do on our internal operations to ensure the success and growth of our organization. Earlier this year, we refreshed the OSTA-AECO brand and committed to a cultural change based on three pillars: accountability, collaboration, and transparency. More information regarding our renewed commitments to these pillars can be found in a letter from OSTA-AECO's Chair of the Board¹, Arjun Dhanjal, at osta-aeco.org/onward.

Updating conference supervision practices

Student safety is our number one priority at conferences. At OSTA-AECO, the board of directors is responsible for creating and implementing supervision and safety policies for all student attendees. Prior to arriving at our conferences, all student trustees must complete the Student Trustee Registration Form, where they provide us with their contact information, an emergency contact, outline any dietary restrictions or accessibility needs, and agree to the Student Trustee Code of Conduct.

All student trustees are required to complete check-in with the Board between 22:00 and midnight each evening of the conference. Once check-in has been completed, student trustees are to return to their hotel rooms to rest for the next conference day. In the case that an attendee has not completed check-in, the student trustee will be contacted via the cell phone number provided in their registration. If we are unable to reach the student trustee directly, members of the Board will contact the student trustee's parent/guardian. All Directors are required to have verified criminal record checks with vulnerable sector screening, in addition to having a level of first aid and mental health training.

Additionally, school boards may send chaperones to any of our professional development conferences if they so choose. Student trustees with chaperones may choose to complete nightly check-ins with their respective chaperones rather than the board of directors. Please note that chaperones are also required to adhere to the Code of Conduct.

As our organization and conference attendance continues to grow on a yearly basis, and to ensure the safety of all students under our care, we are:

- hiring a mental health counsellor for our annual in-person conferences to provide student trustees with a trusted professional from whom to seek mental health support;
- implementing workshops, trainings, and campaigns relating to gender-based violence and consent;
- designating two Directors, of different genders wherever possible, to be on call and present at all times for the duration of conference days to address any concerns that may arise;
- updating the Student Trustee Code of Conduct to explicitly prohibit student trustees from inviting any unauthorized individuals (anyone not currently a student trustee, supervisor, chaperone, or authorized guest) into conference spaces, including hotel rooms; and
- creating a versatile reporting portal for student trustees to report incidents they may face. This portal will be accompanied by a transparent framework for incident resolution.

Our commitment to addressing systemic racism

We continue to work hard to create equitable and safe working environments for everyone who volunteers with OSTA-AECO or attends our conferences. We have a responsibility to ensure that the internal operations at OSTA-AECO foster safe, welcoming spaces in which advocacy work can thrive. Creating cultures of inclusivity and diversity allow us all do to our best work. In organizations such as ours, inclusive culture is often set by the 'tone at the top'.

Over the last several months, we've introduced corporate governance explicitly enabling these kinds of cultures to grow. Last month, we put into effect the *Respectful Workplace Policy* and *Respectful Workplace Procedure* which outline the types of behaviour we deem incompatible with inclusive spaces. At the outset of our new academic year, we also launched the *Code of Conduct and Ethics for Employees, Volunteers, and Directors*, which came into effect on August 1, 2020 and will act as a guiding framework for all of OSTA-AECO's business, advocacy, and professional dealings and decisions. Furthermore, we are in the process of creating a robust framework to address both systemic racism within the organization, as well as ways to improve internal education for student trustees who interact with OSTA-AECO at our conferences and other events.

Central to our responsibility as an organization and to our change in culture is a commitment to fostering a welcoming and inclusive working environment for the people who work within the organization. While inclusivity has always been a central tenet foundational to the way OSTA-AECO operates, recent events around the world have demonstrated that now, more than ever, there is an onus on all organizations, including ours, to demonstrate our solidarity and disavowal for discrimination, violence, and hate in tangible ways. To suggest that OSTA-AECO is excluded from that would be grossly negligent and harmful. We recognize that this is an ongoing commitment as we continue to review, change, and operate our organization by incorporating reporting frameworks to address equity concerns throughout the organization. So far, we have committed to the following changes:

- implementing workshops, training, and campaigns at OSTA-AECO conferences relating to anti-racism;
- mandating equity training on a yearly basis for the executive council and board of directors;
- implementing the *Respectful Workplace Policy* and *Respectful Workplace Procedure* which outline the types of behaviour we deem incompatible with inclusive spaces;
- implementing the *Code of Conduct and Ethics for Employees, Volunteers, and Directors* which outlines the acceptable behaviour of those associated with the organization; and
- utilizing an intersectional lens to improve professional development activities to teach student trustees to be inclusive and thoughtful leaders as they advocate for students in their constituency.



We are committed to reviewing our practices on an ongoing basis, and we will implement changes in support of our renewed commitment to student well-being. We invite our stakeholders to get in touch with our Board Chair if they have any questions, comments, feedback, or suggestions on how we can improve as an organization or make our spaces more safe, inclusive, and welcoming for all students.

¹ Our board of directors is comprised entirely of former student trustees who volunteer on a part-time basis to provide leadership, direction, and support for the organization. The board maintains internal procedures that promote and sustain fiscal management, accountability, risk mitigation, long-term sustainability, and social responsibility. As a publicly funded not-for-profit corporation, these procedures comply with not-for-profit corporate regulations and are designed to maintain transparent and equitable financial records in accordance with regulatory requirements. For more information, visit osta-aeco.org/governance/our-board.

Education advocacy at large

OSTA-AECO is an active partner in Ontario's education system and the largest student stakeholder group in Ontario, representing approximately 2 million students. The General Assembly is comprised of student trustees from public and Catholic school boards across Ontario. Members of the organization work tirelessly throughout the year to advocate for student voice and strive to work with our partners in government and otherwise to improve Ontario's education system for our students. More information about our work can be found at osta-aeco.org.

Our impact on education

At OSTA-AECO, we regularly make recommendations to the Ministry of Education and our other partners as a result of the consultations we conduct with respect to pressing issues in education. Our advocacy work is taken seriously; recommendations from the Student Platform were picked up by each of the major political parties in the 2016 provincial election, and we have a productive and collaborative relationship with the Ministry of Education. Here are some examples of what we've accomplished:

- **We advocated for maintaining class sizes.** In 2018, the provincial government proposed an increase to secondary class size ratios from 1:22 to 1:28. We recommended that ratios be maintained at 1:22; the provincial government settled on a reduced ratio of 1:23 in secondary classrooms.
- **We helped reduce the mandated online course requirement.** We surveyed students across Ontario and received responses from over 6,000 students with representation from all of Ontario's 72 school boards. 95% of students did **not** approve of the proposed e-learning mandate, which required students to take 4 online classes throughout secondary school. The provincial government lowered the mandate to 2 online classes. We continue to advocate for student autonomy in deciding course delivery options.
- **We recommended the reimplementation of the updated health and physical education (HPE) curriculum.** The provincial government launched a modernized HPE curriculum in 2015, which was later rolled back to an outdated version. Our advocacy efforts were successful, as the provincial government reinstated the modernized 2015 curriculum, which remains in effect today.
- **We recommended an extensive review of streaming practices in secondary schools.** Our recommendation included direct consultation with students who were disproportionately impacted by the streaming process—in particular, racialized minorities. As a result, in the summer of 2020, the provincial government announced that Grade 9 would be de-streamed, effective the 2020–2021 academic year.
- **We continue to work with EQAO to improve standardized testing practices in Ontario.** Since 2017, we have had an active voice and seats for student leaders on EQAO's working groups, ensuring that student perspectives are heard at EQAO.

Advocacy initiatives

Members of OSTA-AECO accomplish numerous long- and short-term advocacy initiatives on a yearly basis. During the 2019–2020 academic year, OSTA-AECO was able to accomplish the following advocacy projects with help from our partners. Some of our past work includes:

Affording our Students' Success: 2020/21 Pre-Budget/Grants for Student Needs Submission. This document, prepared by the 2019–20 executive council and submitted to the Ministry of Education, highlights areas in education which require further investment to better support students. [Read the report.](#)

eLearning: the Students' Perspective. This report outlines the findings of OSTA-AECO's eLearning survey and highlights key findings. [Read the report.](#)

OSTA-AECO Equity Survey. In 2019, OSTA-AECO consulted over 3,000 students on issues of equity and representation in education. Results from the survey will be available this coming year.

Working groups at OSTA-AECO

OSTA-AECO's working groups are comprised of student trustees across Ontario. Student trustees have the opportunity to contribute to the development of initiatives across key areas, including:

Environmental Sustainability Working Group (ad-hoc)

This working group seeks to uphold a sense of environmental responsibility by motivating and educating students about the potential impacts of climate change, and on how dependent we are on the health of our Earth for survival.

Indigenous Relations Working Group

This working group educates peers of the barriers Indigenous students in Ontario face today and supports the guidelines for reconciliation.

Communications Working Group

This working group crafts content to strengthen and promote OSTA-AECO's brand by generating creative content for OSTA-AECO's social media platforms and designing visual assets for provincial campaigns. During conferences, this group aids in providing world-class professional development to student trustees as they transition into their roles.

French Relations Working Group

The French Relations Working Group works to identify and advocate for the unique barriers students in French programming face.

Student Well-Being Working Group

This working group gives students appropriate resources and tools to help destigmatize the culture surrounding both physical and mental illness.

Advocacy Working Group

This working group creates official OSTA-AECO position papers relating to current issues in education to bring a unified student voice forward at provincial discussions.

Ontario Student Voice Awards Working Group

This working group awards scholarships to recognize students across Ontario who demonstrate academic excellence and community leadership.

OSTA-AECO's Working Groups play an essential role within our organization's collective advocacy. Last year alone, our Working Groups took part in a substantial amount of initiatives and projects regarding various aspects of our education system. This includes:

- our **French Relations Working Group**, which assisted in revising the French-language versions of a digital learning module for concussions developed by OPHEA, and also planned a French Relations conference to gather Francophone student trustees and foster conversations about improving French education in Ontario;
- our **Advocacy Working Group**, which created an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Handbook to make students aware of the general process of receiving an IEP and generate awareness of the benefits that IEPs can have on a student's educational experience; and
- our **Student Well-Being Working Group**, which provided students with various mental and physical well-being tips through OSTA-AECO's social media accounts year-round, and created a Menstrual Hygiene Accessibility Handbook that can be used for student trustees when lobbying school boards to provide students with free menstrual products.

Conferences and professional development

Conferences provide student trustees with **skills development** as well as **in-depth focus** on the role of student trustee and the Ontario education system as a whole. We also provide resources to help student trustees **find their voice** at the board table through workshops, breakout sessions, and group discussions. Our conferences are also an opportunity for our working groups to work on their initiatives for the year.

The **Fall General Meeting**, hosted virtually this year:

- develops skills in student trustees, including board table basics, professionalism, media relations, parliamentary procedure, and more;
- provides an in-depth focus on the role of student trustee as well as the Ontario education system as a whole;
- provides resources to help student trustees find their voice at the board table; and
- facilitates breakout sessions, workshops, group discussions, and working group initiatives.

The **Board Council Conferences**, hosted in Ottawa:

- encourages student trustees to work together within their designated council on various initiatives;
- provides keynote speakers and professional development geared towards attendees' roles, taking into account the unique challenges posed by public and Catholic, urban and rural student trustees; and
- facilitates breakout sessions to discuss current issues in the education system and brainstorming sustainable, tangible solutions to these challenges.

The **Annual General Meeting**, hosted in Toronto:

- provides newly-elected student trustees with general understanding of Ontario's education system and the role of trustees within local boards;
- transitions incoming and outgoing student trustees between their roles as well as hands over current initiatives for ongoing education advocacy; and
- recognizes outgoing student trustee accomplishments and provide them with avenues for future success.



Conference activities throughout the year may be modified to accommodate best practices for meetings in accordance with COVID-19 guidelines. We are committed to providing frequent, transparent updates to school boards as we make decisions regarding our conferences.

Membership highlights

By joining OSTA-AECO as a member board, your school board will receive the following benefits:

1

Flexible registration adjustment

We allow only our member boards to adjust registration information and invoice amounts up to one week in advance of a conference.

2

Board personnel access to OSTA-AECO conferences

We invite our member board personnel to attend OSTA-AECO conferences to observe student voice in action and learn more about how to support our organization.

3

Ongoing updates from OSTA-AECO

- Quarterly updates from the executive council and board of directors;
- early access to financial updates and ongoing initiatives; and
- member board recognition on our organization's publications.

4

Reduced conference fees

We offer reduced conference fees to only our member boards. Member boards can save up to \$100 per conference, per student trustee.

5

Exclusive additional PD materials

We offer all conference slide decks, resources and handouts to our member boards only, as well as additional videos and resources created by the organization's working groups.

6

Exclusive social media awareness

We share our member boards' social media activity while offering occasional "Member Spotlights" that feature initiatives and projects at the board.

Fee structure

Fixed base membership fee:
\$750



Variable membership fee:
\$0.05 per ADE pupil[†]

[†] In calculating school board membership fees, we use the Ontario Ministry of Education's Average Daily Enrolment (ADE) of pupils as reported on March 31 of each year. The calculation of ADE is based on an average of full-time equivalent students reported on the two count dates. You can confirm your school board's ADE figures in the [Grants for Student Needs: Projections for the 2020-2021 School Year](#).

Contact us

We encourage our board partners to contact us with any inquiries, questions, and/or feedback.

General inquiries



Justine Mackay
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Justine.Mackay@osta-aeco.org



Cameron Prosic
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Financial inquiries



Prasith Wijeweera
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Alex MacDonald
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Governance inquiries



Arjun Dhanjal
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