

STAO

ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 2021

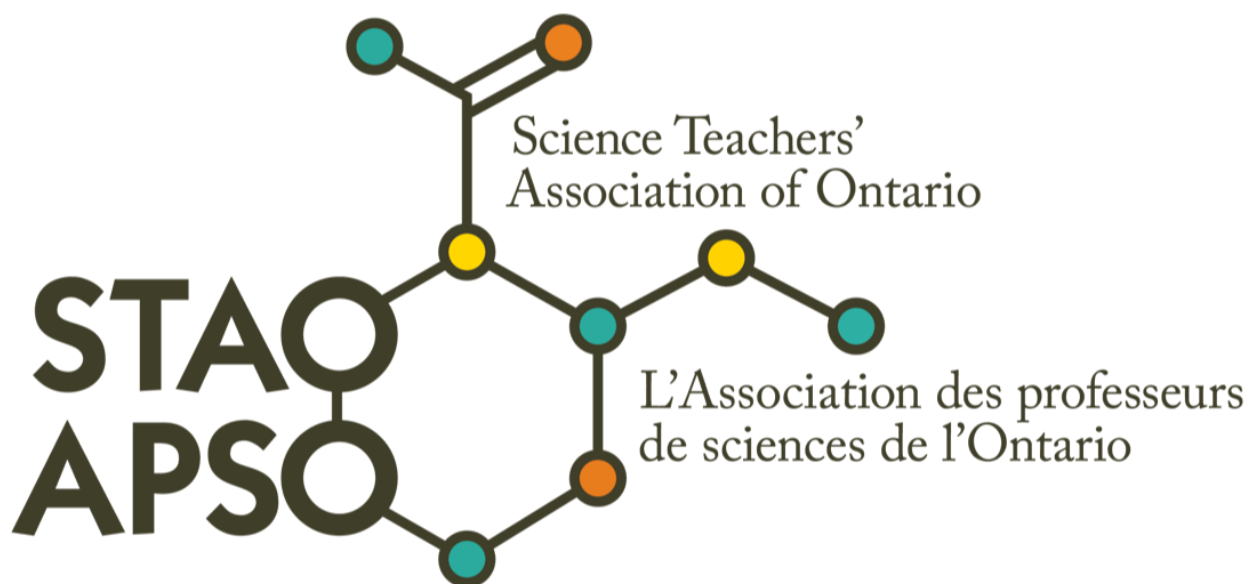


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WORDS FROM...

OUR PRESIDENT

Dear STAO Volunteers and Members,

2021 was another demanding year for us all but, in true STAO fashion, we rose to the challenge. Tireless volunteers designed and facilitated professional learning presentations that taught us how to weave digital tools and inclusive teaching into our daily practices. Our membership curated and created lessons for teaching science through a lens of equitable learning and culturally relevant materials. We co-hosted a bilingual virtual conference for over 300 attendees with Science North. Our internal resource support was rejuvenated with the inclusion of a DEI section to our refreshed STAONews, which included special editions highlighting the connections between Black History Month, Pride Month, Indigenous History month and science education in Ontario. The Science Safety Committee worked with industry colleagues to create COVID-19 Precautions for the Science Classroom while still other volunteers were busy ensuring that STAO Safety Mindedness, Flinn scientific webinar materials and other useful resources were available in English and French. We have also been working closely with the Ministry of Education behind the scenes to advocate for our members and their needs as science and technology education continues to evolve in Ontario.

STAO's work has reached many Ontario educators. Our overall membership grew by 101% to over 3,500 while our Francophone membership saw an increase of 207% to over 800 members. Our school board memberships increased by 1,100%, which means the hard work and educational support of our volunteers reached an ever-increasing audience.

The leadership team underwent an in-depth look at our organizational culture with respect to diversity, equity and inclusion practices. The findings of a professional audit have begun and will continue to allow us to build an association that listens to the needs of our entire membership and works to support everyone in an equitable manner.

We are looking forward to the year ahead where we invite you to join us as we continue the work we have started and forge ahead with inclusivity, accountability, excellence, collaboration and innovation in education.



NINA SAINI

President, STAO

WORDS FROM...

OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



AMY GORECKI

Executive Director, STAO

Dear STAO members,

2020-21 proved to be another challenging year for us all. As educators, I know you continue to face challenges both personally and professionally, and I commend all of you for your resilience and for your continued commitment to delivering high-quality science instruction in your classrooms. Despite all the challenges that were faced, I'm excited for you to see the growth of our organization and the opportunities that were created for our membership over the past year, as a result of the dedicated work of our volunteers. Our volunteers are critical to the operations of STAO and I hope that some of you will consider joining the organization or sharing with other members through other means. If you are interested in getting more involved with STAO, please reach out to us at info@stao.ca.

One of the areas that we are working hard to make changes on within the organization is around diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility. We know that, like many other nonprofit and membership organizations, we have much farther to go in this area, but I am excited to share some of the work that has taken place over the past year. I also welcome your feedback and suggestions for how we can continue to improve. Read on for more information about what STAO has been doing to create a more inclusive organization.

As always, thank you to our amazing volunteers for all of your contributions and dedication to the organization and thank you to our members for your participation and support!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amy Gorecki". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

STAO Mission: Encouraging excellence in science education through leadership and service.

A BIT ABOUT US

The Science Teachers' Association of Ontario (STAO) is a 130-year old association that works to be the leading voice in the advancement of science education in Ontario.

Inclusion

STAO is committed to the inclusion and support of all educators who teach science and technology in Ontario. Our members, like the students they serve, are multilingual and represent diverse racial, ethnic, gender, religious, ability, cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds. This commitment extends to assessing, monitoring and recruiting diverse membership and advocating for more diverse representation in the teaching profession as a whole.

Excellence

STAO's goal is to ensure that every student across Ontario has access to high quality science and technology education that is based on diverse, international research, best practices and progressive education ideals. We will do this by providing educators with access to best-in-class resources that allow them to be innovative in their practice in a manner that is inclusive of, and responsive to, the needs of all students.

Collaboration (community development)

STAO members work together and with our communities towards the common goal of high quality science and technology education for all students. This means providing

opportunities to learn with and from each other, and other organizations who embody STAO's values and commitment to excellence in science and technology education.

Accountability

STAO will ensure that all Ontario students have access to excellent science and technology education through advocacy, accountability and by providing resources and learning opportunities to science educators. This means speaking up on important education issues and continually being accountable to students, educators, and our members in the work that we do.

Innovation

We encourage our members to continually develop a growth mindset by taking advantage of learning opportunities in order to innovate in their classrooms. By evolving teaching practices, being responsive to student needs, and improving the educational experience, the needs of all students in science classrooms will be better met. This means challenging the status quo and promoting the inclusion of a plurality of perspectives in the discourse in science education.

TO ACHIEVE THESE OBJECTIVES, THE ASSOCIATION HAS FOUR STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS:

- 1. TO PROVIDE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES AND RESOURCES TO EDUCATORS;**
- 2. TO ADVOCATE FOR EXCELLENCE IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ONTARIO CURRICULUM;**
- 3. TO RECRUIT AND RETAIN A LARGE, DIVERSE MEMBERSHIP, AND**
- 4. TO DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN RELATIONSHIPS WITH PARTNERS.**

OUR IMPACT 2019-2020

11 STAOLive webinars presented to over 170 participants

19 webinars presented in partnership with external partners to over 250 participants

Bilingual virtual e-STEM conference co-hosted by Science North & STAO in April 2021 to over 350 participants

Regular posts to STAO Blog from our Blogmaster, Milan Sanader and STAO volunteers

Webinars in collaboration with Flinn Scientific hosted to help schools prepare for back-to-school

Creation of three editions of L'InfoSciences, a newsletter for STAO's Francophone members

Destreaming article from DEI Committee

Increase of 101% in overall membership from 1,774 in September to 3,578 in June

Increase of 1,100% in school board membership purchases from 1 to 12 school boards

STAO presentations at: eSTEM conference, ECOO, TCDSB, OTF Summer Institutes

5 French webinars to 54 participants

Inclusion of a new DEI section and an overall refresh to STAONews, including special editions for Black History Month, Indigenous History Month, Pride Month

Creation of COVID-19 Precautions for the Science Classroom by STAO Safety Committee & Colleagues

Translation of STAO's Safety Mindedness modules

Four new French-specific webinars were created in partnership with le Centre Franco

Virtual Don Galbraith Awards were hosted on June 3, 2021

Increase in Francophone membership of 207% from 272 to 835 members

STAO established a DEI Task Force and Committee to oversee a Diversity & Inclusion Assessment and related activities, such as the *Braiding Sweetgrass* book club

STAO hosted two events in collaboration with the Science Education Leaders of Ontario (SELO/LESO)

HIGHLIGHTS ON OUR WORK IN DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

In August 2020, our volunteers told us we needed to become a more inclusive organization, focused on serving its diverse membership and increasing representation, especially underrepresented minority groups in science education, and in the STEM community at large. From September 2020 – July 2021 STAO worked with Daphne Magna, Founder of Tough Convos to execute a diversity and inclusion assessment with the objectives of clarifying STAO's position in the minds of its members and volunteers, identifying the structure, processes or policies that are helping or hindering the org from being more inclusive, and deciding what type of product/service(s) STAO should undertake to improve its leadership in science education. In August 2021, in consultation with volunteers, STAO's brand values were more clearly defined. Our updated brand values can be found on page 5 of this report.

During the first phase of this assessment, our membership was surveyed and we learned the following:

Our members are looking to us for **LEADERSHIP**

- STAO need to be responsive, not reactive
- STAO needs to publish position papers with guidance for educators
- STAO should be influencing curriculum development and implementation
- STAO should be a teaching hub and community for our members
- STAO needs more effective communication and public relations

Our members are looking to us for **SERVICE**

- STAO needs to provide free and diverse resources (including lessons, kits & manipulatives)
- STAO must continue to be leaders in safety
- STAO should continue to provide training and pedagogical supports
- STAO needs to more clearly define its membership benefits
- STAO needs to have more equal opportunities, including diverse tools, methods, and ways to get involved for its members and volunteers

Our members are looking to us for **ADVANCEMENT**

- STAO must have government influence and be vocal advocates
- STAO must develop more commercial partners and sponsors
- STAO must be a leader in advocating for curriculum reform
- STAO must have diverse representation in its leadership
- STAO should participate in research opportunities

HIGHLIGHTS ON OUR WORK IN DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

There is still much work to be done at STAO to improve in all of these areas and we appreciate the hard work of our volunteers and members on this journey. If you have thoughts or comments to share or if you are interested in leadership or volunteer opportunities within STAO, please contact info@stao.ca.



FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Revenue	2021	2020
SPECIAL PROJECTS	\$51,168	\$34,192
MEMBERSHIPS	\$51,597	\$52,955
INVESTMENT INCOME	\$9,456	\$16,779
MISCELLANEOUS	\$7,804	\$9,581
SCIENCE STORE	\$6,515	\$5,116
REGISTRATION	\$2,476	\$0
ADVERTISING AND SPONSORSHIP	\$0	\$1,738
EXHIBITS	\$0	\$640
Total	\$129,016	\$121,001

Expenses	2021	2020
GENERAL ADMINISTRATION AND HUMAN RESOURCES	\$183,236	\$169,054
SPECIAL PROJECTS	\$51,188	\$35,595
SCIENCE STORE COST OF SALES	\$13,468	\$1,851
DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION	\$10,000	\$0
COMMITTEES	\$12,211	\$9,220
AMORTIZATION	\$5,500	\$5,500
CONFERENCE	\$17	\$17,524
Total	\$275,620	\$238,744

Other Items	2021	2020
GOVERNMENT OF CANADA WAGE SUBSIDY	\$25,417	\$16,787
OTHER	\$23,239	\$0
GAIN ON CHANGE IN FAIR MARKET VALUE OF INVESTMENTS	\$10,061	\$540
FORGIVENESS OF LONG TERM DEBT	\$10,000	\$10,000

Deficiency of Revenue over Expenses for the Year	\$(77,887)	\$(90,416)
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THANK YOU SUPPORTERS AND VOLUNTEERS

Thank you to all of our STAO volunteers who help make the organization run smoothly!

Board of Directors:

President: Nina Saini
President-Elect: Mahfuza Rahman
Past President: Lise Gravelle
Treasurer: Imtiyaz (Jim) Rahaman
Secretary: Joseph Bishay
Member-at-large: Dr. Ralph Chou
Member-at-large: Dr. Andrew Pasternak
Member-at-large: Robert Weese
Member-at-large: Entisar Yusuf
Member-at-large: Elaine Theofilos (resigned)

Management Team

Executive Director: Amy Gorecki
Director of Membership & School Board Relations: Cindy Cosentino
Director of Communications: Leila Knetsch
Director of Professional Learning: Malisa Mezenberg
Director of Elementary Resource Development: Sheila Rhodes
Director of Volunteer Engagement: Kathryn Wheeldon
Director of Secondary Resource Development: Laura Wodlinger

Committee Chairs

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee Co-chairs: Leila Knetsch & Stella Kim
Elementary Curriculum Committee Co-Chair: Michael Frankfort & Samantha Hendricks
Safety Committee Chair: David Gervais
Secondary Curriculum Committee Chair: Ana Pereira Neves

STAO would also like to thank our financial supporters over the past year



Ministry of Education



Explore Learning



IN APPRECIATION

Dr. B. Ralph Chou, Past President, Life Member

STAO would like to recognize the many ways in which Ralph has contributed to STAO over his many years with the organization. Ralph will be leaving the Board of Directors at this year's AGM as a Member-at-Large and Past President. The Board is extremely grateful to Ralph for his guidance and leadership over the past ten years as a Board member. Ralph was the driving force behind the new bylaws that were enacted two years ago and in ensuring that STAO was able to meet the Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act (ONCA) requirements far ahead of its proclamation. Of particular note, Ralph has also served as Chair of the Governance & Nominating Committee, Project Steering Committee, and Safety Committee. As Chair of the Project Steering Committee, Ralph oversaw STAO's three Project Innovation initiatives, which were multi-year projects financed by the Ministry of Education that continue to bring benefit to Ontario's science and technology educators many years later. Ralph, STAO thanks you for your many years of dedicated service and for all that we know you will continue to do to advance science and technology education across the province!



Dr. B. Ralph Chou, Past President, Life Member

Chuck Cohen, Past President, Life Member

Special thanks to Chuck for his many years of service to STAO in a wide variety of roles! He has recently stepped down as our Director of Events on the STAO Management Team and we are so grateful for the skills he brought to this role and the many ways he has served the organization. We wish Chuck the best as he shifts some of the time and energy he has devoted to STAO towards the myriad other volunteer organizations he supports and his other entrepreneurial endeavours. Chuck is a long-time STAO advocate who has helped to promote our organization's activities across Canada and the United States, particularly through his connections with the National Science Teaching Association (NSTA) based in the U.S. He has helped forge many new partnerships and brought many learning opportunities to our members, particularly over the past year in his role as Director of Events. His work building these relationships will continue to lead to strong partnerships that will benefit our membership for many years to come! Chuck has also acted as the STAO Science Store Committee Chair and a member of the STAO Conference Planning Committee for many years, including the role of Co-chair. His leadership of the CPC helped STAO execute many successful conferences and dynamic exhibit halls. Chuck, STAO thanks you for your years of service to the organization and for all that you will continue to bring as a Life Member over the years to come!



Chuck Cohen, Past President, Life Member

IN APPRECIATION



Imtiyaz (Jim) Rahaman,
Treasurer

Imtiyaz (Jim) Rahaman, Treasurer

STAO would like to thank Jim for his contributions during his term as Treasurer. Over the three years he served on STAO's Board of Directors, Jim has helped the organization to improve its financial reporting processes, bringing his years of experience as a CPA, CA. With Jim's oversight, STAO has made the move to a new bookkeeping service and new auditors during his term. These changes have been instrumental in allowing us to bring you the easier-to-read financial statements being presented to you at the 2021 AGM. Jim, thank you for the financial leadership and guidance you have shared with us during your term!



Nathalie Rudner, Past
President

Nathalie Rudner, Past President

STAO would also like to thank Nathalie Rudner for the leadership she brought to the Board of Directors during her four years as Vice President, President-Elect, President, and Past President. During this time, Nathalie was Chair of the Finance Committee, played an instrumental role in getting the updated bylaws approved by the membership, and served on the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force to oversee our diversity and inclusion audit. As Nathalie begins a new role as Director of Academics at Rosedale Academy, we wish her the best of luck and look forward to how she will continue to bring her expertise and passion for science and technology to STAO!



Milan Sanader, Past President,
Life Member

Milan Sanader, Past President, Life Member

Special thanks goes out to Milan Sanader for his many years of service to STAO as Blogmaster, an incredibly demanding role! Milan's efforts helped the STAO Blog to stay up-to-date and to keep subscribers and members informed about what's happening in both the world of science and in science education. We also thank Milan for his continued support of the Blog as he works to support our new Blogmaster, Leila Knetsch. Milan has also served STAO as a member and Chair of the Secondary Curriculum Committee, as President, and as a member of the Safety Committee. He led the organization through a complete rebranding during his term as President and was the lead writer on several safety resources, including the online Safety Mindedness learning modules. Milan, STAO thanks you for all you have contributed over the years and for your continued efforts to give back to the science education community in Ontario!

LOOKING AHEAD TO NEXT YEAR...



In 2021-22 we have already planned and hosted a virtual conference with strands focused on: Education for Sustainable Development, Defining Equity for Science, Lessons Learned while Teaching STEM/Science Virtually, and Best Practices in STEM/Science Education. With the completion of this amazing professional learning opportunity, STAO will now be looking forward to planning future professional learning events to meet the needs of our membership.

As with 2021, STAO will continue to focus on equity, inclusion, and diversity within the organization. In early 2022, STAO's Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee will be releasing a statement about diversity, equity & inclusion in science education. On Thursday, February 10, 2022, the committee will be hosting a discussion for STAO members who are interested in learning more about the process that helped craft this statement, to discuss reactions to and thoughts about the statement, and to discuss next steps for STAO as an organization. We hope that many of our members will choose to join this discussion. Further information will be shared through STAONews!

In September 2022 a new de-streamed Grade 9 science course (SNC1W) will be implemented in Ontario classrooms, replacing the current Grade 9 Academic (SNC1D) and Applied (SNC1P) courses. The new curriculum will be released in the spring of 2022 and STAO will be looking at how it can support its members in the implementation of the new curriculum.

We plan to engage with our members through a membership survey in early

2022 and we ask that you please take the time to complete the survey and let us know what we can do to help you over the rest of the calendar year and beyond!

The STAO Board made the decision this year to reduce the scope of the STAO Store. Moving forward, the STAO Store will stock STAO-created safety documents and any future publications unique to our organization. The decision to reduce the scope of the STAO Store was made to reduce costs to the organization and in recognition of the fact that many of the discontinued items are widely available, which was not necessarily the case when the store was launched. STAO thanks all those who helped to make the STAO Store a valuable resource over the years to our members and conference attendees.

As we look to the future, STAO is calling on all its members to consider becoming more involved within your organization. As a membership organization, we want to hear from you and to have a better understanding of your needs. All of the projects and initiatives of STAO are driven by volunteers, and if there is something you are interested in contributing to the organization that relates to any of the themes above or any other projects that would be of benefit to our membership, please contact info@stao.ca to express your interest!



Science Teachers' Association of Ontario

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