

President's Report as of June 14th, 2023

Land Acknowledgement



As an organization and settlers on this land known as Kanata and Kanadario, we are proud to acknowledge those who were on this land before us.

We live, teach and practice on land that has been inhabited by Indigenous peoples from the beginning. As settlers, we are grateful for the opportunity to reside here, and we thank all the generations of people who have taken care of this land for thousands of years. We acknowledge the traditional territory of the Anishinaabeg, Ojibway/Chippewa, Haudenosaunee, Neutral peoples and many other Indigenous peoples from across Turtle Island. Although this territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treatise, we acknowledge that we are also critical of the ways in which it has largely been breached by settlers and newcomers. We support the movement toward a renewed Indigenous sovereignty and deeply appreciate their historic connection to this place. We seek to learn more.

WELCOME TO OSSDF AGM on June 14th, 2023 - Annual OSSDF report

I want to begin by thanking you ALL for your volunteerism and passion to support OSSDF, and me personally, over the years, with your interest, involvement and/or attendance to Ontario Secondary School DANCEFEST. I have been so fortunate to have many people, on the board and off, who have been actively involved and supportive of DANCEFEST for many years, some since its inception in 2003.

As Board members, your commitment to our monthly meetings to share your ideas and assist in providing dance opportunities for our youth demonstrates your advocacy to the arts and its importance to education. OSSDF2023 was a successful return to LIVE DANCEFEST and that is 100% due to your dedication and the *“many hands that made for less work”* and more

opportunity for us to dance in our own way! In addition, your flexibility and generosity to share your time and expertise is greatly appreciated by everyone here.

Speaking as your president for the final time, I also thank you all sincerely and immensely for your interest to continue to promote dance opportunities for secondary students in Ontario. I look forward to continuing this important work together with you, as your Past-President, by providing mentorship and support by promoting advocacy for Dance in Education as it is so important to keep our dance programs, curricular and extra-curricular, vital in our schools.

THANK YOU OSSDF Board of Management for 2022/2023

President: Laurel Brown
Vice-President Operations: Katie Knowlton
Secretary/Treasurer: Cathy Bowman
Teachers' Council Convenor: Joanna Perlus
Communications Manager: Laura Barnes
Members-at-Large: Meghan Kidd, Workshop Coordinator
Deb Kapp, Advocacy Coordinator
Cathy Harris, Adjudicator and Windsor support
Melissa Chiandussi

Resignations/Changes:

1. Laura Barnes, resigned May 3 after volunteering for 3 years. Her contributions include the compilation and compression of 31 eduDANCEon! Resources for educators to use in their blended classrooms during COVID, and the building of a website, ossdancefest.ca.
2. Deb Kapp is moving to the Sub-Committee, Advocacy and Inclusion.
3. Melissa Chiandussi is resigning.

Successes in 2022-2023

1. The development of Sub-Committees to engage with our volunteers more effectively.
2. A proposal to CODE to share the finances for a joint project with OSSDF that includes creating a Dance Advocacy video/documentary was accepted by CODE.
- 3.* An article about OSSDF was published in the Provocations Journal, volume 2: *Holding Space and Bearing Witness through Drama and Dance*. This collection is a rich offering of drama and dance education to our community of teachers, artist-educators, arts advocates, and students.
- 4.* A detailed resource for our OSSDF Adjudicators and Scoring Coordinators was created with plans for an OSSDF Event Manual to be written.
5. This year, we sent out a survey after OSSDF2023. 11/16 teachers completed the survey and also attended a Follow-Up Meeting on Wednesday, May 31st to hear the suggestions and comments that were shared. This was a great success and the first time we had a strong representation after an annual event. Recommendation is to review the comments again prior to planning the 2024 event.
6. Katie Knowlton is very tech savvy - we were fortunate to have her expertise to communicate event information to teachers and social media during the event.
7. Personally, I am grateful and proud to have been a member of this team of board members. Thank you to our new and experienced members whose comradery and

commitment to assist in the planning for the return to a LIVE DANCEFEST so enjoyable. A new venue, lower funds and cancellations were challenging; however, your support of decisions made were understood and greatly appreciated. Thank you too to those people who stepped up to assist our board members (you know who you are) and now, I'm very pleased, will be taking a larger role as we move forward.

Disappointments in 2022-2013

1. UWBlueprint.org was problematic this year. Information that we had in the past, was not present on the adjudication platform, ie., Awards, Notes, numbering of dance entries as well as some filters. Furthermore, due to a lack of communication from Blueprint to update us that our website host was now going to have a further cost attached, we lost all the data from our prior events. They attempted to replace/fix our platform; however, although we thought it was corrected, we discovered that it was not usable for our event and last minute, the adjudicators had to use the old method of paper and pen for scores and award considerations.
2. We were unable to update the website to our expectations and social media was lacking. Communication was not always as we hoped. DANCEBLASTS were lost.
3. OSSDF2023 experienced a financial loss due to withdrawals of schools, participants, dance entries and accommodations.
4. We were unsuccessful with a regional arts grant application.
5. Lack of meeting time commitments accounted for an unstable budget. Next year, due dates must be earlier to plan a smoother event with more opportunity to review music, Accommodations, meal assignments, event schedule, workshop volunteers, and other details with time to actually have an event meeting two days prior with all things accounted for.

OSSDF BOARD MEETINGS

Volunteer members met on ZOOM the last Wednesday of each month to respond to the needs presented by dance educators at monthly Teachers Council Meetings. TC Convenor, Joanna Perlus, brought the concerns of this grassroots group to the Board to learn their needs. The members planned for the provision of resources, workshops or lectures to support the Ontario educators. The other focus was to organize and plan the annual DANCEFEST2023.

Moving forward, I am suggesting that **Board meetings for 2023-2024** have executive members meeting once a month, prior to the monthly meetings with all Board members. This will shorten the Board meetings for all members. Katie and the executive will determine dates, times and the focus of meetings at a future date this summer.

TEACHERS COUNCIL MEETINGS

The monthly Teachers' Council Meeting on ZOOM is an OSSDF initiative, **eduDANCEon!** Networking & Professional Development was created to support our provincial dance educators. It is a wonderful opportunity to meet other teachers in a non-threatening environment. Furthermore, this connection removes that "island" feeling that many feel as the only dance teacher in their school. Also, members have access to our 31 **eduDANCEon!** Virtual Dance workshops to use in their classrooms or access the lesson plans that are included.

Observation: Numbers have dwindled. We had greater attendance during Covid when the Board met every two weeks to respond to concerns. The Teachers' Council is an important grassroots group; however, it may be useful to send out a survey to inquire their feedback regarding what topics they would like OSSDF to focus on that will be a support for 2023-24. Furthermore, maybe fewer meetings are needed. The first meeting in September will be when teachers can share their input or email their feedback to Joanna Perlus at ossdfteachers@gmail.com

Teacher Council meeting dates, times and topics of interest will be decided by TC convenor, Joanna Perlus, and the attending educators in September and a schedule created. Feedback will be shared for the Board to respond to. Joanna provides support, safe discussion and/or education to attending teachers. This partners well with her position as Dance Liaison on the Council of Ontario Drama and Dance Educators - CODE. She welcomes everyone with her warmth, enthusiasm and energy to this friendly gathering.

Website- we need help with this. We do not have any financial means to hire someone. We will do our best to chip away at this task until we have someone who is interested in providing us with support.

Relationships and Dance Connections:

Matthew Sheahan, President of CODE, The Council of Ontario Drama and Dance Educators
 Amy Hampton, Dance Ontario
 Universities and Colleges - York U., Ryerson U., Brock U., Sheridan College, George Brown College, Centennial College, St. Lawrence, Randolph Arts Academy and St. Clair College - contact re: sharing Open House/Program information for our secondary dancers.

REVIEW OF OSSDF2023

OSSDF2023 had **208 dance entries** performed by **373 participants** from **16 Registered schools** plus **1 independent** from KCI and **1 Home school** participant:

Secondary School Legend	City	Dance Teacher/Coach
Cameron Heights Collegiate Institute	Kitchener	Katie Knowlton
École secondaire catholique Pain Court	Windsor	Julia Bellemore
Chatham Kent Secondary School	Chatham	Melanie Randall, Carly Erina
Forest Heights Collegiate Institute	Kitchener	Nikkie Price
North Star High School	Amherstburg	Allison Campbell
Holy Names Catholic High School	Windsor	Jasmine Lam, Kathy Oglan, Kristine Simard
École secondaire catholique EJ Lajeunesse	Windsor	Jocelyne Cranny
Laurel Heights Secondary School	Waterloo	Meghan Kidd, Megan Matsubayashi
Newtonbrook Secondary School	North York	Joanna Perlus
Runnymede Collegiate Institute	York	Christina Kemp
SATEC @ WA Porter Collegiate Institute	Toronto	Tara Duffy
St. Anne Catholic High School	Belle River	Kelly Amyot
St. Joseph's Catholic High School	Windsor	Melissa Chiandussi

St. Thomas of Villanova Secondary School	LaSalle	Amy-Lynn D'Alimonte
Walkerville Collegiate Institute	Windsor	Roger Wellington
Waterloo Oxford District Secondary School	Baden	Stephanie Steffler

Withdrawn schools: (70 participants plus dance entries = loss of \$7,000+)

Cardinal Carter Catholic Secondary School	Leamington	Maggy Sonoski
Chatham Kent Secondary School	Chatham	Melanie Randall
Grand River Collegiate Institute	Kitchener	Emma King
West Ferris Collegiate Institute	North Bay	Jocelyn Bell-Summersby
F.J. Brennan	Windsor	Linda Garrisi

Schools to re/approach for OSSDF2024:

Bluevale CI, Cardinal Carter, Central Algoma, Cobourg Collegiate, Grand River CI, Monseigneur Bruyere, Northern Collegiate, Resurrection, Riverside, Tecumseh Vista, Philip Pocock Secondary, Catholic Central, and others who we turned away earlier when we had a full roster.

OVERVIEW of 2022/2023

Adjudicators - Edward Duranyi was replaced by Shelley Kenney one week prior to the event. Shelley was great and will return as a lead for the 3 adjudicators next year (2 dance artists and an educator) who will be: Shelley Kenney, Shawn Byfield and Deb Kapp. Feedback for teachers and students will be sent out later this week.

Music - This is still an issue. Some schools are not removing inappropriate references in the content. Please review carefully all music for dance entries before submission.

Workshops - Personally, I loved the variety of workshops organized by Meghan and Katie. Positive comments were heard from students who felt represented by the diversity that was offered. I was very pleased with the Indigenous workshop sponsored by Cathy Bowman and I and that Robyn Michaud is interested in more involvement with OSSDF, maybe with the Advocacy and Inclusion Sub-Committee. I'm looking forward to more conversation with her.

I did not feel it appropriate to ask Shelley Kenney to cover both the adjudications and Edward Duranyi's workshop with only one week's notice. Therefore, I was very pleased to receive a positive response from Shawn Byfield to cover his Auditions Workshop which was highly received. Also, the Inter/Adv Contemporary workshop needed to be covered at very short notice due to a family emergency. Laura Dufour was awesome and covered the workshop with 5 hours notice. The comments from the dancers were very positive. That said, I recommend asking Jeff Wong again to attend next year.

Responses from workshops offered at OSSDF2023 will be reviewed before making considerations for OSSDF2024. That said, we wish to continue to offer the variety and diversity of workshops and workshop leaders.

Awards and OSSDF2023 certificates - have all been mailed out and/or delivered. Awards for 2024 will need to be reassessed by the board.

Note: We have made it a practice to 'share the wealth' with awards. Every school has always gone home with an award. This year, we missed giving a Special Award to Forest Heights C.I. and Pain Court. That needs to be rectified for the future.

Today, we discovered that we missed sending out one Special Award to a St. Anne student. I will sent it out asap with apologies.

Retail - Civilian was a great supplier. It was an easy process and limited effort for the Board but the opportunity to purchase was staggered before and after the event which was confusing for some people, including me. OSSDF also didn't make as much money as we hoped but maybe that's the trade off. We will investigate with the people at Civilian regarding other retail items and to see if there are other means of selling OSSDF merchandise.

Venue - this was our first time hosting at University of Waterloo. We will return next year. However, issues encountered this year will be reviewed at follow-up meetings with Janelle Rainville, Theatre Manager and Susanne Keppler, Conference Manager.

Melissa Chiandussi informed today that UW is offering refund for Thursday night accommodations but not Friday night.

The venue for OSSDF 2026 - 2027 may be Laurier University. Closer dorm accommodations and 8 large workshops areas (with mirrors) are appealing.

Final thoughts...

Speaking as your president for the last time, I thank you all sincerely and immensely for your dedication to promote dance opportunities to secondary students in Ontario. I look forward to continuing this important work as your Past-President, by providing mentorship and support to the new Board. Also, I will continue promoting advocacy for Dance in Education as it is so important to keep our dance programs, curricular and extra-curricular, vital in our schools. Lastly, I hope to pursue opportunities for Sponsorships and Grants and a new website.

WELCOME OSSDF Board of Management for 2023/2024

President:	Katie Knowlton
Vice-President:	Meghan Kidd
Secretary/Treasurer:	Cathy Bowman
Past-President:	Laurel Brown
Teachers' Council Convenor:	Joanna Perlus
Members-at-Large:	Cathy Harris Nikkie Price Christina Kemp Brienne Mauro Maddison Evy

Website:

Social Media:

Sub-Committee Chairs:	Advocacy and Inclusion - Laurel Brown & Deb Kapp Education and Resources - Cathy Harris & Maddy Evy & Brienne Funding, Grants and Sponsorship, Website - Laurel Brown
-----------------------	---

My quote of the day...

Dance Educators change the world. They shape minds. They shape stories. They shape bodies. They shape communities. They shape lives.

Thank you for your commitment as a volunteer to shape Ontario Secondary School DANCEFEST as it moves forward to create and shape its own story.

Respectfully,

Laurel

Laurel Brown (she/her)

President