

# TRUSTEE CONFERENCE REPORT

**Name: Fred Meissner**

**Date Submitted: January 31, 2023**

**Name of Conference: OPSBA PES**

**Sponsoring Organization: WRDSB**

**Theme (if any): Opportunity & Optimism**

**Conference Dates: January 26-28, 2023**

**Location: Toronto Sheraton Centre**

## **Workshops/Seminars/Presentations/Keynote Speeches Attended:**

### **January 26, 2023: Opening Ceremonies:**

Cathy Abraham, OPSBA President; Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education

### **January 27, 2023: Keynote Speaker**

Nicholas A. Christakis, Sterling Professor of Social & Natural Science, Author of *Apollo's Arrow*

- "Moving Forward from the COV-19 Pandemic"
- "Pandemics call for great wisdom, in our leaders and in ourselves, but we can use what we and our ancestors have learned to guide our actions towards a successful exit."

Ken Jeffers, Associate Director of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion OPSBA

- "Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Word Salad with a Slice of Privilege Pie on the Side"
- "Words matter and in the context of equity, diversity, anti-racism, accessibility and inclusion, it can be confusing, overwhelming, intimidating and even uncomfortable to ask questions and fully understand what's being said, why and which terms are most appropriate and when is best to use them."
- A powerful, interactive session that allowed trustees to experience and discuss the ongoing issues surrounding the language of equity, diversity and inclusion

Dr. Paul Cormier, Indigenous Trustee Superior Greenstone DSB

- "Aki Gakinoomaagewin—Teachings (Learning) from the Earth (Land)"
- "The goal of this workshop is to help participants rethink education through an Indigenous lens of peace and violence. By privileging Anishinaabeg ways of learning that embraces respect for Aki [Earth], we can transform the education system to improve outcomes for all students."

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- Dr. Cormier asks trustees to learn about local indigenous history, to give land acknowledgements, to bring indigenous leaders into the schools, and to have a heart for one another

Shane Gonsalves, Managing Director, Government & Public Affairs, OPSBA

Stephanie Donaldson, Executive Director, OPSBA

- “Communications Workshop for New Trustees”
- A very informative session dealing with our communications environments and how to navigate them effectively

## January 28, 2023

Central West Regional Council Meeting

- A session for new trustees in boards of this region to meet, hear updates from each board, and prioritize areas for OPSBA to focus on in the future

Panel Discussion: “Moving Forward–Hot Topics and Issues in Education”

- Stephanie Donaldson, Executive Director, OPSBA
- Isabelle Girard, Executive Director, ACEPO
- Shane Gonsalves, Managing Director, Government & Public Affairs, OPSBA
- Nancy Naylor, Deputy Minister of Education
- Camille Williams-Taylor, Director of Education, Durham DSB
- Powerful discussions regarding staff shortages, recruitment, and retention for French language teachers, violence in the classroom, mental health support, and equity, diversity, and inclusion