

TRUSTEE CONFERENCE REPORT

Name: Kathleen Woodcock Date Submitted: July 23, 2019
Name of Conference: National Trustees Gathering on Indigenous Education, CSBA Congress and OPSBA's AGM
Sponsoring Organization:
Theme (If any): Leading Today with a Vision for Tomorrow
Conference Dates: July 3 - 6, 2019
Location: Westin Harbour Castle Hotel, Toronto
Workshops/Seminars/Presentations/Keynote Speeches Attended:
(Include a brief Summary)

Wednesday, July 3, 2019

Healing the Wound with the Weapon: Reconciliation and Public Education

Kevin Lamoureux, Associate Vice President, Indigenous Affairs, University of Winnipeg

- Exploration of the role of public education in reconciliation, particularly in the areas of trauma and identity
- *Truth and Reconciliation, Calls to Action* - Asked the audience when reading the 94 Calls to Action, to pay particular attention to call to action #62.2 which reads: "We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments, in consultation and collaboration with Survivors, Aboriginal peoples, and educators, to: ... ii) Provide the necessary funding to post-secondary institutions to educate teachers on how to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms."
- Spoke about the intergenerational trauma experienced by many as a result of residential schools, "*what we don't transform, we will transmit*"; 'blood memory', a genetic response to trauma
- Trauma-informed practice and pedagogy includes kindness and empathy; flexibility and adaptability; equity vs. equality
- Mino-pimatisiwin = the good-life, or life in the fullest, healthiest sense; living in a good way; even present goal of growth and healing and includes efforts by individuals, families, communities, people in general, and all life entities

Thursday, July 4, 2019

Dr. Paulette Tremblay, CEO, Assembly of First Nations

- 634 chiefs across Canada comprise the Assembly of First Nations
- Reconciliation as to be done together, Indigenous and non-Indigenous people
- Diversity thrives within the Assembly; concentrate on building relationships
- First Nations peoples have a relationship with the land that transcends other relationships
- Treaties are used by First Nations vs. Land Acts (British North American Act) are used by the government in decision-making and negotiations
- Information about the work of the Assembly of First Nations found at <https://www.afn.ca/about-afn/>

- Presentation available on OPSBA's web site: <https://www.opsba.org/events-and-publications/agm-program>

Closing the Graduation Gap: The Indigenous Graduation Coach

Sean Monteith, Director of Education, Keewatin-Patricia DSB; Jennifer McMaster, Vice-Principal at Sioux North HS/Four Directions Administrator; Michelle Kowalchuk, Graduation Coach at Red Lake DHS

- Started their journey of closing the gap by visiting *Braided Journeys* in Edmonton, a program intended to support First Nations, Métis and Inuit youth to become leaders of character, vision and action
- The team met with Indigenous leaders and staff to plan the program which is focused on ensuring the student voice is present, valued and heard
- Presentation available on OPSBA's web site: https://www.opsba.org/EVENTS%20AND%20PUBLICATIONS/Documents/CSBANTGIE_2-ClosingTheGraduationGap.pdf

Student Panel, introduced by Chief Elaine Johnston, Trustee, Algoma DSB Katelyn Wildgoose, Marek McLeod, Amara Ruffo

- The students responded to various questions regarding their school experience and the importance of student voice
 - What did you like about school?
 - Friends, some programs (SWACK), social aspects
 - Challenges you saw/how to address?
 - Talk about mental health every day, rather than one specific week
 - More counsellors
 - Some teachers not interested in teaching
 - Not safe to open up to teachers
 - Teachers overwhelmed by size of classes
 - Felt 'stuck in a box' or 'routine' and nothing appealed to him (academic was more valued than the arts)
 - What advice would they give to the audience?
 - Put more effort into teaching and motivating the kids
 - Talking one on one between teachers and student
 - Make topics more entertaining; attach stories to the learning\
 - 'market' the programs better to students
 - Differentiated learning/teaching
 - School kills creativity

I was unable to attend the following sessions due to a scheduling conflict. Presentations are available on the OPSBA web site at <https://www.opsba.org/events-and-publications/agm-program>

- *Anishinaabemodaa: The Ojibwe Language Strategy*, presented by Heather Campell, RRDSB & Mike Parkhill, SayItFirst, Inc.
- *Indigegogy: An Indigenous Informed Educational Approach Rooted in Love and Healing*, presented by Malcolm Saulis

Friday, July 5, 2019

Peer Orientation: Why Children are Stressed, Why Parents and Teachers are Disempowered and How to Restore a Health Balance in Adult-Child Relationships

Dr. Gabor Maté, www.drgabormate.com

- Spoke about attachment drive, attachment void and attachment loss (implications include shut down emotionally, don't want to be vulnerable, making of bullies and victims, inappropriate desperate sexuality, and adaptive learning)
- **Kids become 'peer attached' when they don't get it from caring adults**
- **A must read...*In The Realm of Hungry Ghosts* book**

Fostering Resilience in a Stressed Culture

Dr. Gabor Maté

- Session focused on the causes and underlying dynamics of the challenges faced by today's children – and therefore, by the adults tasked with nurturing and educating them
- The most important feature of any approach to resilience needs to be the attachment relationship between children and the adults responsible for their care, unpleasant reactions and interactions.
- Avoid conflict by keeping each other at an emotional arm's length, creating yet another impediment to genuine connection
- Bully – an attempt to gain dominance and exploit the vulnerability of the person; dominance of Alpha instinct without caring
- Education is very hierarchical; the culture in schools needs to be more democratic
- Inclusiveness in a high school setting – create a culture of community at the beginning of the school year; stressed teachers are teaching stressed kids – self-care is critical
- How are teachers going to 'attach' to students they don't treat well? 1) human needs are for respect, loved, cared for; 2) there are no such things as cultural differences, just basic human differences; this culture massively lets down its immigrants
- Victims are vulnerable to due to lack of healthy attachment to an adult
- Dr. Maté thinks cell phones should be banned in schools; kids shouldn't have cell phones until they are ready, "collect them before you direct them"

OPSBA AGM

The following trustees were acclaimed in their respective roles:

- Cathy Abraham (Kawartha Pine Ridge DSB), President
- Michael Barrett (Durham DSB), 1st Vice-President
- Carol Anne Sloat (Grand Erie DSB), 2nd Vice-President

The voting delegates passed the minutes from last year's meeting and carried the Strategic Priorities as outlined in the AGM material. Constitutional amendments and policy resolutions were carried.

Saturday, July 6, 2019

Making Public Education – and Your Leadership – Matter in a Kim Kardashian World

Brian Woodland, Brianinspires: Speak-consult-Inspire

- Using a very quick presentation style and entertaining, pointed stories and examples, Brian spoke about breaking through the clutter and delivering key message, both internally and externally
- Gained an awareness of new vs. old techniques and tools, understood the role of social media as integral to PR and understood what will make an impact on a hard-to-reach public
- Ask yourself "what have I done for students today? – a way to measure how you are doing
- Presentation can be found at <http://bit.ly/CSBAEdMatters>

Cross Canada Check-in and CSBA Strategic Plan

Moderated by Laurie French, President, CSBA

- Representatives from Newfoundland & Labrador, British Columbia, New Brunswick, Quebec (English), Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Quebec (French), Alberta and Ontario provided highlights of the work each provincial organization is doing to address issues in their jurisdiction
- Some commonalities include strategic planning, budget/funding issues, advocacy initiatives

OPSBA Regional Council Elections

The following trustees were elected/acclaimed in their respective roles in Central West Region:

- Donna Danielli (Halton DSB), Vice-President
- Kathleen Woodcock (Waterloo Region DSB), Vice-Chair
- Jeanne Gray (Halton DSB) and Linda Busitil (Upper Grand DSB) – Policy Work Team
- Amy Collard (Halton DSB) and Alex Johnstone (Hamilton-Wentworth DSB) – Program Work Team

In addition to the professional development/educational session, the networking opportunities available at this event are important to learn more about the educational landscape in other provinces. Most importantly, the opportunity to learn and understand the intricacies of implementation from different, often conflicting perspectives, of the calls to action in the Truth and Reconciliation Report compels one to think deeply about our individual and collective responsibilities regarding Indigenous reconciliation.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathleen Woodcock