



BEHOLD I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW ...

# *better together*

A new vision  
for Christian education  
Spring 2017



Presented by



Edifide Christian Educators Association



Ontario Christian School Administrators Association



Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools



# Introduction: How did we get here?

In the fall of 2015, the organizations (Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools, Ontario Christian School Administrators Association and Edifide Christian Educators Association) got together to ask whether it was time to re-imagine the structures that had served the Christian schools in eastern Canada. The initial discussion was intense but positive. The histories of the organizations were recognized but so were the silos and areas of overlap. Educators, boards, and principals desire collaboration, shared responsibility for learning, development and implementation of innovative practices; they also value expertise. Christian education has grown to include many families from a diversity of church denominations and backgrounds. To strengthen Christian education, a new organization needs to be nimble, responsive, streamlined, and connected to a variety of the best available expertise—maximizing resources. We recognized the opportunity to create an organization that will lead (and serve) to empower, to build capacity and sustainability.

The three boards speak with one voice to all members with this recommendation: that you vote to approve the dissolution of the three current organizations, and that you join the new organization. This report seeks to set direction for the overall philosophy and focus of this new organization.



## Mission and Purpose

The new organization exists to lead, enhance, and support Christian schools.

We do this by cultivating leadership, providing learning opportunities, tools and resources, and promoting sustainability and advocacy.

## Why should we exist?

We will promote, strengthen and invigorate Christian education. We will be a big tent community of Christian educational organizations and partners. We will have thriving and flourishing school boards with directors who support professional leaders, educators, and staff, who will influence students into engaging in their own learning to become leaders and culture-makers, who will bring God's love and compassion, and who actively participate for the greater good of their communities. We will have institutional, leadership, and learning growth as well as collective voice for Christian education that serves the public good in eastern Canada.



# How will we behave?

We will behave with clarity, transparency, trustworthiness, and respect. We will seek professionalism for each stakeholder in Christian education while recognizing that each school serves its own community and that no "one size" fits all. We want to be a leadership organization that provides services that empower and build capacity and sustainability. Our voice in the province will be neighbourly and clear, free of judgment, believing in community and accountability. Our core values will include: integrity ... to be believable; humility ... to be collaborative; loyalty ... to be dependable; courage ... to be innovative; and hopeful ... to assume the best of people and each other.

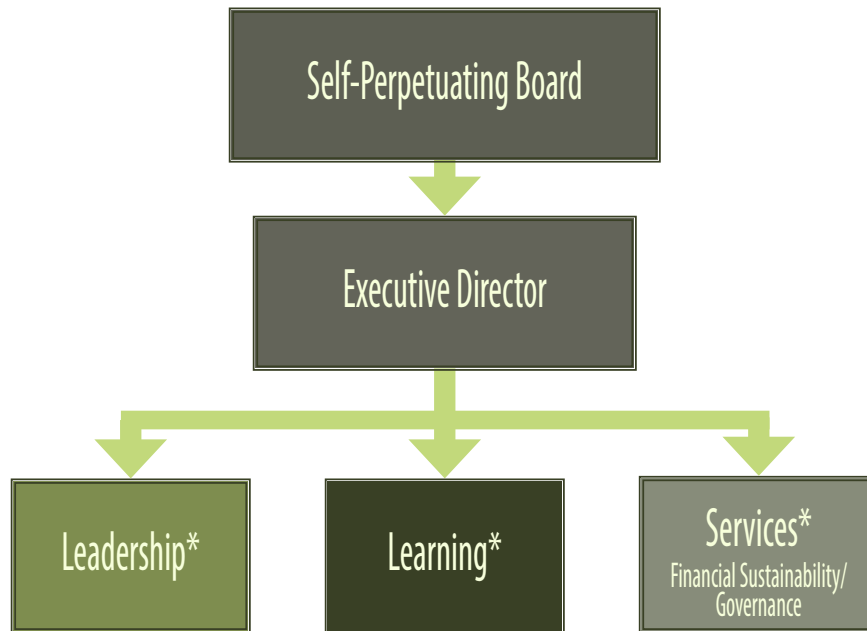


# What will we do?

There will be five areas of focus working in collaboration with one another and with partner organizations.



# Organizational Structure



Struggling school transition fund\*\*

\* Each of these areas will have revenue stream/fee-for-service components.

\*\* It is the Core Team's intent to solicit funds for a transition fund for schools who need help to afford changes needed in their schools with respect to learning/leadership/governance/sustainability. There will be an application process and accountability structure that will be put in place and administered by the Christian School Foundation. This fund is established to grow capacity and to provide assistance where needed.

## Who can participate in this new organization?

Everyone can participate in this new organization. Schools and individuals seeking to benefit from the new organization's programs and services will pay a minimal annual fee. They can then subscribe individually to a range of additional services and programs on a fee-for-service basis.

# Leaders

## Transitional Leadership Team

Ren Siebenga, Justin Cook, and Ray Hendriks have been identified as leaders in their areas of expertise. They have agreed to work into the interim (2017/18) and only for the first year of the new organization (2018/19). At that time, their work will be reviewed by the new Executive Director and permanent placements may be available.

**Executive Director - to be identified in 2017/18 school year to begin work in 2018.**



### LEADERSHIP

The leader of leadership will be focused on the development and investment of leaders, both potential and identified. The leader of leadership needs to keep pushing the envelope of what is possible within the walls of Christian education while at the same time offering practical support to schools who can't/won't push forward yet. This leader needs to provide "field trips" far and wide and close to home which intentionally cause unrest within the leaders' hearts and minds. A sense of urgency needs to be the normal climate in which the leader lives. Leadership conferences will be provided to focus on cultivating courage, competence, and character. The regional cohorts will continue to develop and grow as strong tools for leaders to build collegial relationships and a supportive network with others in the same role.

#### Ren Siebenga

Ren Siebenga, many years a high school principal in two locations, Toronto and Bowmanville, more recently Executive Director of OCSAA, is keenly interested in assisting leaders in leading. He sees Christian schools as the centers of the good education in the province when the leaders are open to growing in competence, character, and courage. His extra-curriculars include: birding, photography, golf and relating with grand kids. He and his wife Barb reside in Ancaster.

### LEARNING

How do we invite students into the depth and beauty of the Biblical narrative and God's way of knowing as loving? We recognize that the method of understanding this narrative is not only through learning content but primarily through experience. Educators design experiences for learners that are then woven into their personal narratives. Our school communities intentionally participate in what we profess to be "the true story of the whole world," and that compels us to also participate in creation care and culture making, not in little Christian enclaves, but in humble dialogue and courageous partnerships with a multitude of experts and organizations in our wider communities. These partnerships and dialogues can be woven into the experiences we design for and with our students. As we deepen our ability to design those experiences, we focus on three dimensions of learning for educators and students in our ongoing apprenticeship with Jesus Christ in what it means to be image-bearers: culture and character, mastery of knowledge and skills, and beautiful work.

#### Justin Cook

After teaching high school English in British Columbia and Ontario, Justin works for the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools as the Director of Learning, where he is excited to partner with schools in a vision of learning for flourishing communities. At home, Justin and his wife Rachel (and their three beautiful children!) love trying to live intentionally in their neighborhood: sharing and restoring a multi-unit house, practicing hospitality, walking to church with their children, feasting with friends.

### SERVICES

I have an intense belief that Christian education is a larger movement than any individual school. As an organization centered in Eastern Canada, we must function with a vision and desire for flourishing Christian schools throughout the area that God has entrusted to us—from Thunder Bay to Charlottetown and beyond. Our schools are linked together by a strong sense of community finding its expression in vision and purpose but also in history and a vision for the future.

Wherever there are Christian schools, we are committed to providing the leadership, support and services for those schools to thrive and flourish. I believe a new organization must continue to develop and provide services. Being responsible to schools means continuing to serve professionally and innovatively but also providing the services required to function confidently each day knowing that they are supported in all areas of need.

#### Ray Hendriks

In 1981, Ray began his career as a teacher in at Calvin Christian School, Drayton. He moved to Peterborough in 1985 to become the principal at Rhema CS. In 2008, he joined the OACS as the Director of Advancement and School Quality. In June 2017, he will assume the position of Executive Director. Ray and his two sons, Dan and Matt, live in Peterborough.

# How will the new organization be funded?

The new organization will be funded through base rate fees: schools will pay a school base rate and individuals (from schools that do not pay the base rate) will pay an individual base rate. In addition, fees will be charged for additional services and conferences.

The funding formula will encourage the organization to provide services that schools and individuals find to be of value. Services may also be “purchased” and will be revised on the basis of cost effectiveness. The effect of this change will be to bring the organization closer to the end user and to be more responsive to needs. This formula will more closely link fees to service utilization.

# What is the timeline on the fee changes?

The fees for the three organizations will remain the same for the 2017-2018 school year. In 2018-2019, the new base rate fee structure will be implemented.

Income (based on 60 schools participating)	
Base rate (\$5,000) <sup>1</sup>	\$ 300,000
Financial Services (\$3,500)	\$ 210,000
Fee-for-service/conferences	\$ 170,000
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 680,000</b>
EXPENSES	
Salaries	\$ 500,000
Administrative Expenses/Other	\$ 180,000
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 680,000</b>
<b>INCOME OVER EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ —</b>

<sup>1</sup> The base rate listed here is for schools. The base rate for individuals would be \$550.00.

**Note:** This is a high level budget and should in no way be interpreted as the final budget for the new organization.

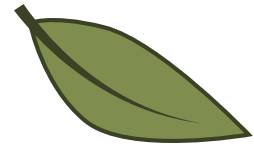
Finances

# governance!

## How will the new organization be governed?

This board will be constituted as a self-perpetuating board as provided in legislation. The board will be constituted with members who represent, and have expertise in, K-12 learning, leadership, governance, law, human resources, finances, higher education and government relations.

## How will we move from the present structures to a new organization?



### The need for a Transitional Board

The role of the Transitional Board is an important one. The work done by the Core Team needs to be continued through to completion as the new organization begins to function.

The Transitional Board will be the first Board of Directors of the new organization and will serve for a term of two years.

It will consist of nine members, three of whom will be appointed by each of the three current organizations. It is expected that at least some of the members of the Core Team will continue as members of the Transitional Board to ensure continuity of purpose and understanding.

The Transitional Board will be tasked with:

- Establishing appropriate by-laws and policies to govern the activities and affairs of the new corporation
- Putting together a profile and job description and selecting an Executive Director
- Selecting an appropriate corporate name, brand, and location
- Working closely with the three current organizations in the transfer of their responsibilities to the new corporation
- Reporting regularly on progress to the memberships of the three current organizations

Upon completion of these tasks during the transition period, a permanent Board will be formulated and selected in accordance with the new organization's by-laws. It is possible that some Transitional Board members may continue as part of the permanent Board.

## How will we succeed?

We will be successful when Christian schools across eastern Canada can report they have increased clarity of roles (board, leader, staff, students) and increased capacity to lead within those roles. We will be successful when we have done what we said we will do. We will be intentional about our leadership and services and set measurable targets or metrics. We will seek continuous innovation and improvement, and seek feedback from our stakeholders. We will establish strong partnerships with other people and organizations that share our work and serve our schools. We will be successful when we are recognized as a collective, public voice for Christian education. We will be successful when parents visit our schools and leave with the feeling that they can't afford NOT to enrol their children.

# What is important right now?

We will unite our efforts, our wills, and our desires to re-imagine our collective voice. Christian education is a shining light of the work God has done in each one of us, individually and institutionally, as we move forward together in faith.

On the more practical side, we need a positive vote in June, and then we need to identify and put in place our employees, set the direction for the next twelve months, and recruit an Executive Director to move the organization forward.

# Transition of school services

*What transitional arrangements will be put in place so that the services school communities now depend on will not be adversely affected?*

Our plan calls for the creation of a fourth entity—the new organization—to consolidate our three existing organizations (Edifide, OCSAA, and OACS) over a specified period of time. This new organization will be established by an agreed upon majority of the members of each organization at the June vote. The current organizations will continue to exist and to offer their programs and services for the 2017-2018 school year in order to provide time for an orderly transition to the new organization. An appropriate corporate name for the organization will also be selected during this time.

The desired goal would be that the transfer of all programs and services to the new organization would be completed by August 2018, and for the current organizations to cease to exist as soon as possible thereafter. It is recognized that the legalities of transferring a few services—e.g., banking services for schools—may take somewhat longer to complete.



We will unite our efforts, our wills, and our desires to re-imagine our collective voice.

# What must we do?

We must do what we say we are going to do. We will excel at uniting the visions of learning, leadership, governance, and sustainability, and see them as interconnected and essential for the well-being and flourishing of Christian schools. We must fulfill our mandate, increase the number of schools and individuals, and exceed all expectations.



# Messages from the board chairs of each organization

## Edifide Christian Educators Association - Maureen Jarvis



It is an exciting endeavour to work towards a unified vision of developing a dynamic and innovative organization that will take Christian education to new heights. Working together allows the development of strong leaders, effective learning, and pragmatic services that will help Christian schools to grow and flourish. Creating a united vision in education that meets the needs of educators, principals, and boards is essential for the future of Christian schools. Together we can develop a stronger voice and presence in eastern Canada and beyond, built on a Biblical foundation that will impact our communities. It is an honour to be a part of this amazing team that desires to serve God and develop a vigorous organization for the future education.

## Ontario Christian School Administrators Association - Ken VanMinnen

The opportunity we have as Christian organizations to impact our culture is immense! Through courageous leadership, authentic learning and vital services, we can collectively strengthen the provincial fabric of Christian schools. Our new organization creates the conditions needed for Christian schools to be vibrant forces within their communities. It is exciting to be on the verge of one organization that provides leadership opportunities which drive vision, dynamic professional growth which drives learning and interconnected services which drive organizational health. There is a strong Biblical call on our institutions to do the work God has laid out for us, and together we will be able to fulfill that call in a unified and ecumenical way. Exciting times ahead for Christian education in eastern Canada!



## Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools - Gabriella Hoogstra



This is an exciting time for Christian education! Bringing three leadership organizations together creates incredible potential for Christian schools throughout eastern Canada, and thus the Christian education movement, to thrive and flourish. Under one organization, we'll focus on developing and inspiring strong leaders to direct their schools, classrooms, and communities with courage and vision. We will deliver dynamic professional development that inspires educators to provide authentic and meaningful learning opportunities for students. And we will be a hub of resources and support for schools to develop and strengthen organizational health and capacity. Through this consolidation, our focus remains on developing our students to be well prepared for life—to pursue God's work, live for God's glory and reflect His love and grace.

# Employee Association: What will the future employment services for teachers, administrators and other staff look like?

One of the important features of our history in Ontario Christian education has been the development of a professional association (formerly the Ontario Christian School Teachers Association, now Edifide Christian Educators Association) which focused not only on professional learning but also on employment services. Did you know that no other Christian educational system in Ontario has a professional association that negotiates and advocates for its members in the workplace? By focusing on employment services and negotiating contracts as well as salary grids and benefits, Edifide has promoted a fair and just workplace. We believe that healthy workplaces need leadership that includes employee engagement and voice. If the June vote is positive, Edifide will reorganize into an inclusive employee organization that will represent teachers, educational assistants, administrative assistants, principals and any other employee of the Christian school. Our mandate, in partnership with other organizations, will be focused on professionalism and employment services, including the following:

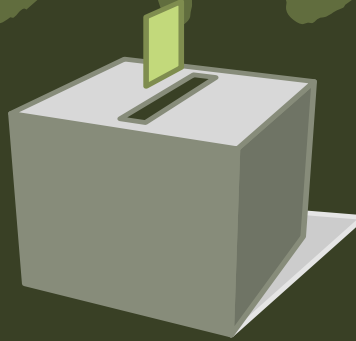
- Healthy workplaces
- Compensation reports
- Salary grids
- Health and benefits recommendations
- Up-to-date contracts
- Education on workplace policies
- Advocacy which will include restorative practices, conflict resolution, mediation and arbitration
- Focus on mental health
- Best practices in HR

It is the intention of the new employees' association to work respectfully, collaboratively, and in trust with both the new organization and its schools/organizations.



## When will the ratifying vote occur?

We have scheduled the ratifying vote to be concluded on June 9, 2017. All results will be revealed before the end of June.



## How will the votes be cast?

Edifide will conduct an online vote with links sent directly to each member.

OACS will conduct an online vote with links sent to each member school board.

OCSAA will conduct an online vote with links sent directly to each member.

## What is the question you will be asked to vote on?

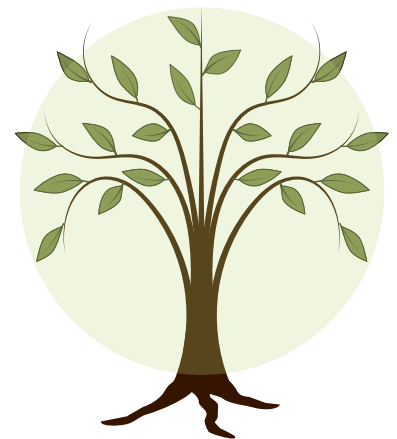
Members of all organizations will be asked to answer yes or no to this statement:

*"I/We vote for the creation of a new organization which will consolidate the three existing organizations (OCSAA, OACS, Edifide) to lead Ontario Christian education."*

## What if you have more questions?

Q & A videos will be produced to supplement this report and links will be sent directly to members.

The Core Team is committed to being available for phone calls, email, video conferences, and face to face meetings, when possible.



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