



The STLHE Board of Directors: From Regional To Portfolio Representation

STLHE was born from representatives concentrated in Ontario. To encourage other regions in Canada to join, regional representation was reflected in determining the composition of the Steering Committee and later enshrined in Board seats when STLHE was incorporated.

The underlying principle to move away from regional to Portfolio representation is based on what Board members actually do. The Board is atypical compared to other academic Boards because it is a working Board that assumes responsibility for most of the STLHE's operations. In fact, Board members primarily dedicate themselves to activities associated with a portfolio. These portfolios have historically included Publications, Awards, Memberships and Conferences in addition to the roles of the President, Secretary and Treasurer.

As the Society grew, so did the Portfolios. Today these include Partnerships, SoTL, Communication and Bilingual Advocacy, as well as representatives of STLHE's two constituencies – the Educational Developers Caucus and the Council of 3M National Teaching Fellows. More recently, representatives for Students and Member-at-Large were added.

The size of the Board has resulted in a number of challenges. Monthly online meetings are very difficult to coordinate and carry out. Cohesiveness is compromised, as it is demanding to get to know Board members and their work. There is also the challenge to align the talents and motivations of a regionally elected member with the expertise required for a given portfolio. Equally important, given the many administrative aspects of portfolio work that keeps Board members extremely busy, the existing structure is not conducive to attend to bigger policy, and strategic issues.

The new structure that is being proposed reflects portfolio-based appointments and a relatively smaller Board. STLHE will continue to cherish regionalism by holding its annual conferences in all parts of Canada. We will also regularly sponsor and co-host regional events. Several of our Standing Committees are also sensitive to regional representation.

The new structure also reflects three other salient points worth noting. First, the new structure aims to strengthen existing operations. By increasing administrative capacity (we have hired a part-time Administrative Assistant for a one-year trial period) memberships, conferences, and communications related work will no longer require portfolio Chairs but will be undertaken by our administrative support staff. We have developed an Operations and Procedures manual to ensure quality in the processes implemented. This will also allow for a smaller and more cohesive Board.

Second, by electing a Vice-President we stand to increase our strategic capacity and presence at external events. The VP will manage and coordinate operations that were sometimes running in a parallel rather than an integrated manner. The VP can also share the increasing demands for advocacy that fall to the President. Finally, the new structure preserves representation from our

constituencies (The EDC and The 3M Council) and continues to give voice to students, colleges and bilingual advocacy.

For all of the reasons mentioned above, we have unanimously voted to move to portfolio representation (see the existing and new structures in Appendix A). We are asking you to join us at our **Annual General Meeting, Thursday, June 21, Centre Mont-Royal in Montreal**, and vote in favour of this new direction. We encourage you to send us your ideas, questions and feedback before this meeting.

Should the membership approve the new structure, and assuming Industry Canada is in agreement, we are anticipating a multi-year time line to implement these changes. More specifically, the Board has recommended that the Awards and Publication Portfolios that require ongoing work continue until the terms of the Chairs expire. If however, the membership would like these portfolios to be advertized for elections, then we will proceed accordingly.

Finally, existing Board members who stand to be displaced with the new structure will continue in their existing roles to serve out their terms on the Board or step down if they so wish. We have accordingly planned for a transition that will honour the wishes of existing Board members and to ensure that the work of the Society is not disrupted.

We look forward to your comments!

Sincerely,

STLHE Board of Directors

APPENDIX A

Note—The representatives currently take on the following portfolios: Publications, SoTL, Awards, Partnerships, Conferences, Memberships, and Communications. Some are without portfolios.

Existing Board Positions

President
Treasurer
Secretary
Chair, Council of 3MNTF
Chair, EDC
Chair, Bilingual Advocacy
Student Member-at-large
Regular Member-at-large
Representative—Anglophone Quebec
Representative—Saskatchewan/Manitoba
Representative—Ontario Northeast
Representative—Nova Scotia
Representative—NL/NB/PEI
Representative—Ontario Central
Representative—Ontario Southeast
Representative—British Columbia
Representative—Northwest Territories
Administrator

New Board Positions

President
Vice-President
Treasurer
Secretary
Chair, Council of 3MNTF
Chair, EDC
Chair, Bilingual Advocacy
Chair, Student Advocacy
Chair, College Advocacy
Chair, Publications
Chair, Teaching & Learning Canada
Chair, Awards
Chair, Partnerships
Administrator (& Assistant)