

TRUSTEE CONFERENCE REPORT

Name: Kathleen Woodcock Date Submitted: September 30, 2019

Name of Conference: WRDSB Principals Conference 2019

Sponsoring Organization: Ontario Principals Council

Theme (If any): Moving Forward

Conference Dates: September 26 - 27, 2019

Location: Ivey Spencer Leadership Centre, London, Ontario

Workshops/Seminars/Presentations/Keynote Speeches Attended:

(Include a brief summary)

Thursday, September 26, 2019

- Registration and welcome social gathering
- Opening Ceremonies
 - o Prior to dinner, remarks from Principals Conference Planning Committee chair, WRDSB chairperson and Director of Education
- Team Building Activity
 - o Teams were pre-arranged to participate in a scavenger hunt on the site of the Ivey Spencer Leadership Centre
 - o Using clues provided digitally, teams spread out to respond to the clues, document (group selfies in the pre-named destination) and submit responses
 - o Good spirited, friendly rivalry combined with team building, problem-solving and observation skills provided a fun way to network

Friday, September 27, 2019

- *Keynote address, 'Dealing with Traumatic Events', Presenter - Frank De Angelis*
 - o Former Principal of Columbine High School, provided insight to how he is moving on 20 years after the shooting that left 13 people, one teacher and 12 students, dead
 - o Mr. De Angelis shared that he recites the names of all those who died that day first thing in the morning when he gets out of bed
 - o He made references to the power of counselling and his faith, both of which kept him going during the darkest days
 - o He provided insight into the personal toll the shooting and its aftermath took on him – divorce, estrangement from his family, depression, survivor guilt and more
 - o He covers the country (USA and Canada) talking with principals and communities that have fallen victim to recent school shootings
 - o As stated in an interview with CNN (<https://www.cnn.com/2019/04/20/us/columbine-shooting-anniversary-principal-frank-deangelis-20-years/index.html>), he felt the need to help rebuild the community:
 - “After the shooting, Frank "felt this enormous burden to go rebuild that community," he said. That's when he made the promise to stay at Columbine until the Class of 2002 had graduated. Other staff members made the same commitment, he said.”
 - o The emotional presentation was moving beyond words
 - o Mr. De Angelis has a new memoir out, “*They Call Me 'Mr. De'*”

Communications Department seminar, 'Telling Your School's Story', Presenters - Lynsey Slupeiks and Ross Howey, WRDSB Communications Department

- Provided valuable tips to attendees about resources available to principals to help with social media and website construction/maintenance
- They talked about logo branding/rebranding, use of in-house systems, e.g., School Day and alternative methods of engagement for those in a school community who may not have the technology available to them to participate in on-line surveys or access websites
- Excellent refresher for me in that I was reminded of the myriad of resources that the staff team in Communications can provide to schools to get our WRDSB schools' stories 'out there'

In addition to the professional development/educational and motivational sessions, the networking opportunities available at this event are important as an opportunity to learn about the challenges and successes experienced by principals and vice principals in the schools.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathleen Woodcock