



Day 1: Saturday, November 5th

REGISTRATION OPENS

8:00 a.m.

CONFERENCE KICK-OFF

KEYNOTE: MINISTER OF EDUCATION, LAUREL BROTEN

8:45 a.m.–9:30 a.m.

Welcoming remarks, brief introductions, and the Minister of Education's inaugural speech

KEYNOTE: PASI SAHLBERG

9:30 a.m.–10:30 a.m.

The Finnish line: Testing less, learning more and scoring higher. What can Finland teach us?

While we argue about standardized testing and full-day Kindergarten, other jurisdictions have overhauled their education systems from the ground up - including new definitions of success and broader goals for education in the 21st century. Pasi Sahlberg, who has worked as teacher, teacher-educator, policy advisor and director in Finland and served the World Bank and the European Commission as an education specialist, will discuss Finland's educational journey with Annie Kidder. Sahlberg is the current Director General of CIMO (Centre for International Mobility and Cooperation) in Helsinki, Finland.

BREAK

10:30 a.m.–10:45 a.m.

MORNING WORKSHOPS

10:45 a.m.–12:15 p.m.

1. Schools of choice: The end of public education or the path to a better way?

Schools based on gender, race or special interest are a hot topic of debate. Once the rhetoric is put aside, is there convincing research behind either side's arguments? What evidence is there that specialty schools are better for students? What evidence is there that they create greater inequities among students or increase social divides?

- Jim Gibbons, Senior Education Advisor, Alberta School Board Association
- Rick Salutin, Columnist, teacher

2. Transitions: A challenging time for parents and children

Change is a necessary and sometimes difficult part of growing up. This workshop will focus on ways to ease the transitions from early years to Kindergarten, elementary school to high school and high school to post-secondary life.

- Dr. Sheila Bennett, Professor and former Chair, Department of Teacher Education, Brock University
- Dr. Bruce Ferguson, Director, Community Health Systems Resource Group, The Hospital for Sick Children
- Joanne MacEwan, Chair, Ottawa Catholic School Parents' Association; Chair, Ottawa Catholic School Board PIC
- Professor Janette Pelletier, Director, Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto

3. Healthy fundraisers: An oxymoron?

This session will provide an explanation of the new healthy school guidelines, ideas on how to put them into practice and a chance to taste-test old-style treats and healthy alternatives.

- Kimberly McColl, Nutrition Promotion Consultant with Healthy Living, Chronic Disease Prevention, Toronto Public Health

4. School council workshop: A how-to session for council members

This session will offer practical tips on how to reach out to your community, how to run a productive meeting, how to work with school administration and how to tackle other common issues.

- Jacqui Strachan, Community Outreach Coordinator, People for Education

5. Face off on education: Ecker, Kennedy and Polanyi weigh in

There's a new minority government in Queen's Park facing the same old issues in education plus a handful of new ones. What should they do? What can they do? What will they do? Two former Education Ministers and a policy guru face-off with an award winning journalist to debate the future of education in Ontario.

- Janet Ecker, Former Minister of Education
- Gerard Kennedy, Former Minister of Education
- Michael Polanyi, Researcher, Ontario NDP Caucus
- Jennifer Lewington, Education journalist

LUNCH

12:15 p.m.–1:15 p.m.

Mix and mingle with participants and enjoy a complimentary lunch.

PLENARY PANEL: WHAT MAKES A GREAT TEACHER?

1:15 p.m.–2:15 p.m.

Hosted by Cheryl Jackson (TVOParents) and livestreamed on the TVOParents website (<http://tvoparents.tv.org>)

Is education simply the delivery of information? If it is, then won't the teacher's role in the classroom diminish as the role of technology increases? Or is going to school about more than learning the facts? Does it include things like learning to make friends, trying new things, thinking on one's own, being a team player, navigating an argument, asking good questions, respecting others and being a better citizen? If teaching is about more than information delivery, how should we define this most important job? And how should we train our teachers and support them?

- Dr. Ben Levin, Professor, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto
- Lucy Nathan, Teacher, Toronto District School Board
- Dr. Dennis Shirley, Professor, Lynch School of Education, Boston College
- Tim Workman, Interim Director, Advanced Learning and Technology, University of New Brunswick

BREAK

2:15 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS

2:30 p.m.–4:00 p.m.

1. Public school. Private money. The fundraising dilemma.

What role does fundraising play in public schools? Is it an educational enhancement? A necessary evil? An unacceptable inequity? If fundraising is banned, what would we lose and what would we gain?

- Lesley Johnston, Researcher and Policy Analyst, Social Planning Toronto
- Catherine Parsonage, Executive Director & CEO of the Toronto Foundation for Student Success (TFSS)

2. Parent Involvement Committees: From mandate to action plan.

A professional facilitator will work with participants to translate the PIC mandate into "action items" that PIC members can bring back to their committees.

- Nicole Swerhun, Professional facilitator
- representative from the Ministry of Education Parent Engagement Office, TBA

3. Learn how to create a free e-newsletter

School councils, teachers and community groups have so much important information to share with their communities. This workshop is designed to show you how to get your message out for free. This is a hands-on session – participants will learn how to create a beautiful, free e-newsletter. Stay in touch with your school community by email!

This session is geared to "non-techies" – if you know how to send email, we can show you how to use this free e-news tool.

You'll need to bring a laptop to this session. If you don't have a laptop and can't borrow one, please email Gay Stephenson (gay@peopleforeducation.ca).

- Gay Stephenson, Online Communications Manager, People for Education

4. What do school trustees do and why do we need them?

School board trustees – including a student trustee – will be on hand to describe their work and to hear from participants. What would you like your trustee to focus on?

- Catherine Fife, President, Ontario Public School Board Association
- Bernard Murray, Trustee, Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board
- Jenny Williams, President, Ontario Student Trustees' Association

5. Special education: Finding your way

Special Education: When the professional becomes the personal - Imagine what you could learn from a special needs professional who truly understood what it was to be the parent of a special needs child. Now imagine how much more you could learn from two such women. Now you can stop imagining and find out at this very unusual session. Jyoti and Robyn will share their experiences as teachers and moms on how they navigated their way through the school system to advocate effectively for their special needs children.

- Jyoti Sanwalka, Centrally Assigned, Special Education Coordinator, Toronto District School Board
- Robyn Young, Special Education Consultant

KEYNOTE: ANNIE KIDDER

4:00 p.m.–4:45 p.m.

Putting it all in perspective – Where do we go from here?

WINE AND CHEESE

4:45 p.m.–5:45 p.m.

A lovely end to a big day! Chat with participants and speakers over cheese and your choice of beverages.

Day 2: Sunday, November 6th

REGISTRATION OPENS

9:30 a.m.

UNCONFERENCE

10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

You're in charge!

Day 2 is an interactive session facilitated by TVOParents. We'll ask, "If you were running the education system, how would you define success and what would you use to measure?" In the morning, we'll discuss, debate and dream a little. After lunch, we'll work together to shape the morning's work into a new definition of a successful student, teacher and school.

Join the discussion, share your ideas and make a difference!

**[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER NOW
FOR THE CONFERENCE!](#)**

You can also click on the links below to find important information related to the conference:

- [directions](#) on how to get to York University by car or public transit on our website

- a [map of York University's Keele campus](#)

- details about [discounted hotel accommodations](#) (in order to receive the conference rate, you must make your reservation with the [Hilton Garden Inn Toronto/Vaughan](#) by October 17th)