



News Digest

January 2015, Issue No. 22

Message from the President

There has been a whirl wind of activity around the recent negotiations concerning the allocation of resources towards wages and ancillary benefits for our staff. In this exercise it is important to remember that our trusted partners in MCSS are required to respond to their Minister who in turn is responsible to the Cabinet and the Premier. Each Minister has been given a written directive from the Premier as to what she expects her ministries to deliver during the current mandate. In addition, the budget was approved by the Management Board and resource allocations were determined by the Minister of Finance. As much as we might like it to be otherwise, our elected officials believe they have identified where they see the greatest need.

As always, it takes very skillful and delicate negotiations on the part of all parties to interpret the intent of the budget while also recognizing the realities that exist within each of our agencies. Add to this mix the joint participation of two ministries, the involvement of the two principal third parties and our sector as a whole and you have the basis for some interesting and dynamic interaction.

As the saying goes, “You can please some of the people some of the time but you cannot please all of the people, all of the time.” The Ontario Government is approaching a debt level of some \$325 Billion Dollars. They must be seen to be doing something to control spending and the first area that is always in the mind of the electorate is public sector wages. Therefore, every decision they make is a public decision that will come under the scrutiny of the media, of the opposition parties and of the people in the home town of every Member of the Provincial Parliament. They want to be seen as fair, responsible and good stewards of the public purse.

Bottom line is that, “A rose by any other name will smell as sweet.” Therein lies the nature of the true intent of the negotiations that have taken place over the past several weeks wherein recognizing the tremendous spectrum of need in each agency, all of the parties have made herculean efforts to address the directions they have been given by their superiors while at the same time acknowledging that need. Given the speed with which MCSS has been charged with dispensing these resources and the day by day progress made in finalizing all of the details, it is to be expected that there will be different interpretations made by each MCSS Regional Office that will require further clarification. In addition, as it is the intent of MCSS not to direct individual bargaining exercises at each agency, the usual tactics used by third parties negotiators to advance their positions may add some further interim confusion to the process.

On our part, OASIS as a significant contributor to the Provincial Network along with our other provincial partners in the Developmental Service Sector who sit at that table, have represented us in these negotiations with patience, persistence, determination, fortitude

and magnitude in reaching the best agreement possible on behalf of the sector. I extend my profound thanks to OASIS Members Andrew Lewis, Gerry D'Amico, Eugene Versteeg and Dave Ferguson for all of their efforts on our behalf.

The next meeting of the OASIS Board of Directors will take place on February 18-19, 2015 in Newmarket. As always, members are welcome to attend Board meetings. We welcome you to join us or contact me prior to the meeting to share your ideas and concerns. I can be reached by email at president@oasisonline.ca or by phone at 1-800-961-9144.

Sincerely,
L. David Barber
President, OASIS

Workforce Stability

On December 20th, representatives of DS sector employers, CUPE and OPSEU reached an agreement with respect to input to MCSS regarding the allocation of funds to the sector. It was agreed that on February 1, 2015 funding allocation of \$36 million will flow for the current fiscal year. Another \$36 million will flow to the sector on April 1, 2015 for the 2015/16 fiscal year.

On December 22nd, an email was widely distributed to all agencies outlining the details of this settlement. The settlement spoke to allocation, distribution and timing of meetings with respect to Collective Bargaining. This was followed by two conference calls in which agencies wanting clarification could ask and listen in on the discussions. There were many concerns coming forward in how this information was being interpreted by both Ministry and agencies. During this same time, there were also a number of calls between MCSS and the representatives of DS sector employers on the feedback and questions being received as well as clarification on the intent of the settlement. On January 23rd, a detailed Q&A was distributed for agencies to refer back to. Agencies are now working with their regional offices clarifying their data. Agencies should expect to receive communication from your Regional Office mid-February related to specific information pertaining to your agency.

As part of these discussions, it was also suggested and agreed upon, that MCSS will establish a Developmental Services Advisory Group (DSAG). The understanding with respect to membership, activities and costs are outlined in a separate document. Once a firm commitment and timelines are received from the Ministry, The Provincial Network will do a call for nominations for those interested in being a representative for this committee. The first meeting of the DSAG is to be held by June 1, 2015.

Communications Training Opportunity

With an ever increasing demand and necessity for agencies to broaden their communication efforts, OASIS is working with the Provincial Network Communications Committee to develop a training opportunity that can help better prepare you. To help us align the content and mode of sharing with the needs and preferences of the sector please take a moment to complete this quick survey <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/KC2JL3P>

Thank you in advance,
Michelle Marshall
Vice President Executive Director
OASIS

OASIS Scholarship Submissions Due February 28, 2015

In recognition of the philanthropic/voluntary contribution of OASIS leaders, three scholarship funds were established. We encourage individuals in OASIS member agencies to apply for these bursaries, which will be awarded at the 2014 Conference in London. We hope that Executive Directors, or Senior staff, as applicable, interested in receiving one of the OASIS scholarships have started working on their submission, which is due February 28, 2015. For more information and the application form, go to <http://oasionline.ca/research-resources/scholarships/>

Board Meeting Highlights - January 14-15, 2015 - Toronto, ON

Communications and Public Relations

Matthew Lombardi joined the meeting to review a workplan, schedule and media audit submitted by OASIS' public relations firm, Edelman. Frequent communications from OASIS will occur in the form of quarterly updates, bi-monthly newsletters, e-blasts and memos. It is critical that we do a good job now of defining what the new funding actually translates to so that at the end of the 3 years, our messages do not fall on deaf ears. A Queen's Park Relationship Building Day will take place this Spring.

Queen's Leadership Program

Preparations are underway for the next course, which will take place at end of March and will have a class capacity of 50. Look for the brochure over the listserve in the coming days.

Rotman School of Management

The Ministry will fund the cost for 12 OASIS members to participate in the next Rotman School of Management course. The course will assist agencies with succession planning and is intended for younger middle management who have longevity in the sector. Due to the short amount of time given to submit participants, the Board determined that individuals from the 12 agencies represented on the Board of Directors would be invited to attend. There will be another opportunity for others to attend the course in the Spring.

Every Canadian Counts(ECC)

The ECC Coalition has completed its application for status as a non-profit entity and is now in a position to raise funds of its own accord, and better positioned to recruit Board members as the coalition grows. Community information meetings continue around the province. As always, members are encouraged visit the ECC website and take the pledge to be a Supporter of Every Canadian Counts. Please spread the word to your staff, families, stakeholders etc. You could also add the link <http://everycanadiancounts.com/> to your agency website.

Housing Task Force (HTF)

A proposal opportunity is expected to be launched in February for submissions that explore new and innovative housing. The deadline for submissions is planned for March 27, 2015, with approvals following in April. For up to date information on the Housing Task Force, and to join the conversations, check out

<https://www.facebook.com/ontariodevelopmentalservicestaskforce> and for up to date information, visit <http://connectability.ca/en/>

OASIS Business Resource Committee(OBRC)

OBRC Chair, Darlene Ryan, provided an update to the Board on the work of the Committee for the past year and goals for 2015.

Accomplishments of the Committee for 2014

- Connected with back office purchasing organizations to provide sector with as many VOR's as possible to provide opportunity for cost saving.
- Sponsoring and engaging with Developmental Services Financial Group.
- Collecting sector information on an annual basis to develop aggregate indicators similar to those used by the Ministry that can be used by agencies to compare their indicators to the aggregate to improve their operations.

Goals of the Committee for 2015

- Working collaboratively with the Ministry to assist in pilot projects – possible project testing the resource allocation model on existing individualized budgets.
- Update the Policy Options Manual.
- Networking, sharing of information and best practises within the sector relating to finance and administration.

Welcome New OASIS Member

One new OASIS member was approved at the January Board meeting, Ongwanada in Kingston. This brings the total membership to 181 agencies.



Introducing OASIS Board Member, Trevor MacGregor

It was 1991 when I walked through the door of Community Living - South Huron for an Employment Counselor interview. I had no idea what the agency did and had no knowledge of the Developmental Services sector. I was greeted with open arms and it was this welcome that provided me with confidence for the work I was about to do, while at the same time introducing me to a whole new world.

That was 24 years ago and I am currently the Executive Director for Community Living Stratford and Area. I made this change 5 years ago, leaving my position of Supervisor of Human Resources with Community Living – South Huron. It was my passion for Human Resources that attracted

me to the work of OASIS. OASIS has provided me with resources, support and opportunities to grow my knowledge and build success within my agency. When I was approached to become a Board member, I was thrilled to have the opportunity to participate and continue the great work that OASIS does for the sector.

Outside of my fulfilling professional role, I enjoy spending time with my family and friends. Some form of sporting activity, whether participating or watching, is usually on the agenda. I also teach part time in the Lawrence Kinlin School of Business at Fanshawe College. Through this experience I have become quite interested in working with our local School Boards to build on the strengths of youth and influence the future through their perspectives.

I am always one to talk out issues and build friendships through face to face conversations. I hope to meet many of you at seminars, conferences and at Board meetings and look forward to sharing our talents in the effort to continue making changes in our sector.

OASIS 2015 Conference

The 2015 OASIS Conference Committee is pleased to invite you to attend the 18th Conference and Annual General Meeting, which will be held May 6th-8th, 2015. The conference will take place at the Sheraton Parkway North in beautiful Richmond Hill, one of the most multi-cultural communities in the Greater Toronto Area.

This year's conference is sponsored by the Faith & Culture Inclusion Network (FCIN), a coalition of organizations in the developmental sector representing service providers, self-advocates, and families of people with developmental disabilities. With member organizations throughout Ontario, FCIN supports choice and inclusion for people with developmental disabilities with regard to faith, culture, accessibility and service planning. FCIN is also committed to the promotion of progressive public policy and makes recommendations to government and provincial advisory groups.

To learn more about the conference, review the 2015 OASIS Conference Brochure <http://oasionline.ca/wp-content/uploads/RESPECT-program-WEB.pdf>

To register for the conference, please [click here](#)

