

TRUSTEE CONFERENCE REPORT

Name: John Hendry **Date Submitted:** February 1, 2016

Name of Conference: Public Education Symposium 2016

Sponsoring Organization: Ontario Public School Board Association

Theme (If any): Annual Public Education Symposium

Conference Dates: January 29, 2016

Location: Sheraton Centre, Toronto

Workshops/Seminars/Presentations/Keynote Speeches Attended:
(Include a brief Summary)

“Why We Explore” Presenter: Natalie Panek

This was probably the most inspiring presentations of the day. She shared her experiences from University to present day with a theme of never giving up and perseverance. She shared her experiences and challenges which have been shared with female students with the hope of encouraging them to pursue their dreams even when they are non-traditional paths such as becoming an astronaut or aerospace science.

“Mind Brain and Education” Presenter: Dr. Daniel Ansari

A very technical but informative presentation on Dr. Ansari’s research into the role neuroscience can play in assisting teachers identifying differences in students in the classroom and using this information to help students find their own level of success.

His presentation outlined how the human brain develops and acquires new information. His evidence demonstrates the potential neuroscience can have in the transforming future education.

“The New Role Of The Ontario Ombudsman” Presenter: Barbara Finlay

This was a presentation I was looking forward to hearing. I was very happy with the clarification of the role the Ombudsman is playing with respect to the education sector.

The presentation clarified the process when complaints are received, the attempt, or goal to encourage solutions at the local level, when investigations are called for, and identifying common concerns which can in turn assist all boards in the future.

Although the mandate is relatively new, the number of complaints is relatively low. Among the top complaints – no surprise – Special Education and Transportation.

“From Typewriter to Twitter – How The News Media Are Utterly Changed, And Exactly The Same” Presenter: Sean Mallen

Mr. Mallen was the London Bureau Chief for Global News as well as the Queens Park Correspondent. His stories related to his experience as a reporter were interesting and somewhat entertaining. Several known truths were exposed; namely, never try to avoid a reporter, it is better to face them and be direct.....often this leads to much more balanced reporting and fairness. Remember, the reporter’s job is to report the news, and they will pursue their story despite any attempts to evade or avoid.

His most important advice was to be ever vigilant when posting information on social media. Once there it is impossible to take back – or even explain the context.