

## **Director's Report – March 8, 2016**

### **1. EDPS Welcomes Syrian Students**

After months of planning and preparation by the Valley Welcome Committee, EDPS staff and students were excited to finally meet their new Syrian students and their family. Receiving classrooms prepared for their arrival by engaging in a brief study of the Middle East, more specifically its language and customs. With the help of Google Translate, the entire newcomer family toured the school in anticipation of their first day. The children were so excited, they wanted to start immediately, as this would be their first opportunity to attend school on a regular basis. On January 25th, Eganville District Public School welcomed their Syrian newcomer children as official students at EDPS. Three highly motivated students, with huge smiles entered the front doors, ready to begin their educational journey. During the last month, these three students, one in JK, one in Grade 4 and one in Grade 5 have impressed everyone at the school with their enthusiasm and patience to learn in spite of the language barrier. Staff is also excited to engage in their new learning journey around not only meeting the needs of the new language learners, but also to further enrich the diverse make up of the school. The new students have been well accepted by their peers and school community. EDPS is very thankful to have been given the opportunity to be involved in the education of these three amazing students!

In addition, Walter Zadow PS and Mackenzie Community School have also welcomed Syrian students into their schools!

### **2. Opeongo HS Technology and Coop Departments Celebrated**

The OHS Tech and Coop departments have received some well-deserved recognition this month. The success of the wood working department, under the leadership of Mr. Barry Pilgrim created a showcase of student wood working projects that caught the attention of visitors to the school, including those who attended the Grade 9 Orientation Night. A solid foundation of welding skills developed under the leadership and instruction of Mr. Michael Sinclair contributed to the success of many students, including Yvonne Kirkpatrick during her coop placement at Canadian Nuclear Laboratories (CNL) in Chalk River last semester. Yvonne's skills led to an early start to her welding career through the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program.

### **3. Building Character at ADHS**

On Friday, February 19th, 2016, ADHS was proud to host Kate Whitfield and Mark Hatfield for a tremendous day of character building for its students. Students had the opportunity to listen to inspirational presentations by the two speakers and the female students conducted informal discussions amongst themselves designed to help girls break down barriers, connect with each other and develop stronger relationships and a deeper understanding that "as girls, we really are all on the same team". Meanwhile, male students participated in leadership development activities with their classroom teachers including a large outdoor "snow football" game. The fun-filled day ended with a students-vs-teachers basketball game and a musical coffee house, both of which the students thoroughly enjoyed.

### **4. Horizons Leadership Conference Empowers Students**

On Tuesday February 23rd, student leaders from each high school in the RCDSB had the incredible opportunity to attend Horizon's Leadership Conference held at Renfrew Collegiate Institute. Horizons is designed to inspire, empower and motivate students to make a difference at their schools by providing valuable professional development through one-day, regional conferences. The day began with keynote presentations from youth speakers Stu Saunders and Nick Foley, before leading into a share session facilitated by the students themselves. Leaders from different schools had the opportunity to share in discussing ideas, experiences, and initiatives as students came away from the day with more insight into the valuable roles they play in each of our school communities.