

TRUSTEE CONFERENCE REPORT

Name: Kathleen Woodcock

Date Submitted: July 4, 2023

Name of Conference: Annual General Meeting

Sponsoring Organization: Ontario Public School Boards' Association

Theme (if any): *Celebrating 35 Years – Embracing the Future Together*

Conference Dates: June 8 - 10, 2023

Location: Westin Trillium Resort, Blue Mountain, Ontario

Workshops/Seminars/Presentations/Keynote Speeches Attended:

Celebrating 35 Years of OPSBA reception and networking

Team Subban's Vision for Success - How Did You Do It?

Karl Subban

Mr. Subban shared anecdotes about defining and achieving success. Subban believes anyone can, and everyone should, reach their true potential.

Supporting Every Student's Mental Health and Well-Being

Toni Lauzon, Implementation Coach & Equity and Identity-Affirming Mental Health Consultant, School Mental Health Ontario

[Toni Lauzon presentation](#)

Annual General Meeting

Elections Nominations Results

OPSBA Annual Report 2022-23

OPSBA Multi-Year Strategic Priorities

Guided by the Mission, Vision and Values, OPSBA's advocacy and support for school boards will focus on the following multi-year strategic priorities:

- *Student Success, Equity, and Well-Being* - OPSBA promotes and advances high-quality, equitable, and inclusive learning environments to support student success and well-being.

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- *Local School Board Governance* - OPSBA supports the role and leadership of local, democratically elected school boards in Ontario's English public education system.
- *Truth and Reconciliation* - OPSBA develops and strengthens relationships to facilitate access to programs, resources and supports for Indigenous and non-Indigenous students that reflect the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action.
- *Effective Relationship and Sustainable Resourcing* - OPSBA works with members, partners, the government and Federations/Unions to ensure that fiscal and human resources match school board needs and priorities.

In the Boardroom - How Great Boards Meet

Presenter - Marion Thomson-Howell

The best board meetings are ones in which trustees engage in meaningful discussion and make decisions that advance the objectives of the school system. The worst meetings are those in which trustees spend their time arguing among themselves, focusing on issues that belong to staff and run on for hours into the night. This workshop highlighted best practices that reflect how to lead and participate in great meetings and avoid getting trapped into practices that reflect the worst.

[Marion Thomson--Howell Presentation](#)

What Does Bill 98 Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act mean for Trustees and School Boards?

Panel - Jennifer Feren, Board Lawyer, DSB of Niagara; Sheila MacKinnon, Partner, Shibley Righton LLP; Jennifer McIntyre, Director of Policy, OPSBA (moderator)

Discussion included a review of the latest cases on Defamation and Trustees and the Balancing of Freedom of Speech and Human Rights during a Board Meeting Delegation

[OPSBA Submission re: Bill 98](#)

[BC Case](#)

[Bluewater DSB Case](#)

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Governance Panel: Successful Director of Education and Chairperson Relationships

Panel - Rachel Chernos Lin, Board Chair, Toronto DSB; Colleen Russell-Rawlins, Director of Education, Toronto DSB; Jodi Lloyd, Board Chair, Simcoe County DSB; John Dance, Director of Education, Simcoe County DSB; Shane Gonsalves, Managing Director, Government & Public Affairs, OPSBA (moderator)

Interesting discussion about the professional, working relationship between the Board Chair and Director of Education.

Keynote Speaker

Njeri Damali Sojourner-Campbell, Associate, Hicks Morley LLP

Through her strategic advising practice, Njeri helps school boards realize the potential of their workplaces through the development of policies and procedures, the design and delivery of legal seminars for systems leaders, and, when the need arises, resolution of legal disputes through mediation and litigation. Njeri works with school boards, municipalities, hospitals, and non-profit organizations in human rights and equity restructuring initiatives involving strategic advising and policy augmentation.