



COUNCIL OF ONTARIO
DIRECTORS OF EDUCATION

CONSEIL ONTARIEN DES
DIRECTIONS DE L'ÉDUCATION

2025/26 YEAR IN REVIEW

**Leadership, Collaboration and a Shared
Commitment to Student Achievement**

A YEAR OF GROWTH

Advocate. Lead. Empower.

Supporting Ontario's education system

through leadership, evidence-informed advice and collaboration

As Ontario's education sector begins a new school year, it is an opportunity to look back and reflect on a year of significant growth, influence and transformation for the Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE).

Throughout 2025–2026, CODE remained focused on our mission to lead, influence and build coherence in Ontario's publicly funded education system. Working with Directors of Education, CEOs, senior leaders, the Ministry of Education and provincial partners, we brought practical, system-informed perspectives to policy discussions, strengthened leadership capacity and created opportunities to share knowledge and promising practices across Ontario.

Advancing Evidence-Informed Policy and Implementation

16

FORMAL SUBMISSIONS, POSITION PAPERS
AND CONSULTATION RESPONSES.

60+

DIRECTORS OF EDUCATION AND
SENIOR LEADERS ENGAGED IN POLICY
DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION
DISCUSSIONS.

Advocacy and government relations remained central to our work throughout the year. CODE provided more than 16 formal submissions, position papers and consultation responses to the Government of Ontario and provincial organizations on issues affecting students, school boards and the broader education system.

More than 60 Directors of Education and senior leaders participated in Ministry advisory tables, working groups and consultations, contributing practical perspectives to policy development and implementation. CODE also maintained regular dialogue with Ministry leadership and provincial partners, including the Deputy Minister of education and Ministry Assistant Deputy Ministers and senior officials.

Bill 101:

A Significant New Responsibility

The introduction and implementation of the *Putting Student Achievement First Act, 2026* represented one of the most significant changes to Ontario's education system in many years.

ANALYSIS

GUIDANCE

PARTICIPATION

CODE responded by providing timely analysis and information to members, coordinating legal and governance guidance, participating in provincial information sessions and engaging directly with Ministry officials and education partners.

Following amendments to the School Boards Collective Bargaining Act, 2014, we also began our transition to our new role as the collective bargaining agency for English-language district school boards. This included transitioning labour-relations staff, establishing bargaining and support teams, the Interim CODE Collective Bargaining Committee and our presence at nine central bargaining tables.

This new responsibility represents an important evolution for CODE and reflects the confidence placed in our members and leadership to contribute to the future of labour relations in Ontario's publicly funded education system.

Strengthening Leadership and Dialogue Across Ontario

150

EDUCATION LEADERS FROM ACROSS ONTARIO ATTENDED THE 2026 CEO/CFO LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE.

Professional learning, leadership development and meaningful dialogue remained cornerstones of CODE's work throughout the year.

The 2026 CEO/CFO Leadership Conference brought together more than 150 education leaders from across Ontario to strengthen professional relationships, share knowledge and explore emerging priorities affecting Ontario's publicly funded education system.

Our **2026 Summer Meeting**, held under the theme ***Leading Forward: Leadership, Innovation and Partnership***, provided another important opportunity for education leaders to engage directly with provincial decision-makers. We welcomed Ontario Minister of Education Paul Calandra,

2026 Summer Meeting

EDUCATION LEADERS GATHERED TO EXPLORE PRIORITIES, STRENGTHEN RELATIONSHIPS AND NAVIGATE CHANGE TOGETHER.

Deputy Minister Denise Cole and senior Ministry officials for dialogue on the priorities and challenges facing Ontario's education system.

The Summer Meeting included opportunities for CEOs to engage in strategic discussions on issues including governance, special education and the evolving role of Directors of Education/CEOs under Bill 101. These conversations reinforced the value of direct, constructive dialogue among education leaders as Ontario moves through a period of significant change.

Professional Learning and Leadership Development

100

LEADERS ENGAGED SESSIONS FOCUSED ON THE ONTARIO HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION'S *DREAMS DELAYED* REPORT

60+

LEADERS PARTICIPATED IN AI LEADERSHIP WEBINARS

CODE also delivered a province-wide learning series focused on the Ontario Human Rights Commission's *Dreams Delayed* report. More than 100 leaders participated in sessions designed to deepen understanding of human rights, equity and inclusive practices that support student success.

As part of this learning, we welcomed Patricia DeGuire, Chief Commissioner of the Ontario Human Rights Commission, for a session on *The Right to Read* and *Dreams Delayed: Sustaining the Momentum*. The session provided an important opportunity for education leaders to reflect on their responsibilities and consider how the findings of these reports can inform continued progress across Ontario's publicly funded education system.

We also expanded learning opportunities focused on artificial intelligence, leadership and governance. More than 60 leaders participated in AI leadership webinars, supported by AI Briefs and individualized consultation opportunities led by Dr. Tom D'Amico. We also continued our research partnership with Ontario Tech University, exploring leadership for an AI-enabled future.

Sharing Knowledge and Promising Practices

SUCCESS STORIES

LEADERSHIP CONVERSATIONS

PROFILES OF DIRECTORS OF EDUCATION AND CEOS

This past year, we continued to create opportunities for education leaders to learn from one another and showcase the innovative work taking place across Ontario.

Our Leadership Conversations series produced **six** practical resources on topics including family engagement, effective senior teams, multi-year strategic planning, strategic leadership, artificial intelligence in education and strategic risk management.

We continued publishing Board Stories, highlighting innovative practices from school boards across Ontario. These stories help connect leaders, celebrate local innovation and contribute to a culture of learning and continuous improvement.

We also began profiling our Directors of Education and CEOs, using their stories and expertise to strengthen public understanding of what these leaders do within Ontario's publicly funded education system.

Building Stronger Partnerships

CODE strengthened relationships with more than **20 provincial organizations and education partners**, creating opportunities for our board CEOs to collaborate on leadership, governance, student achievement, well-being and emerging issues.

Our partnerships and engagement included work with the Ministry of Education, Ontario Human Rights Commission, Ontario College of

Teachers, Ontario Tech University, COSBO, OPSBA, OCSTA, School Mental Health Ontario, OPHEA and others across the sector.

These relationships continue to strengthen our ability to add value to provincial conversations and use the experience and expertise of our members to address issues affecting students, staff and communities.



A man with grey hair and glasses, wearing a blue and white plaid blazer over a light blue button-down shirt, is smiling and talking to two people. The two people, a woman with dark hair on the left and a man with dark curly hair on the right, are seen from the back/side. They are outdoors with green trees in the background. A dark blue semi-transparent banner covers the bottom half of the image, containing the text.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2026-2027

The 2025–2026 school year was marked by significant change, new responsibilities and important opportunities for collaboration.

As CODE looks ahead, our priorities remain clear:

Support the effective implementation of Bill 101

Share promising practices from across the sector

Strengthen leadership learning and professional development

Maintain constructive relationships with government and education sector partners

Support Directors of Education and CEOs through research and policy engagement

Above all, our work remains grounded in our shared commitment to student achievement and the success of every student across Ontario.

By working together, learning from one another and maintaining strong relationships across the education sector, CODE will continue to help build a strong, stable and forward-looking publicly funded education system.

We thank our members, Board of Directors, staff, provincial partners and the many Directors of Education/CEOs and senior leaders who contributed their expertise, time and leadership throughout the year. Your collective commitment continues to strengthen CODE and the value it provides to Ontario's education system.



COUNCIL OF ONTARIO CONSEIL ONTARIEN DES
DIRECTORS OF EDUCATION DIRECTIONS DE L'ÉDUCATION