



**PAUL  
CARR**

CPCO President

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome back! While summer provides the opportunity for much deserved rest and a re-uniting with family, we always find ourselves eager to get back to our schools with renewed enthusiasm and commitment. I wish you every success as you meet the many challenges during the new school year.

Along with the challenges come the many opportunities to live out our call to serve our students as Catholic leaders in the educational community. As no one else, we who are principals and vice-principals have a unique opportunity to create the character of our school. The life, the values, and the feeling of each school derive in large part from our commitment to our staff, to our students, and to the Gospel. As we begin another school year, it is a good time to remember that few of us went into education out of a burning desire to raise students' test scores. We went into it out of a deep sense of what's good for kids and society, what's worth knowing and thinking about, indeed, what it means to lead a good life. It is timely indeed that the theme of this issue of *Principal Connections* is "all about kids".

The summer was filled with opportunities for me as incoming president of CPCO. The July executive meeting in Niagara Falls provided an opportunity to re-focus as an executive both spiritually and with respect to the goals and needs of our members. We welcomed three new members to the Executive Council and celebrated the contributions of outgoing executive members. We bid farewell to Terri McDonald, Patty Mardero, and Brian Rivait and will remain grateful for the gifts and talents they so generously shared. Together we welcomed Mary Ellen Agnel and Mike Seguin (secondary councillors) and Kevin Malcolm (elementary councillor). I was impressed by their dedication and enthusiasm as they begin their term on the Executive Council.

The summer's executive meeting also focused on the appointment of the committees for the upcoming year. We had an overwhelming response this year with sixty-five members applying to take part on committees. Surely this is a sign that we remain true to our mandate of being a "grassroots" organization that provides opportunity for members throughout the province to participate. Thank you to all those who put their name forward for this important work on behalf of their colleagues. This year's committee chairs include Paul Lacalamita (Constitution), Diane Jackson (Issues in Catholic Education), Opiyo Oloya (Communications), Joe Czaczkowski (Member Security), Christine Kwiatkowski (Professional Development), Anthony Chezzi (Finance), and Brian O'Sullivan (Policy Research).

An uplifting experience for me this summer was the opportunity to visit the PQP courses. The instructors I met were knowledgeable, well prepared and clearly demonstrated their dedication to Catholic education. It is no surprise that we are hearing from the directors around the province that the candidates from our course are exceptionally well prepared, especially in understanding the value and goals of Catholic education in Ontario. It would seem that our Principal's Qualification Program is more than meeting Fullan's test of sustainability by developing leaders for the future. Congratulations to our PD department, for the outstanding program planning and design.

On the horizon for the new year, the Executive Council will continue to focus on the Strategic Plan. We will be engaged in reviewing the recommendations that came from our Member Services Review of last year. Included in these are: the enhanced legal protection plan which includes the feasibility of a self-funded service, the annual employment seminar, and professional development initiatives including literacy and numeracy, the Education and the Law series, and bullying. We will, of course, continue advocacy initiatives with the government, ministry, and other education stakeholder groups on behalf of our members.

The beginning of the school year always engenders the sense of "new hope". We are, after all, a people of hope. More than that, we are challenged to bring hope to those we touch every day in our school communities. This is nowhere better articulated than in "This Moment of Promise" where it states, "In an age which seems more fearful of the future, we are directed to give an account of the hope that is within us." As we begin the new year, we continue to hope for positive outcomes for our members in some critical areas outlined in our Role of the Principal paper. Perhaps this is the year we will witness changes in TPA, testing, and, dare I add, job security.

In the words of Pope Paul VI, "If the world will listen to leaders, it is because they are witnesses." I wish all of you well as you take up the message of hope for a new year giving witness to who we are as leaders in the Catholic community. I look forward to meeting with you throughout the year on my journey as president. May God bless you and keep you in his grace throughout the year.

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