TRUSTEE CONFERENCE REPORT

Name: Kathleen Woodcock    Date Submitted: February 7, 2017

Name of Conference: Public Education Symposium 2017

Sponsoring Organization: OPSBA

Theme (If any): ____________________________________________

Conference Dates: January 19 to January 21, 2017

Location: Sheraton Centre, Toronto, ON

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

Multi-Year Strategic Planning Session - Denise Dwyer, ADM, Ministry of Education
- Provided background and purpose of doing the revised guidebook
- Purpose was to simplify and streamline, to clarify roles and responsibilities of key players and to provide trustees and senior school board staff with effective practices and online resources for monitoring and evaluating their multi-year strategic plan.

Orientation to the Revised Guidebook and Online Resources - Laurie French, President, President, OPSBA and Linda Savard, Chair Conseil des écoles publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario
- Revised guide focuses more on measurement and evaluation
- Tried to make it more user friendly, streamlined
- Made trustees the principal audience
- Reflect current strategic planning needs, highlight effective practices and allow for flexibility and adaptability

From Scorecards to Storyboards: The Role of Strategy, Engagement and Storytelling in the Remarkable Turnaround of KGH - Theresa MacBeth, Director Strategy Management and Communications, Kingston General Hospital
- Highlighted a different way of thinking about strategy to turn an organization in crisis into a top performer
- Innovative ways of engaging the community, installing a culture of performance management, using storytelling to connect people to the strategy and help bring it to life
- Tools used included balanced score card and story telling
- Talked to business and community leaders - what are you counting on us for? how can we live our values? what does outstanding public education look like and what made the experiences outstanding?
- Story telling tool has created a palpable sense of progress for staff at KGH; a confidence in the work they do
- Think about your organization specifically and think about one thing you would like to transform - not just something you want to get better at and what is one thing you might want to do better in terms of how you implement your strategy

Community Engagement/Conversation
- Focus the conversation
- Create many ways to participate
- Keep it positive
- Let people tell their stories
- Listen deeply
- Record everything
- Synthesize the input together
- Bring back the strategy in their words
- Start the story with WHERE we’re going
- ‘You can’t manage what you can’t measure; what gets measured, gets done!’

Continuous improvement, project management, change management
- Identify signature behaviours in the organization and audit the results
- Create metrics that align with your organization’s vision, mission, etc.
- Make it personal; have a ‘performance agreement’ for everyone
- Remember – keep the strategy visible; fill people’s lives with purposeful, strategic work; eliminate ‘busy’ work

Communications
- Various methods of communicating to stakeholders – corporate plan, annual report, quarterly reports, newsletter
- Continuing interest of staff and morale is challenging - how can you make it so that it doesn't feel like an add on; people at KGH resisted this in the beginning, part of it was their absolute commitment to delivering on the changes to be better. Authenticity of message and the stories you tell is so critical - most important things we've done. Results are only possible because of staff. We maintain a commitment to the laser focus on strategy. They tell the story about how the work is unfolding.

Sharing Leading Practices – Panel discussion (Chairs and Directors of Ottawa-Carleton DSB, Algoma DSB, and Conseil des écoles publiques de l'est de l-Ontario)

- Be aware of the timing of the creation of a new strategic plan; OCDSB creates a new strategic plan every 4 years, always after the first year of an election
- Pillars – equity, well-being, engagement, stewardship, learning
- Exit outcome – what we want for our graduates
- Sometime you get too much data so you need to have clear goals, alignment and measurement; need to have ‘SMART’ data, not just SMART goals
Monitoring
- performance indicators based on strategic planning
- each outcome becomes a measureable performance indicator
- activities included in the director of education’s performance agreement
- Board administration is aware of the achievement of outcome
- coaching and monitoring within each department

Monitoring and measurement
- Connections between key work, strategic objectives and measurement strategies
- Annual reports on each objective
- Qualitative and quantitative evidence; all boards have data available (per Ministry direction) that can be used for the annual report
- Using data to inform next steps
- Algoma DSB – created the Algoma Leadership Table to streamline community services (mental health, poverty, education, health & development, housing/property); collective impact for community well-being
- Due to the small size of the board, they needed to work together with services in their community to provide wrap around services for students
  - School must be in the community and the community should be in the school

Engaging Trustees
- Trustees are the board’s ears in their communities
- Ensure a good understanding of objectives and outcomes
- Engage expertise
- Annual feedback process
- Algoma DSB uses the committee of the whole meeting for information sharing so when trustees need to make a decision, they have all the information that they need to make the decision
- OCDSB emphasized that trustees need to balance advocating for their constituents and what the strategic plan indicates are the priorities of the board
- French board- harmonize their strategic planning exercise with the director of education’s performance agreement; put their strategic planning into action; give yourselves enough time by defining an internal evaluation cycle; important to present the process and SWOT analysis to stakeholders
- Lessons learned → important to ‘plannify’ the cycle of strategic planning (when to start and when to finish strategic planning; information need to be provided to trustees so they can understand the priorities, etc.)
- Strategic planning helped Algoma DSB to keep focused on the ‘what’ questions
- Respect, rules, responsibilities

Effective Preparation and Communication for Collective Bargaining – Panel discussion
- The panel provided participants with an overview of OPSBA’s communications and media relations strategies related to collective bargaining. The session included an interactive, consultation component on OPSBA’s future communication plans.
- Emphasized benefits of having one spokesperson, importance of confidentiality, pros and cons of ‘going public’ and use of social media
Art Thinking – Amy Whitaker, Author, ‘Art Thinking’; Assistant Professor of Visual Arts Management, NYU Steinhardt
- Introduction to the framework of art thinking and how to bring this kind of creativity into structured education settings
- Importance of teaching students not just to answer questions but to ask the questions that really matter
- Independent thinking, values of a liberal arts education and interdisciplinary approaches

Mitzie Hunter, Minister of Education
- Told her story; talked about her education in Pickering; education was an important part of her growing up and in her family
- How do we help community? Education is the key to helping communities thrive
- Well being journey – current consultation regarding what well being really means
- Public confidence in education involves many voices – student, parent, staff, trustees

Indira Naidoo-Harris, Associate Minister of Education
- Acknowledged that trustees are on the front lines, dealing with issues and forming our students
- Learning happens from ‘day one’
- Hubs for child care will help realize an integrated program with child care
- After school program for 6 to 12 year olds where there is sufficient demand

Toward Reconciliation: Understanding Our History – Treaties and Residential Schools
Elaine Johnston, Trustee, Algoma DSB; Chief of Serpent River First Nation
- Flower Woman is her spirit name. Given to her by her grandmother. Registered nurse. First woman and indigenous person to work for Health Canada. Worked with the Assembly of First Nations. Sat on the commission that oversaw the Truth and Reconciliation process;
- Her parents – both her father and mother attended residential school; her father wasn’t abused but impacted by what went on; when asked about his experience, he regrets that it took him away from his mother, father and extended family;
- Elaine was very much influenced by and close to her grandmother; learned a lot about her culture from her grandmother
- Her parents didn’t know how to parent because the residential school experience they had prevented them from learning how to bond with their families
- Difficult to make 500 years disappear in one year of truth and reconciliation process;
- The student experience in residential school – forbidden to speak their own language; sexual abuse; medical experiments; application of electric shock; bones broken; food quality and supply were bad; some kids died and they parents didn’t know they had died; punishments were plentiful; many didn’t fit in at home when they returned from school; residential schools caused PTSD; kids away from their parents for a long period of time so they lost all association with their culture, language, etc.
- How do we reconcile and move forward? It is about understanding the harm and avoiding making the same mistakes of the past.
What can we in education do? Commit to working to change the names of mascots that are a shame to indigenous peoples; need cultural stories and teachings in the schools; give opportunities for safe space for indigenous students; language in the schools; language stopped in the schools so schools need to be the place to bring language back; get access to funding that is available

**Bob Watt, Adjunct Professor, Queen's University**

- Tall Pine is his spirit name
- Acknowledge that this area served as a crossroads for many different First Nations
- Reconciliation is about indigenous protocols
- Referenced the inclusion of indigenous peoples in ceremonies at opening the Olympics in BC and the impact that inclusion had
- Truth and reconciliation recommendations are actually ‘calls to action’ for every part of society
- Cultural genocide that Canada has gone through; will take some time to work our way out of the damage caused over the years
- You don’t need to be an expert in these things because there are tons of resources for people who want to help turn this around
- ‘Snowflakes of reconciliation’ happening across this country will be the actual trickle down reconciliation, not just the grandiose ‘special events’
- Confederation was to unite diversity but indigenous peoples were left out of it; history of Canada has been written from the ‘empire’ perspective
- Test of civilization was ‘are you Christian?’ Indigenous peoples did not make the grade
- The ‘teepee was stronger than the classroom’ – solution was to form residential school system – ‘kill the Indian, save the child’; graveyards were put in the architectural plans of residential schools on the assumption that kids were going to die at the schools; kids didn’t see parent for many years, if ever
- As educators and as people who share this land, we have to think through what we’ve been told about indigenous peoples
- Celebrations of cultures are treated as special events and need to shift to making it part of the fabric of everyday life and education in the classroom
- Reconciliation is an opportunity to ‘refound’ this country
- Truth and reconciliation commissions are like ‘spring ice’ – if you grab it, it will crumble and shatter; if you treat it gently, you are rewarded with beautiful colours and light through the ice

**Social Media Fitness - Chris Vollum, President, CMV Social Media Inc.**

- Don’t get rid of social media, let’s get good at it!
- ‘fake news’ was really just half the news
- Students who use Facebook know there are important people (future influencers) who can affect their future
- We need to be on whatever platform our students are on
- Students want ‘likes’, ‘followers’, share, views and subscribers – WHY? To be more popular, attention recognized, famous and feel good; biggest fear of students is the ‘fear of missing out’
- Definitive link between stress, anxiety, depression and use of social media
- Apps are just things - choices, behaviour, values and peer pressure cause issues, not apps!
- A reasonable expectation of privacy
- Spend more time IRL (in real life) than online; balance
- Create exceptional content – as “What are you doing for others?”
- You don’t get really good at social media in grade 12. You need to get really good at social media the day you opened your accounts.
- The best experiences happen when you disconnect
- I am what I post and what I post online will affect my reputation always!
- Social media and hiring – competence, character, quality, intentionality, integrity, honesty, values, respect; listen more, post less, stay relevant, add value, respect

What we should do?
- 30 – 45 minutes daily
- Listen – learn – research – engage

**Social Media Panel – panel discussion** (Shawn McKillop, Communications, Grand Erie DSB; Chris Moore, Principal, Lambton-Kent DSB; Chris Vollum, President, CMV Social Media Inc.; T.J. Goertz, OPSBA, (moderator)
- Facebook used by parents primarily; used a lot for the beginning of FDK
- Schools using it a lot, high school; departments are using social media i.e., guidance accounts, arts accounts need to engage
- Student leadership group has a Twitter account; it’s good because it shows the student perspective
- The students are playful on line; can introduce humour to posts
- Some teachers have Twitter accounts; school wants them to make sure they are positive; student leadership group uses
- Is SnapChat useful for schools or is it individual? yes it can be used; clarify voice, tone, board’s objective; lead into telling stories about parent events, school events, etc.; start using baby steps; establish trust; ask students how to involve the school administration in SnapChat
- Media consent process is important
- School Website – calendar is always available and updated
- Many of the elementary administrators are using blogs rather than websites
- Keeping web sites up to date can be challenging
- Teachers using social media in the classroom; starting the kids young, engaging parents early; can be used to bring the world into the classroom
- Privacy concerns – eliminate the grey area – permission needs to be either yes or no; but parents can change their mind
- Fake news and propaganda in the age of the big lie - how do we determine fake news from skewed news from biased news; If you see something on one outlet, check other media outlets; it is about source; need to teach kids about social media at a young age because
they are going to be living it; trolls are the dark side of Twitter, don’t buy follows; block and report them

Central West Regional Council Meeting

- Discussion of 2016-2017 OPSBA Priorities – The Whole Child and Student Well-Being; New Generation Education; Advancing Reconciliation: First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education; Advocating for the Role of Trustees as Members of the Board and Building Leadership Capacity; Education Funding; Labour Relations
- Visit http://www.opsba.org/advocacy-and-action for more information on these priorities
- Education Program Work Team – EQAO discussion paper; effective practices re: indigenous education survey; well-being survey reminder
- Topics for board updates included French Immersion, transportation, accommodation reviews, declining enrolment