

**Board Meeting
Chair's Update - Susan Humphries
29 January 2019**

There a number of items that occurred during the past two months that I would like to take the opportunity to highlight:

Director's Annual Review:

In mid-November Director Buffone shared with us a comprehensive review of his past year as well as some priorities that he plans to work on in the upcoming year. All of the trustees had an opportunity to provide feedback and this summary was provided to our Director in mid-December. A few comments by the trustees that you might find interesting:

- (there was growth in) “understanding the rural communities of Renfrew County: their culture, character, values and loyalties; their engagement profile, their children, their schools and their school staff’s,”;
- “His willingness to do what is right and not just what is expedient. By doing this he builds trust in the system and community.”;
- “(pleased with) The strength of leadership demonstrated in all areas making a well-rounded, cohesive, progressive and forward thinking district that will provide excellent education for our students.”;
- “extremely pleased that our Director has a strong provincial presence and involvement”.

Of course there were suggestions for areas of growth but basically we felt that an A+ was an appropriate rating on his annual “report card”. Thank you for a great year and we are looking forward to our upcoming year.

Creativity and Innovation committee meeting:

I had the opportunity to join this group for a meeting in mid-December. Wonderful to see the broad cross section of staff and student voice through our student trustees. A challenging task to work through and develop the conditions for ensuring creativity and innovation at all levels and especially for our students. More work will be done over the spring so stay tuned!

Attendance of our Board at the Public Education Symposium:

It was wonderful that the majority of our Trustees were able to attend PES last week. There were over 350 trustees from across the Province with over 50% being new trustees! This is a great networking and educational opportunity that we always encourage our trustees to attend annually. Speakers and panels told us about the

economy, understanding the roles of the trustee, parliamentary procedure rules for meetings, the role of the Ontario Public School Board Association (OPSBA) in upcoming negotiations, supporting student leaders and how to find the “sweet spot” in leadership as described by Michael “Pinball” Clemons!and there were many more topics! The Minister of Education, Lisa Thompson, also joined us for part of an evening session.

We are especially proud of our Student Trustee Sean McCloskey who was one of a panel of 5 student trustees from across the province. They presented a session about how boards can support the students in ways that will ensure we will have that important student voice at our table. Several of us sat in on his session and you can be assured that we were very proud of Sean as a representative from the RCDSB!

Gayle Bishop’s retirement:

As our Director has noted in his report, Gayle Bishop, one of our Superintendents, has chosen to retire! It has been my pleasure to work with Gayle closely over the past few years as she had the responsibility for my family of schools in Renfrew. I knew that she would always respond to any concerns that I shared with her and that she would make sure that everyone who needed to be involved was involved. She always has a quiet calming way about her that immediately helps to bring any situation to a different level. I appreciated her patience with me as a new trustee as I learned and continue to learn how our roles intersect and interconnect. We will sincerely miss Gayle around the Boardroom table and I will truly miss Gayle in my Family of Schools. Thank you so much for all you have done to ensure that we are providing the very best we can for each and every student. And of course enjoy your retirement- you have earned it!

Bell let’s talk day Jan 30

Just a quick reminder that tomorrow is Bell Let’s Talk Day. Dedicated to moving mental health forward in Canada, Bell Let’s Talk promotes awareness and action with a strategy built on 4 key pillars: fighting the stigma, improving access to care, supporting world-class research and leading by example in workplace mental health. Tomorrow Bell will donate 5 cents for every applicable text, call, tweet, social media video view and use of their Facebook frame or Snapchat filter. In 2018, there were over 138 million interactions. We need to keep having important conversations about mental health and this allows us to raise money as well.... let’s talk.