

TRUSTEE CONFERENCE REPORT

Name: Natalie Waddell
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Name of Conference: OPSBA PES 2019
Sponsoring Organization: OPSBA
Theme: Stronger Together Public Education
Conference Dates: January 24 - 26, 2019
Location: Toronto, Ontario

Workshops/Seminars/Presentations/Keynote Speeches Attended

EDUCATING IN A WORLD WHERE EDUCATION IS EVERYTHING

Don Drummond, Adjunct Professor, Queen's University

Consensus is building that education is the answer to many of societies' goals including stronger economic growth, less poverty and better health outcomes. These aspirations will be on a collision course with constrained public resources. Better ways of delivering education will be required but ideology too often prevails over evidence in that dialogue.

Managing Polarization in Public Consultation

Eric Bergman, Media Training Consultant

Introduced to The Polarization Model, a unique tool that provides a strategic approach for understanding, tracking and effectively managing polarization. This model demonstrates how it can be possible to use openly hostile views to move opinions to a more positive perspective.

The session also discussed trust as an important catalyst to managing issues effectively, and draws a clear line to the equally important concept of transparency. Was introduced to a novel working definition of transparency: "Ask me anything."

The session concluded by outlining the value—and the difficulty—of answering questions effectively to enhance communication and transparency.

Key takeaways:

- Bridging the gap between trust and transparency
- It takes skills at answering questions effectively
- It takes time to move peoples' opinions
- Don't go into a contentious public meeting and do a powerpoint presentation of information - people won't hear, as they are anxiously awaiting opportunity to ask questions.
- Strategy for answering questions - Pause, Answer, Stop Talking. Think before answering and cut the bureaucratic answers.

- Message you want to ultimately portray is “I’m part of the elite, but I am listening to you and your concerns are important to me.”

Parliamentary Procedures - FOUNDATIONAL CONCEPTS FOR EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

Lori Lukinuk, Certified Parliamentarian

This workshop will focus on the foundational concepts upon which parliamentary procedure is based. We will identify the steps used to properly process motions and work through the most commonly used motions, *Main Motion*, *Amend*, and *Amend an Amendment*. Time permitting, we will also deal with the motions to commit and postpone. This workshop will be a great refresher for veteran board members and those new to the position or those who are unsure of their present processes.

Key takeaway: Clarify in bylaws how to handle abstentions. Abstaining give the rest of the board the job of making the decision on your behalf. Does board bylaw state abstention is equal to a non-vote or a nay vote? Can make the difference when close vote.

Parliamentary Procedures - BEYOND THE BASICS: BUILDING ON THE FOUNDATION

Lori Lukinuk, Certified Parliamentarian

This workshop will focus on what is often the most difficult and longest step in processing a motion, that being debate of a motion. We will discuss proper decorum in debate and what debate is and more importantly, what it is not. This workshop will also teach how to properly question when you feel the agreed to and adopted rules are not being adhered to and how to challenge a ruling from the chair. We will work through both motions, *Point of Order* and *Appeal from the Decision of the Chair*.

Key takeaways:

- Make a sheet of “special rules”
- Procedural rules should only appear in appendices and should be separate from bylaws
- Don’t put rules in bylaws that you may want to suspend

OPENING CEREMONIES

Lisa Thompson, Minister of Education

“Equal access to supports, regardless of where you are in the province”.

The Importance of Teamwork

Michael "Pinball" Clemons

Few people exemplify the qualities of personal excellence, teamwork, community leadership, and overcoming the odds better than CFL legend Michael "Pinball" Clemons. With boundless energy, Pinball's talks centre on the potential for each of us to achieve anything we set our minds to.

How OPSBA Supports Trustees and School Boards

JENNIFER MCINTYRE, Director of Policy, OPSBA

MAY MOORE, Director of Communications, OPSBA

JUDITH NYMAN, Director of Program Policy, OPSBA

Learn about OPSBA and how it provides support, advocacy and timely information to assist trustees in their day to day practice. OPSBA staff will walk you through OPSBA Board and committee structures, regional meetings, how to navigate the OPSBA website and how you can become more involved and informed on a provincial level. The key areas of Program, Policy, Finance and Communication will be highlighted.

Trustees and Their Boards – The Legal Framework

MICHAEL HINES, Partner, Hicks Morley LLP

This presentation, a "Trustees and the Law 101", will give you an overview of the critical legal parameters of your role. What is the role of the individual trustee? Who does what? When can boards meet "in camera"? How does the law deal with conflicts of interest? Can trustees ever be held individually liable? When and how can the Ministry intervene? You won't want to miss this workshop delivered by one of Ontario's most experienced school board lawyers!

Key Takeaways:

- In camera reasons - addition of ongoing investigation under Ombudsman Act
- Conflict of Interest - even though only pecuniary conflicts are required to be declared under Acts, it is reasonable that someone should declare non-pecuniary interests
- Liability - individual trustees not responsible for decisions, as they are made by the board as a whole.

