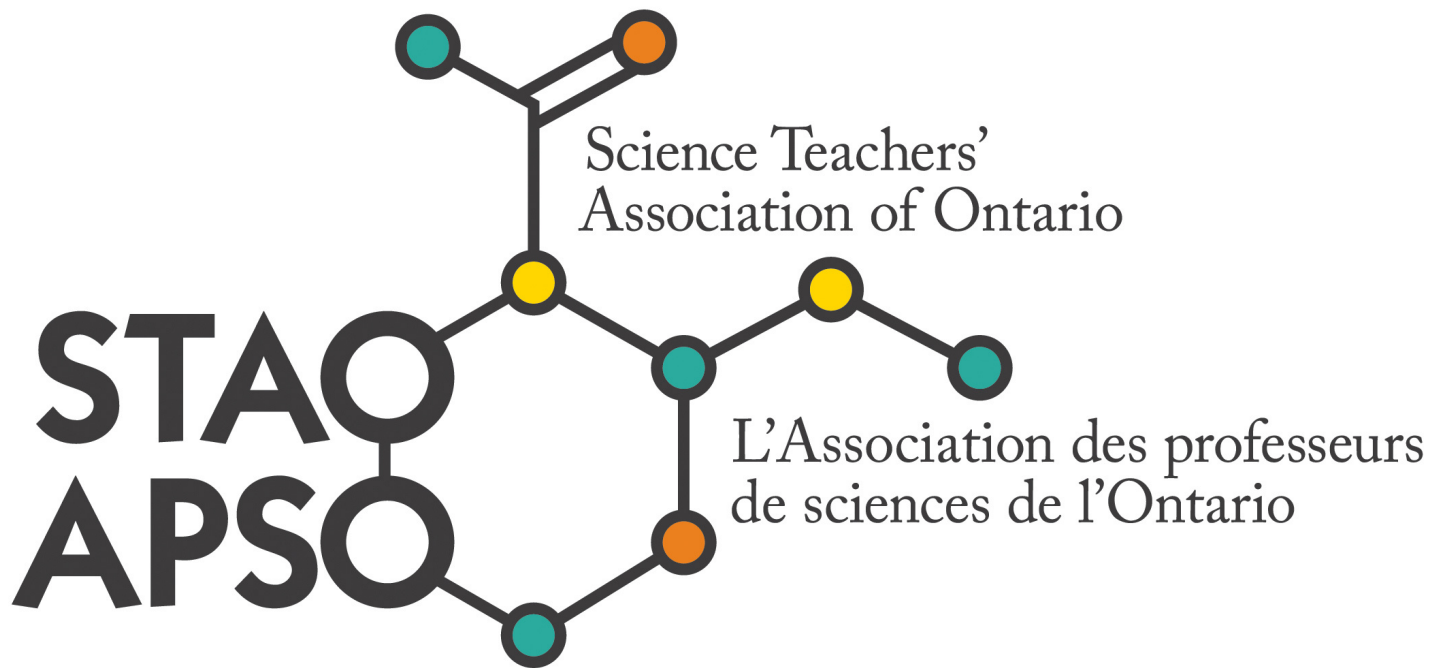


STAO ANNUAL REPORT 2020





PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear membership and volunteers,

Together, we are the Science Teachers' Association of Ontario (STAO), a well-established professional organization that seeks to encourage excellence in science education through leadership and service. In the past year, we have encountered a few hindering blocks while pursuing our mission. However, our volunteers have demonstrated that through teamwork and innovation, STAO lives its vision of being the leading voice in the advancement of science education in Ontario.

With fresh initiatives and a solid strategic plan, STAO is currently in a cycle of rebirth which is both exciting and daring. We do need to seek new avenues and I am confident that our solid Management Team will lead us in the right direction. On behalf of our Board of Directors, I salute the engagement of our volunteers who are currently involved in ensuring a great new year of professional development. More

than ever, teachers need our support and opportunities that respond to their needs.

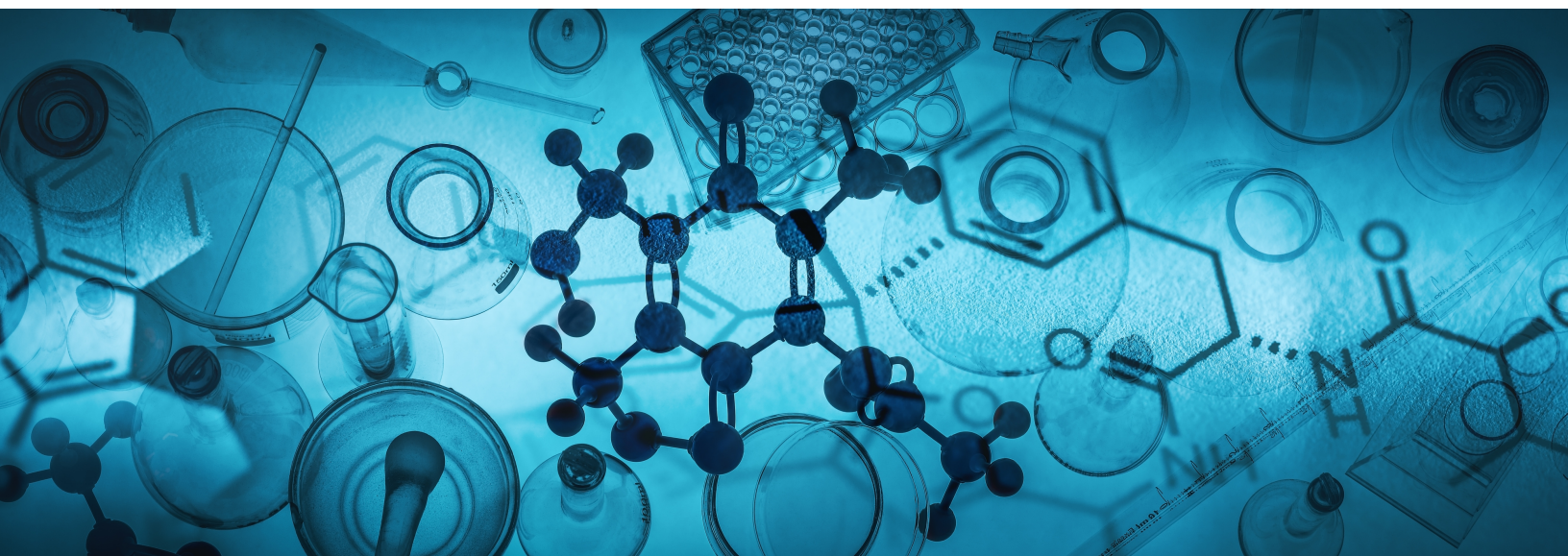
I do wish to thank all volunteers that have spent many hours working on preparing for our 2020 conference. It was with great regret that we had to cancel this event and your efforts should be recognized regardless of the outcome.

I would also be remiss in not acknowledging our Executive Director's incredible leadership through what has been a very challenging year. Thank you Amy!

Dear teachers, please do take a moment to give yourself a pat on the back. You have shown incredible resilience and are continuing to adapt as needed to be there for our future generations.

Thank you and please, take care.

Lise Gravelle, President STAO/PSO



MISSION

Encouraging excellence in science education through leadership and service.

VISION

To be the leading voice in the advancement of science education in Ontario

VALUES

Accountability, excellence, inclusiveness, innovation, integrity, respect, responsibility, teamwork



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

To all of our members, I think I can safely say that 2019-2020 has been a year like no other! The challenges that STAO and other subject associations and nonprofits like ourselves are facing should not be diminished, but we should also be reassured that we are taking these challenges and turning them into opportunities. Our STAO2020 conference team put together what would have been an incredible March 2020 conference and I would like to acknowledge all of their hard work and dedication. The cancellation of STAO2020 due to COVID-19 and our inability to host large-scale in-person gatherings into 2021 gives us an opportunity to consider how we can open up our professional learning opportunities this year for those who may not have been able to secure release time or travel expense coverage in the past. We also find ourselves in a time where networking, sharing, and learning together are more important than ever, which aligns with our mission to encourage excellence in science education through leadership and service.

This is just one example of taking a challenge and flipping it into a positive, but we are always looking for additional ideas to be shared, as no one knows better what classroom educators are in need of than other classroom educators!

I would like to take this opportunity to extend a huge thank you to our STAO volunteers. With a small staff, it is amazing how much we are able to do in our community through the generosity and sharing of our volunteers. If you have ideas to share or are interested in joining STAO's dedicated groups of volunteers and sharing your passion for science education, please reach out to us at info@stao.ca; we would love to meet you online, and we hope soon in person, to work with you in helping to support science educators!

Sincerely,
Amy Gorecki
Executive Director, STAO/APSO

STAO BOARD & BOARD COMMITTEES

(Finance & Audit, Strategic Planning, Governance & Nominating, Risk Management, and Project Steering)

2019-20 presented STAO with many new challenges and opportunities for growth. Despite the many challenges faced, the leadership and oversight of the organization remained strong. A key area of focus was the restructuring of STAO to clearly separate out the governance role of the Board from the operational role of the Management Team. This was successfully accomplished by the passing of the updated bylaws at the 2019 AGM, the establishment of a Management Team led by the Executive Director, building capacity by identifying new Board members, and the introduction of online voting for elections at the AGM. In addition, the Board has begun a comprehensive review of all of the policies and procedures impacted by the new bylaws. Another area of focus was minimizing the impact of COVID-19 on STAO's operations, by overseeing the cancellation of STAO2020 and seeking out government support and other revenue streams. The Board also developed and presented a new 3-year strategic plan to the membership that clearly outlines the goals and areas of focus for STAO as we move forward.

STAO STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2023

MEMBERSHIP GROWTH

Grow STAO's membership to reflect the diversity of science & technology/ science educators in Ontario



- Increase STAO membership
- Ensure STAO members are informed and involved through regular engagement
- Provide regular opportunities for members to share their ongoing needs

VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT

Create a positive and rewarding environment where volunteers feel empowered and appreciated



- Ensure overall satisfaction of volunteers
- Support the development of empowered volunteers
- Recognize volunteers for their contributions to STAO

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Develop timely and inclusive resources to reflect the diverse pedagogical needs of Ontario's science educators



- Develop high quality professional learning resources in a variety of media
- Evolve professional learning in tandem with pedagogical approaches

LEADERSHIP

Maintain STAO's voice as the leading advocate for science & technology/ science education in Ontario



- Assure excellence in the development and implementation of the Ontario curriculum
- Develop and maintain relationships with partners to enhance STAO's influence in the sector

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Assure financial sustainability of the organization to allow STAO to achieve its strategic goals

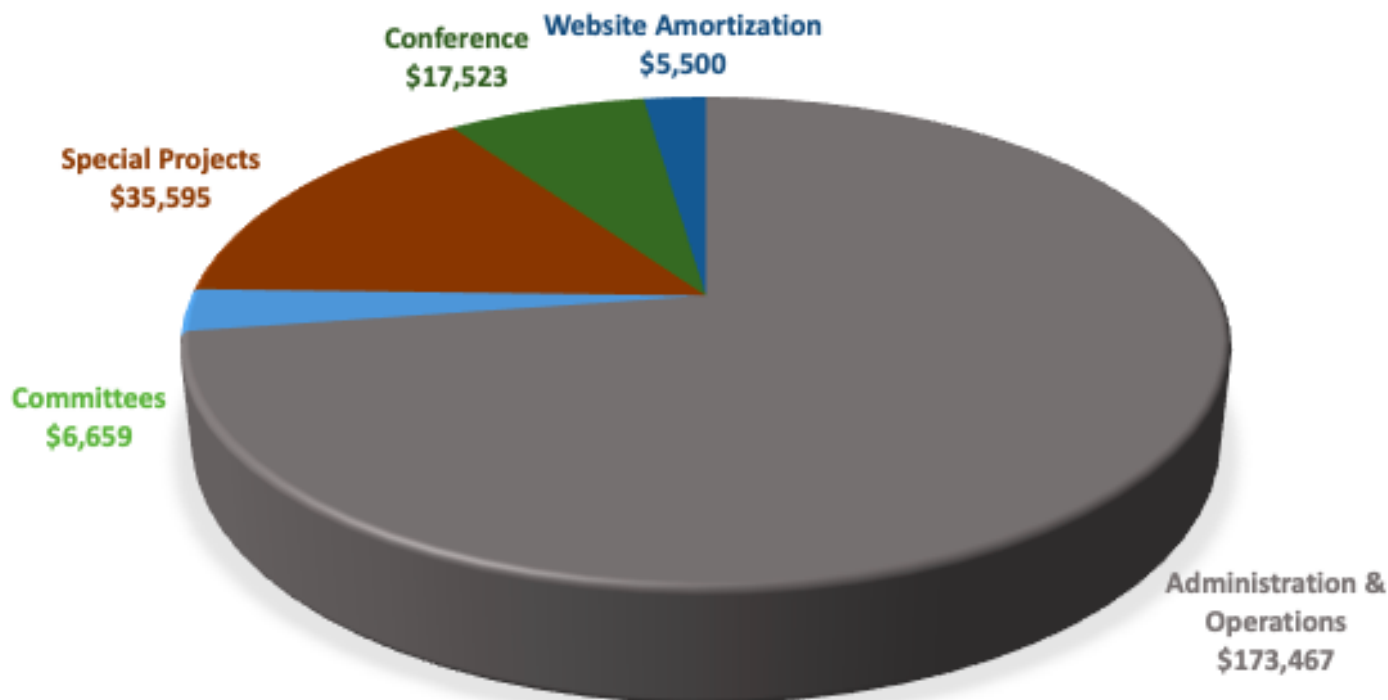


- Increase and diversify funding streams
- Maximize cost effectiveness of projects, as well as organizational and administrative structure

STAO FINANCES

STAO ended 2020 with a deficit of \$90,416, primarily resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic preventing us from running the STAO2020 conference. Sponsorship and exhibitors at the conference have helped pave the way for STAO's financial success for many years. Having to cancel the face-to-face event, particularly after some expenses were already incurred was both unavoidable and unfortunate. Despite these financial hardships, STAO did receive some of the COVID-19 stimulus packages that were available to businesses and nonprofits, including the Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA) and the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS). Both are helping to offset some of the revenue loss. COVID-19 has clearly demonstrated that STAO needs to diversify its funding sources and revenue streams in order to stay financially sustainable.

STAO 2019-20 EXPENDITURES



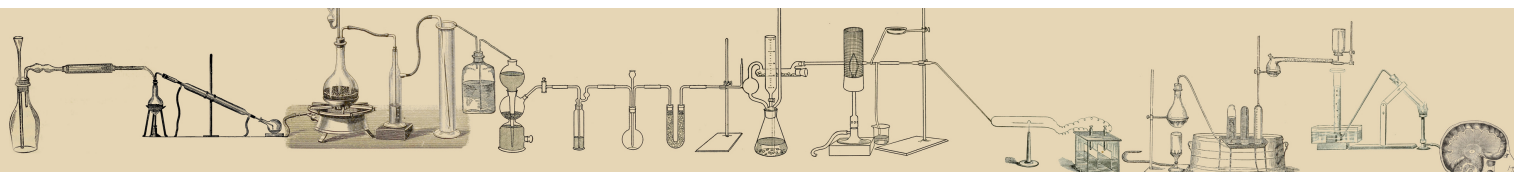
STAO MANAGEMENT TEAM & OPERATIONAL COMMITTEES

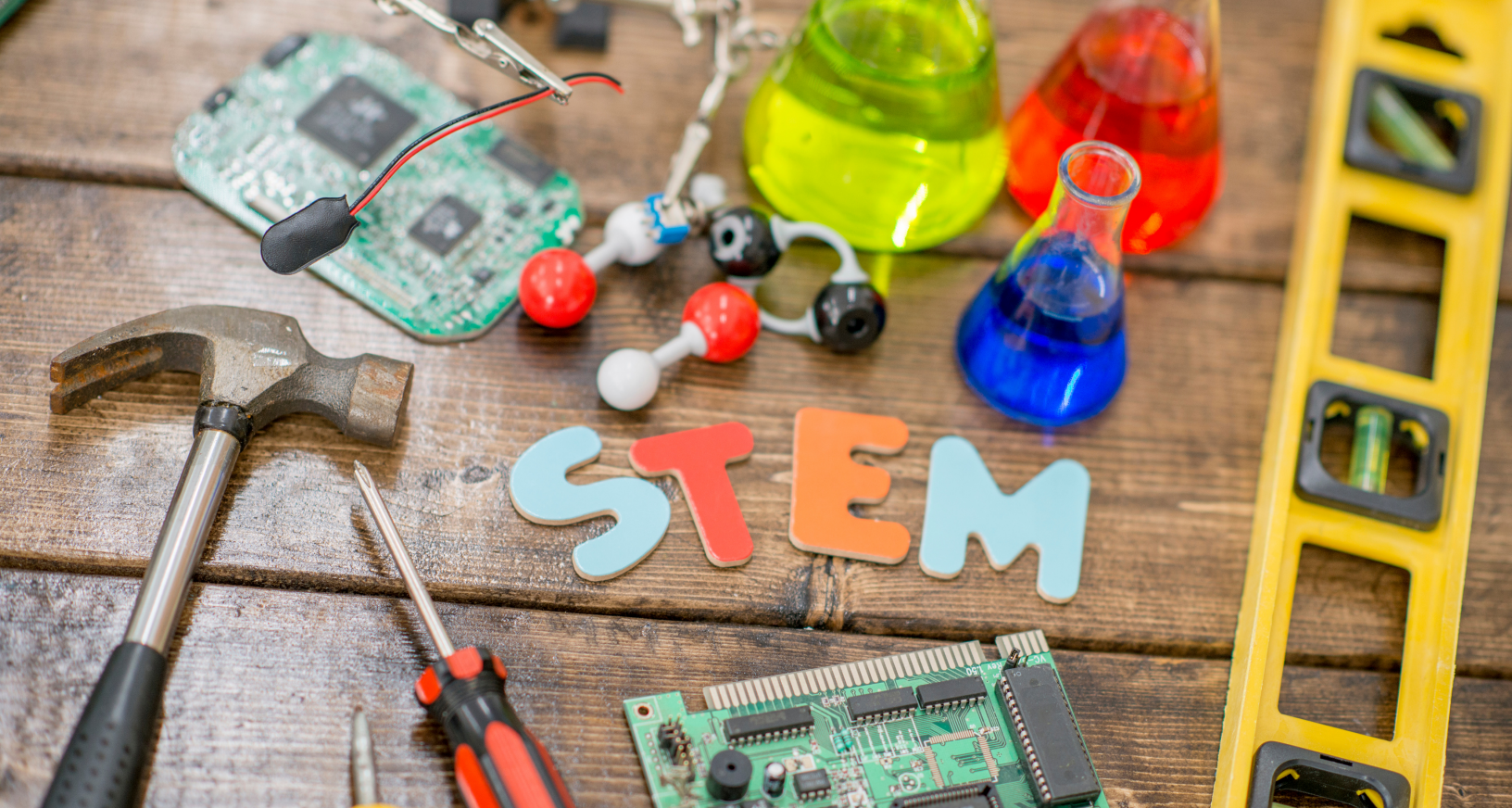
(Elementary Curriculum, Francophone, Promotions, Safety, ScienceWorks, Secondary Curriculum, STAO2020, Volunteer & Awards)

With the passing of the new bylaws at the 2019 Annual General Meeting, STAO underwent a transition from the previously existing Executive Committee, to the current Management Team, whose structure was implemented in August 2020 ahead of the new fiscal year. This past year represented a year of growth at the operational level that saw a wide variety of accomplishments by both the operational committees and the Management Team itself, including:

- Launching the new STAO website (Website Committee)
- Overseeing a developing partnership with NGUX/iP2 in the development of new curriculum resources (Elementary Curriculum Committee)
- Recognizing two outstanding volunteers, Cindy Adams and Brennan Caverhill, through Nominations for Ontario Volunteer Service Awards (Volunteer Committee)
- Pivoting to the delivery of online webinars in partnership with ExploreLearning, Perimeter Institute, Discover the Universe, Flinn Scientific Canada, and 5 webinars by a variety of presenters through a Ministry of Education Francophone grant (Management Team)
- Publishing the updated version of Safer Use of Chemicals (Safety Committee) Participating in the STEM Expo at the Youth Science Canada Online STEM fair (Promotions/Executive Director)
- Creating videos to accompany some of STAO's previously existing online demonstrations through an OSSTF grant (Secondary Curriculum Committee)
- Adopting Google Suites as the primary communication platform (Google Migration Task Force)
- Planning and ultimately cancelling what would have been an excellent program at STAO2020 (STAO2020)
- Establishing the Terms of Reference and membership of the new Management Team (Management Team)
- Building relationships and networking connections with other subject associations and other like-minded organizations (Executive Director/Management Team)
- Hosting STAO's first Virtual Congress for Volunteers in August 2020 with approximately 30 attendees to plan for 2020-2021 (Management Team)
- Recognizing outstanding teacher candidates from 2018-2019 through the Don Galbraith Awards (Awards Committee) Increasing the number of STAO blog followers by daily postings on the STAO blog (Blogmaster Milan Sanader)
- Actively engaging members and non-members through our social media platforms on Facebook, twitter and Instagram (Promotions Committee)
- Supporting teachers in distance teaching and learning by delivering webinars exploring strategies and technologies for practical distance teaching as part of the OTF connects webinar series and the ECOO Virtual Conference (ScienceWorks)
- Paving the way for a new Volunteer experience with STAO by planning Volunteer Engagement events for the 2020-2021 year, such as a virtual celebration event (Volunteer Committee)
- Planning for increased engagement of volunteers through a new volunteer satisfaction survey and a more structured onboarding process to help volunteers find a 'good fit' within STAO (Volunteer Committee)
- Completing a number of grant projects including Project Innovation 2, Project Innovation 3, and the Ministry of Education's Francophone Grant (Malisa Mezenberg, Francophone Committee)

With the new Management Team in place and six dedicated Directors, STAO is in a great position to offer even more value to members, create new resources, and engage the community as a whole in increasing excellence in science education.





IN APPRECIATION

- Lynda Weese retired as STAO's Administrative Assistant at the end of September 2019. STAO is so grateful for her dedication to the organization over the years and for her oversight and diligence to all of our administrative needs.
- Jana Grubb's contract as Marketing Coordinator for the annual conference was completed. STAO would like to thank Jana for her time and energy over the years in growing our exhibitor hall and contributing to the financial success of the organization.
- At the end of the 2019-20 year Racquel Carlow announced her decision to step down as Chair of the Promotions Committee. We are so grateful to Racquel for her many years of service to STAO and her leadership in a number of positions, including Past President and Chair of STAO Conference's Speaker and Promotions Committee, along with much more. We look forward to her continued contributions to various STAO projects and the work of the Promotions Committee in the future!
- Thank you to Karen Dodds, our recent Past President for her years of service on the Board of Directors and steering STAO in the right direction. STAO recognized Karen formally at the Virtual Congress and presented her with one of her favourite prints - "The Breakfast Club"- as appreciation for all of her dedication to STAO.
- Thank you to Cindy Adams, whose second term as Member-at-Large on the STAO Board has come to an end. Cindy has contributed her expertise in so many ways and she will be missed.
- And, last but not least, one last thank you to all of our dedicated volunteers for all that you do!