

## **Notes & Report from Kathi Smith re:**

### **OPSBA BOARD MEETINGS & ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – June 11-14**

#### THURSDAY, JUNE 11

##### **Board Meeting**

- First of two Board meetings were held
- This meeting began at 1 and concluded shortly before 4 p.m.
- The longest part of the meeting was an In Camera Labour Negotiations update

##### Finance

- announcements of balanced budget are misleading about the real story
- spec ed cuts - cuts in other areas
- cuts that are being made at local area in order to achieve a balanced budget
- copyright - has filed for new tariff - \$13.30 per full time equivalent students
- this will result in \$17.5 million dollars in cost to English speaking boards in Ontario

##### FNMI Paper on Education

- passed unanimously

##### **Opening Reception**

- this informal event allowed for great interactions with trustees from other school boards
- participated in a long discussion about First Nations, Metis and Inuit students and what we can do to assist them to access the same quality education as other students in the province.

#### FRIDAY, JUNE 12

**The morning began with a First Nations prayer of thanksgiving and a smudging of the meeting room and an offer to provide a smudging ceremony for any interested attendee.**

##### **John Ralston Saul – “A Country is Imagined in its Public Schools”**

Mr. Saul gave a very thought provoking talk on, focussing much of his address on the recent Truth and Reconciliation recommendations. He offered the opinion that school board trustees are a vital part of the public education system. He left us all with much to think about.

- one language is reducing you to being a child of Florida
- the universities do not welcome students who speak French
- French not only teaches the language but also a more complex way of thinking

- Universities are not doing their job of making sure that we insure that students continue to experience the true heart of Canada
- trustees need to lobby the Universities to
- The country is imagined in the public school system
- the base of education is imagination, innovation and inclusion
- education is meant to encourage students to learn
- instability is leading to a resurgence of racism, imperialistic way of dealing
- this wave is moving into Canada - one only needs to look at C51
- creates an atmosphere of fear
- puts pressure on trustees to not succumb to this movement but to create innovation
- we need to deal with this in the schools
- they don't like Canada because we have been relatively successful at immigration, citizenship,
- we are a success story with our education system and we have ignorance or distrust in the world - we need to know it works and why it works
- how do we make it stronger - we need to be able to explain it simply and in understandable terms
- relationship between indigenous people and the rest of us
- we don't have it right
- Europeans came here because they were desperate
- the indigenous people were patient with the immigrants and helped them
- the history was re-written by immigrants (frequently from England and France - inferior profs who set up the universities)
- Canada's immigration role was based on the circular family values of our indigenous people
- if we succeed it will be based on us being honest - what we owe and what we have done wrong
- the report from Justice Sinclair is elegant, well written and plainly written
- not about blaming but reconciliation
- need awareness of the past, awareness of harm inflicted, action to change behaviour
- public education is central to change
- we need to distance ourselves from the European model of the nation state
- we need to rethink how we teach literature and history
- need to be very tough as the change moves along
- non aboriginals need to stand up and say we understand, we hear it and we will make it happen
- they want respect, they want understanding and their rights - they do not want sympathy
- as a citizen, you are now responsible for the wrongs that have happened in the country
- 2 million to a 175 thousand aboriginals in the country

- our own history is edited for both what we did wrong but also what we did right
- real whites were French Canadian
- 100 million every year fighting against aboriginal rights
- one of the biggest barriers is the history curricula in our schools
- content will be more challenging
- history curricula will help Canadians to understand why we are who we are
- we will understand the impact that indigenous civilizations have on the way that Canada operates
- languages are at risk - big languages are killing the small languages
- 9.1 for 58 languages (47 at risk of dying completely)
- "Canada is a test case for a grand notion"

### **Labour Relations & Key Work of OPSBA**

- updates of the successes and progress being made in the various works of OPSBA

### **5 Minute Sessions**

Six school District School Boards presented a 5 minute session on a program or success that they have achieved. Information was shared through paper or online presentations to be used by other school boards that may have interest in implementing the idea.

- Superior Greenstone presented on Aboriginal Peoples in the Superior Greenstone Region - they created an information handbook for staff and parents.
- Simcoe Country DSB presented Beyond the Classroom walls – talking about outdoor learning spaces that they have developed to enhance learning for students.
- Limestone DSB talked about the Limestone Learning Foundation and how it has allowed the Board to create a margin of excellence for students by raising and disbursing funds to assist in student learning
- Halton DSB talked about the Employability Skills Certificate which provides a Pathways program for students in self contained Life Skills programs
- Trillium Lakelands DSB talked about Math CAMPP (Collaborative Actions for Mathematical Professional Learning, Precision and Personalization) – a professional learning community for K-12 Educators
- Upper Grand DSB – talked about their Digital Historian Project – where Inquiry meets Numeracy – an experiential learning four credit senior math/history program

### **New Pedagogies for Deep Learning**

- going from concept to classroom
- from Kawartha Pine Ridge DSB

## Objectives

- introduce pedagogies

*It is about helping students to build attitudes and confidence through doing purposeful things that make a difference in the world.*

- links in with the achieving excellence document
- call for deep learning came from around the world not from our Ministry
- in Ontario the following boards
  - Algoma, Avon Maitland, Hamilton Wentworth, Simcoe County, Near North
- 2014 had schools from around the world to talk about how to engage students thoroughly
- <http://app.emaze.com>
- <http://deeperthanknowledge.com>

there's nothing magical about any tech tool. Real magic rests in the mind

## Deep Learning Competencies

- allows development with proficiency from 1 to 5
- allows students to learn that mistakes are for learning!!

## Community Builder

- allows students to develop character, citizenship, critical thinking, collaboration, communication, creativity

<http://onthoughtbakery.ning.com>

[www.mindmeister.com](http://www.mindmeister.com)

If you are working on something exciting that you really care about you don't have to be pushed. The vision pulls you.

Steve Jobs

Education needs to be radically rethought... to blow the lid off learning, whereby students and teachers as active partners become captivated by education. Michael Fullan & Maria Langworthy

I have been waiting for this day my whole life. 3 year old at FDK Orientation

Trustees need courage, a heart and a brain

The true courage for OPSBA

True courage is in facing danger when you are afraid

## **Annual General Meeting**

- the Executive of OPSBA was acclaimed to serve another year.
- The successes of the past year of OPSBA were reviewed.

SATURDAY, JUNE 13

## **David Chilton “A Truly Unique Perspective”**

- **David, a graduate of the WRDSB shared some great stories from his Dragons’ Den time – inspiring to hear about the successful entrepreneurs he has worked with**
- **David challenged school board trustees to look for ways to promote entrepreneurship and innovation in the system**
- **He warned that the development of new and engaging learning software and approaches threaten public education as we know it – we need to keep up with the times**

## **Social Media 101**

- reasons why you should be there
- a lot of folks are reaching out online
- even if you are not online - they do talk about you
- need to know what ask fm is
- #1 social bullying site on the planet
- discussion about twitter and facebook

### Digital Footprint

- it is permanent and will happen when you are online or even if you are not online
- Google yourself
- how can social media help you manage your reputation?
- you can tell people what you are doing
- skin has to be super thick when you are on social media

### Important to Harness the Power of Social Networks

- they watch twitter and facebook to figure out what people are asking - choose their stories that way
- when there is a school tweet - you have a great window into classrooms
- if you like a story, then you tag it with media

### Using Social Media as a Trustee

- allows you to build provincial and national (and international) networks

- develop positive relations
- Trustees to be aware of personal, professional blended
- should have separate personal and professional accounts
- think about what you are posting on your personal/professional
- if you are always positive on your space - have both combined is okay
- <http://bit.ly/1F68k24>

### **Luncheon Speaker – Mikenzie Sandy**

Mikenzie shared firsthand experience of being an aboriginal student in a public school system. She shared some of the more challenging moments along with some of the very positive moments.

### **5 Minute Sessions**

Six more DSB provided 5 minutes presentations on innovative programs and projects that they have introduced.

- Limestone DSB presented Unstreamed
  - all chose to continue with academic
  - 59% did not meet standard in grade 6 all met grade 9
  - two nights for homework
  - had brainology course
  - one full academic class
  - Growth Mindset instruction
- Trillium Lakelands DSB presented on Feed All Four which uses a combination of Maslow' Hierarchy and First Nations Medicine Wheel – a way of thinking to connect physical, mental, social health an wellness to the curriculum
- DSB Niagara talked about their Walker Living Campus Environmental Outdoor Education Centre
- Avon Maitland DSB talked about the Digital Human Library
- York DSB talked about the Resiliency Project to help students who were at risk of expulsion or suspension by developing their resiliency skills – helps build student well being for all students
- TDSB talked about Parent Academies to encourage and build engagement

### **OPSBA Regional Council Elections**

- As part of Central West District, we have the chance to elect a Vice President and Vice Chair for our Region – Donna Danielli from HDSB is our VP and Alex Johnstone of HWDSB is our Vice Chair
- We also elect trustees to represent our Region on the Policy Work Team and the Program Work Team

- I had the privilege of being elected as trustee on the Program Work Team

### **Community Hub Discussion**

- Trustees were given the chance to make presentations to the Chair of the Premier's Special Advisory committee on Community Hubs
- Great feedback was provided to Karen Pitre about the impact on schools
- We will receive the final recommendations sometime in the fall

### **SUNDAY, JUNE 14**

An organizational Board Meeting was held on Sunday morning for the newly elected Board and Executive.

*The conference provided an excellent opportunity to share ideas with trustees from across the province. The speakers were thought provoking and educational. It provided some excellent learning opportunities.*