

For immediate release

Renfrew elementary teacher receives OTIP award for teaching excellence

TORONTO, October 20, 2020 — Heather Lett, the recipient of the OTIP Teaching Award in the Elementary Teacher category, brings student-led inquiry, freedom to voice ideas, and respect for others to her Grade 3 classroom at Eganville & District Public School.

An example of this is Heather's contributions to the First Nation Métis Math Voices research project with Dr Ruth Beatty at Lakehead University. The project involves partnering with the community to co-design and co-teach units of math instruction based on Algonquin artistry. This has resulted in relationship and trust building with the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan, whose students attend Eganville. As well, the project has assisted in rejuvenating the Algonquin culture and language.

Heather has also co-developed comprehensive social studies units that focus on the history and continuing contributions of Indigenous peoples. She has been a leader in her school on Conscious Discipline, training in youth mental health to recognize the signs of deteriorating mental health as well as ways to improve or sustain mental wellness in children.

As stated in a letter of support, "Heather has a clear sense of purpose: to ensure that all the people in our school family (students, families and staff) have a safe and inclusive environment to learn and grow in and to inspire and empower those around her to achieve their potential."

More information and a video honouring Heather are posted on the Teaching Awards website: teachingawards.ca.

Because of the pandemic, the winners were not presented their awards. OTIP and OTF hope to honour her in the spring.

The Ontario Teachers Insurance Plan (OTIP) and the Ontario Teachers' Federation co-sponsor the OTIP Teaching Awards for excellence in teaching in the publicly funded school system. Three awards are presented: secondary school teacher, elementary school teacher and beginning teacher.

OTF is the advocate for the teaching profession in Ontario and for its 160,000 teachers. OTF members are full-time, part-time and occasional teachers in all publicly funded schools in the province – elementary, secondary, public, Catholic and francophone.

About OTIP: Creating Insured Members for Life. At OTIP (www.otip.com), we not only understand the education system, we believe in it. OTIP has been committed to providing quality insurance benefits and advice for the best value since 1977. Across all lines of insurance, OTIP provides coverage to over 160,000 education employees in the province. Owned by Ontario's four education affiliates (AEFO, ETFO, OECTA and OSSTF) and directed by a Board of Trustees, OTIP was built on the belief that educators would be better served by a not-for-profit insurance advocate that was part of the education community. This remains our philosophy today.

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