

TRUSTEE CONFERENCE REPORT

Name: Kathleen Woodcock **Date Submitted:** March 24, 2015

Name of Conference: Public Education Symposium 2015

Sponsoring Organization: Ontario Public School Boards Association (OPSBA)

Theme (If any):

Conference Dates: January 29 to January 31, 2015

Location: Sheraton Centre, Toronto, ON

Workshops/Seminars/Presentations/Keynote Speeches Attended:

January 29, 2015 Pre-Symposium

WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS - Michael Barrett, President, OPSBA

- Trustees are of the community, by the community, from the community.

ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE – A RENEWED VISION FOR EDUCATION IN ONTARIO - The Honourable Liz Sandals, Minister of Education

- Committed to one public system of four boards (English Public, English Catholic, French Public, French Catholic)

VOICE OF EXPERIENCE: REFLECTIONS ON THE ROLE OF TRUSTEE - Carmen McGregor

- Always maintain focus on student achievement
- Importance of relationships (trustees as a team, chair of the board & director; trustees & director; trustees & staff; trustees and the community) → RESPECT

EARLY YEARS – MOVING THE VISION FORWARD - Jim Grieve

- Vision of the young child as a capable, competent learner.
- Going from 'Impossible' to "I'm possible"

MAKING CONNECTIONS – SETTING THE CLIMATE FOR STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND WELL-BEING - Panel discussion facilitated by Marilyn Gouthro

- What do you need from the Board? – strong political leadership plus a strong administrative leadership, role clarity, common focus (strategic plan, board work plan, director's work plan), relationships (respect, trust, work together)

MAKING CONNECTIONS – STRATEGIC PLANNING AND THE RENEWED VISION FOR EDUCATION IN ONTARIO –

Table Activity facilitated by Marilyn Gouthro and Lise Lortie

- What gifts are around YOUR board table? Intellectual capital, reputational capital, political capital, social capital; teamwork, not group think; rich conversations and divergent thinking; clarity, leadership, excellence, accountability → TRUST

ALIGNING RESOURCES TO PRIORITIES: WHAT DO YOU NEED TO KNOW? WHAT DO YOU NEED TO ASK? -

Gabriel Sékaly and panel discussion facilitated by Alain Gélinas

- Ministry Vision = achieving excellence; need to refine that vision to suit local community and test the vision from different angles
- Consultation → test results and graduation rates are not the only measures of well-being

- Every trustee is a trustee for all students.

January 29 to January 31, 2015 Main Symposium

FIRST NATION TRUSTEES COUNCIL MEETING – Peter Garrow

A networking opportunity for First Nation trustees. All trustees welcome to attend.

THE ARTS AND EDUCATION - Jeff Melanson

- Creativity should be recognized as innate in every human being and central to every human pursuit
- Innovation = practical application of creativity

THE POWER OF WHY - Amanda Lang

- “Processes” love the status quo bias but we can create a culture to change the status quo using the power of collaboration; think like innovators

THE MARK OF A LEADER - Doug Keeley

- 5 levels of leadership – spirit, imagination, intellect, hearts (passion), hands (action)

“HOW DO SCHOOL BOARDS KEEP RELEVANT” GOOD GOVERNANCE/ETHICAL LEADERSHIP - Panel discussion facilitated by Marilyn Gouthro

- How to foster an environment for risk-taking and curiosity? Respectful of divergent views; go to the source; there are no bad questions; being prepared and attending the meetings; all about the big/main focus; what’s right for kids; it’s not all about ‘you’

SCHOOL BOARDS COLLECTIVE BARGAINING ACT (SBCBA) - Panel discussion facilitated by Penny Mustin

- This workshop addressed an implementation model for Ontario’s SBCBA. Panel members addressed building an informed, inclusionary infrastructure for collective bargaining to best serve student achievement and well-being.

THE CHANGING ROLE OF TRUSTEE - Panel discussion facilitated by Geoff Williams

- Huge responsibility and privilege to be a trustee; having new trustees on the board is an opportunity to make change
- Use of social media → online is ALWAYS public
- Code of conduct – need one; rules of engagement; how to enforce it; review each year to remind trustees of the code
- By-laws can be boring to update but need to be reviewed regularly (yearly)

THE WHOLE CHILD AND STUDENT WELL-BEING - Panel discussion facilitated by Laurie French

- Early years is the best time to ensure success
- Have been talking about the whole child for 10 years (2004 = nutrition & daily activity; 2005 = building relationships; 2009 = education & well-being)
- ‘The caring adult’ concept is important to have active in schools; connect the students to that caring adult

REGIONAL BREAKFAST MEETING (CENTRAL WEST)

- Updates on current OPSBA issues, legislative and strategic; brainstorm topics for regional meeting

SCHOOL BOARD GOVERNANCE: SETTING THE CONDITIONS FOR EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT - Mike Hines

- Reminder that individual trustees have no authority through the Education Act; school board is the legislative source of all decisions

CANADA AND CANADIANS IN A CHANGING WORLD - Peter Mansbridge

- Through describing his encounters around the world (Obama interview, Vimy Ridge, Sri Lanka, Appeldoorn, Afghanistan, Berlin, Rome), he provided his perspective on how well-regarded Canadians and Canada are by the rest of the world.