

**Clara Pitoscia**  
Executive Director



## Privilege and Prospect

During the formative years of CPCO I had the opportunity to serve as an elected representative for Catholic principals and vice-principals as a councillor on the executive council. Though it seems like yesterday, it was more than ten years ago. Now, almost twelve years later, one can see how far we have come as an independent organization serving Catholic principals and vice-principals. It is with humility and pride that I assumed the role of executive director this past January and in so doing became CPCO's fourth executive director.

The strength and success of our organization is rooted in all who have worked tirelessly these past twelve years to enact CPCO's mission statement and to build strong partnerships with other organizations as well as with Ontario's political establishment. As we move into our second decade, it is a privilege to serve as the executive director of CPCO and continue this good work.

CPCO is part of a strong vibrant network for Catholic education through its partnership with the Institute for Catholic Education (ICE). The chart below denotes the depth, breadth and a significant aspect of the legacy of Catholic education in Ontario. Each association encircled in the chart is a marker in time of a collective voice for Catholic education in Ontario. CPCO works closely with each of the partners in supporting Catholic education and the role of Catholic principals and vice-principals. The Catholic curriculum and foundational documents developed and produced by ICE in recent years speak to the success of the collaborative partnerships. These documents have shaped and sharpened the focus of Catholic education for Catholic educators and students.

CPCO enjoys an excellent working relationship with its Catholic partner associations, the Ministry of Education, its principal counterparts and other educational partners such as the Institute for Education Leadership, the Ontario College of Teachers and The Learning Partnership. With the recent cabinet shuffle and the announcement of a new minister of education, Leona Dombrowsky, we look forward to a continued excellent relationship with the Ministry of Education.

This school year has seen numerous major new ministry policies, regulations and legislation land at the front doors of schools and boards. Bill 157 - *Keeping Our Kids Safe at School Act*; PPM 119 - *Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy*; and Bill 168 - *Workplace Violence and Harassment in the Workplace* are but a few among the many which have given us cause to pause and reflect about the aspects of our school environments. Central to

the implementation and integration of these new policies and legislation at the school level is the principal. Purposeful planning with the principal in mind creates successful implementation strategies with regards to new initiatives.

The role of the principal and vice-principal continues to garner attention both at the school level and at the system level. The research clearly shows that the principal plays a pivotal role in moving the learning forward in a school. At the same time though, we know that the principal is continuously working to ensure that their school is a safe learning environment. The juxtaposition of these two dynamic parallel responsibilities, principal as instructional leader and principal as manager, reflect the push and pull of all activities each and every day concerning the principal or vice-principal.

The recent Kellar arbitration on system-level principals has sparked some pivotal conversations around this particular issue both locally and provincially. System level principals, many of whom are fulfilling their mandate through the roles provided for in the *Student Success or School Effectiveness Framework* initiatives, find themselves at the front and center of this issue. CPCO continues to work on behalf of all its members to advocate for principals and vice-principals in order to bring clarity and understanding to the full scope of the role of the principal and vice-principal, whether school-based or system-based.

I look forward to the prospects that the future brings for principals and vice-principals in Ontario and for Catholic education.

