

**RENFREW COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**

**MINUTES OF INAUGURAL BOARD MEETING HELD ON DECEMBER 5, 2017**

**at 4:05 p.m.**

MEMBERS: Present: M. Adam; L. Boland; K. Dunsmoor-Lough; S. Humphries;  
B. Morris; W. Hewitt; D. Kaiser;  
Sean McCloskey (Student Trustee)

Absent  
With Regret: D. Shields, N. Edge (Student Trustee)

STAFF: P. Buffone; G. Bishop; S. Blok; B. McIntyre; J. Poirier;  
L. Schimmens; J. Laderoute; S. McIntyre

The meeting was called to order. Pino Buffone, Director of Education and Secretary to the Board, chaired the meeting until the election of the new Chairperson.

Director P. Buffone gave the invocation.

138. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS

Director P. Buffone asked for declarations of conflict. None were forthcoming.

139. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOVED BY B. MORRIS, seconded by S. Humphries that the Renfrew County District School Board approves the agenda for today's meeting.

The motion was CARRIED

140. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

MOVED BY K. DUNSMOOR-LOUGH, seconded by B. Morris that the Renfrew County District School Board confirms the minutes of the meeting held on November 28, 2017.

The motion was CARRIED

141. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON

The Director presided during the election of the Chairperson and asked for nominations from the floor for the position of Chairperson.

MOVED BY S. HUMPHRIES, seconded by B. Morris that Trustee Wendy Hewitt be nominated for the position of Chairperson of the Board for the coming year.

W. Hewitt indicated that she was willing to serve as Chairperson of the Board.

ON MOTION OF S. HUMPHRIES, seconded by B. Morris nominations for the position of Chairperson of the Board were closed.

The motion was CARRIED

Trustee Wendy Hewitt assumed her position as Chairperson of the Board.

142. CHAIRPERSON'S ADDRESS

Chairperson W. Hewitt thanked Trustee Humphries for the nomination, Trustee Morris for seconding the nomination, and to all trustees for supporting her decision to represent all Trustees as the Chair of Renfrew County District School Board (RCDSB). Chair Hewitt looks forward to continuing to work with an amazing group of educators and team as we grow in curiosity and creativity together. See Appendix "A" for Chair Hewitt's address.

143. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRPERSON

The Chairperson presided during the election of the Vice-Chairperson and asked for nominations from the floor for the position of Vice-Chairperson.

MOVED BY K. DUNSMOOR-LOUGH, seconded by D. Kaiser that Trustee Susan Humphries be nominated for the position of Vice-Chairperson of the Board for the coming year.

S. Humphries indicated that she was willing to serve as Vice-Chairperson of the Board.

ON MOTION OF K. DUNSMOOR-LOUGH, seconded by D. Kaiser nominations for the position of Vice-Chairperson of the Board were closed.

The motion was CARRIED

Trustee Susan Humphries assumed her position of Vice-Chairperson of the Board.

144. COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

The Board proceeded to set up the Committee Structure (see Appendix "B") and agreed that all members of the Board would sit on the Finance, Facilities and Services Committee, the Program and Personnel Services Committee and the Joint Session of Committees.

Trustees proceeded to elect the Chairpersons of the following Committees:

(a) Chairperson – Finance, Facilities and Services Committee

MOVED BY B. MORRIS, seconded by D. Kaiser that Trustee Marjorie Adam be nominated for the position of Chairperson of the Finance, Facilities and Services Committee.

Trustee M. Adam indicated that she was willing to serve as Chairperson of the Finance, Facilities and Services Committee.

ON MOTION OF B. MORRIS, seconded by D. Kaiser, nominations for the position of Chairperson of the Finance, Facilities and Services Committee were closed.

The motion was CARRIED

Trustee Marjorie Adam was declared Chairperson of the Finance, Facilities and Services Committee.

(b) Chairperson – Program and Personnel Services Committee

MOVED BY K. DUNSMOOR-LOUGH, seconded by M. Adam that Trustee Leo Boland be nominated for the position of Chairperson of the Program and Personnel Services Committee.

Trustee L. Boland indicated that he was willing to serve as Chairperson of the Program and Personnel Services Committee.

ON MOTION OF K. DUNSMOOR-LOUGH, seconded by M. Adam, nominations for the position of Chairperson of the Program and Personnel Services Committee were closed.

The motion was CARRIED

Trustee Leo Boland was declared Chairperson of the Program and Personnel Services Committee.

(c) Chairperson – Joint Session of Committees

The Board's Vice-Chairperson, S. Humphries, automatically is the Chairperson of the Joint Session of Committees.

(d) Audit Committee

Trustees M. Adam, L. Boland and B. Morris volunteered to sit on the Audit Committee.

(e) Character Development Committee

Trustee D. Shields and Trustee B. Morris volunteered to serve on the Character Development Committee.

(f) Communications and Technology Committee

Trustees D. Kaiser and B. Morris volunteered to serve on the Communications and Technology Committee.

(g) Director's Advisory Committee on Indigenous Education

Trustees L. Boland and M. Adam agreed to serve on the Director's Advisory Committee on Indigenous Education.

(h) Director's Review

The Director's Review Committee consists of the Chairperson of the Board, W. Hewitt, Vice-Chairperson of the Board, S. Humphries; Past Chairperson of the Board, D. Shields; and the Chairperson of the Program and Personnel Services Committee, L. Boland.

(i) Parent Involvement Committee

Trustee K. Dunsmoor-Lough volunteered to serve on the Parent Involvement Committee.

(j) Accessibility Committee

Trustee K. Dunsmoor-Lough volunteered to serve on the Accessibility Committee.

(k) Policy Review Committee

Chairperson of the Board, W. Hewitt; Vice-Chair S. Humphries, Trustees B. Morris and D. Kaiser agreed to serve on the Policy Review Committee.

(l) Calendar Committee

Trustee L. Boland agreed to serve on the Calendar Committee.

(m) Student Senate

Trustee K. Dunsmoor-Lough agreed to continue serving on the Student Senate.

(n) Supervised Alternative Learning

One Trustee is required to attend Supervised Alternative Learning meetings.

(o) Discipline

The Board's Chairperson, W. Hewitt, automatically sits on Disciplinary Committee meetings as well as two Trustees.

(p) Renfrew County Joint Transportation Consortium Board of Directors

Chairperson W. Hewitt asked for one Trustee to join M. Adam, Chairperson of the Finance, Facilities and Services Committee on the Renfrew County Joint Transportation Consortium Board of Directors. Trustee L. Boland agreed to serve on this Committee.

(q) Ontario Public School Boards' Association

Chairperson W. Hewitt asked for Trustees to sit as the Board representative on the Ontario Public School Boards' Association.

Vice-Chair S. Humphries indicated she is willing to serve as the Board Director on the Ontario Public School Boards' Association.

Trustee M. Adam volunteered to serve as the Board's alternative representative on the Ontario Public School Boards' Association.

Trustee D. Shields volunteered to serve as the Board's voting delegate on the Ontario Public School Boards' Association.

(r) Special Education Advisory Committee

According to the Education Act, two trustees plus two alternates sit on the Special Education Advisory Committee. Trustee B. Morris and Trustee D. Shields agreed to sit as members on the S.E.A.C. Committee and Trustees K. Dunsmoor-Lough and D. Kaiser agreed to be the alternate members of that Committee.

MOVED BY S. HUMPHRIES, seconded by M. Adam that the Renfrew County District School Board confirms the Trustee membership on the Special Education Advisory Committee, the Director's Advisory Committee on Indigenous Education, Audit Committee, Character Development Committee, Calendar Committee, Communications and Technology Committee, Student Senate, Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL), Discipline, Renfrew County Joint Transportation Consortium Board of Directors, Parent Involvement Committee, Accessibility Committee, Policy Review Committee, Director's Review, Director, Alternate and Voting Delegate for the Ontario Public School Boards' Association.

The motion was CARRIED

145. Director's Annual Report

The Director of Education, P. Buffone, presented his final Director's Annual Report. Director Buffone proudly went through the report to highlight the many achievements and moments of pride over the course of the 2016-2017 school year. See Appendix "C". Mr. Buffone indicated that the preparation of this report was a team effort and thanked his team for their assistance. A copy of the 2016-2017 Director's Annual Report will be posted on the Board's website.

MOVED BY D. KAISER, seconded by M. Adam that the Renfrew County District School Board receives the 2016-2017 Director's Annual Report.

The motion was CARRIED

REPORTS TO THE BOARD FOR ACTION – SYSTEM REPORTS146. Signing Officer and Borrowing Resolutions

(a)

MOVED BY W. HEWITT, seconded by S. Humphries that the Renfrew County District School Board approves the Signing Officer Resolution as follows:

Whereas the Renfrew County District School Board appoints signing officers each year,

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Renfrew County District School Board signing officers for 2018 be:

- (i) The Chairperson of the Board, Wendy Hewitt
- (ii) A Pembroke Area Trustee, Leo Boland
- (iii) The Director of Education, Pino Buffone
- (iv) The Superintendent of Corporate Services, Lisa Schimmens

The motion was CARRIED

(b)

MOVED BY W. HEWITT, seconded by M. Adam that the Renfrew County District School Board approves the Borrowing Resolution as follows:

Whereas Renfrew County District School Board, 1270 Pembroke Street West, Pembroke, Ontario, deems it necessary to borrow funds not to exceed \$12,000,000 at any one time to meet, until revenues are collected, the current expenditures of the Board for 2018,

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED as follows:

1. The signing officers are hereby authorized to borrow from the Bank of Montreal, Pembroke, Ontario, from time to time, a sum or sums not exceeding at any one time \$12,000,000 to meet, until revenues are collected, the current expenditures of the Board for 2018.

2. The signing officers are hereby authorized to sign on behalf of the Board and to secure with the Bank a line of credit for the sum or sums as borrowed with interest at such rate as the Bank from time to time may determine or as governed by an interest calculation agreement with the bank.
3. The Treasurer is hereby authorized and directed to furnish to the said Bank as it may from time to time request a statement showing the nature and amount of the estimated revenues of the current year not yet collected of the estimated revenues of the Board as set forth in the estimates adopted for the next preceding year and also showing the total of any amounts borrowed in the current year and in any preceding year, that have not been repaid.
4. All sums borrowed from the said Bank shall, with interest thereon, be a charge upon the whole or any part or parts of the revenues of the Board for the current year and for any preceding years, as and when such revenues are received.
5. The Treasurer is hereby authorized and directed to apply in payment of all sums borrowed from the said Bank, with interest thereon, all of the money hereafter collected or received on account or realized in respect of revenues for the current year and for any preceding years.

The motion was CARRIED

147. Excursion Request – Opeongo HS

MOVED M. ADAM, seconded by B. Morris that the Renfrew County District School Board approves the Excursion Request from Opeongo High School to travel to Ecuador from March 9 – 17, 2018.

The motion was CARRIED

148. Excursion Request – Fellowes HS

MOVED B. MORRIS, seconded by K. Dunsmoor-Lough that the Renfrew County District School Board approves the Excursion Request from Fellowes High School to travel to Greece from March 7-15, 2019.

The motion was CARRIED

149. STUDENT TRUSTEES' UPDATE

Student Trustee S. McCloskey gave a verbal update.

150. INFOMATION ITEMS

Chairperson, W. Hewitt, announced that our Board's proposal to present at next month's OPSBA Public Education Symposium has been accepted.

Director of Education, P. Buffone, referenced the wooden reindeer assembled in the Board Room. These items were made and donated by RCDSB employee, Shane Halliday, on the condition that all proceeds would be directed to the Student Support Fund (SSF). The SSF helps students across our district overcome barriers by providing financial support so that students can participate fully in their school life and reach their true potential. Director Buffone thanked Shane for his generosity for donating his time and supplies.

ON MOTION OF B. MORRIS, seconded by K. Dunsmoor-Lough the meeting adjourned at 4:56 p.m.

December 5, 2017

First of all, I would like to say thank you to Trustee Humphries for the nomination, Trustee Morris for seconding the nomination, and to all of you trustees that supported the decision to have me represent you all as the Chair of Renfrew County District School Board (RCDSB). I truly believe we all have a unified passion and dedication towards our students and their well-being. I also have appreciated the opportunity to work closely with you all over the past year and know as we move forward, we will continue to be a part of a dedicated team no matter what position we hold. We are all equally represented here at the table together.

As we near the end of 2017, I look back on what has been accomplished here with all of us working together for the benefit of our students here in Renfrew County. Some of the roads that brought us to today were filled with many obstacles, yet we stood together as a team for the benefit of our students. This past year has probably been the year with the biggest changes since I've been on the board since over the past seven (7) years. We hired our new Director of Education who then also hired two (2) of our new Superintendents of Education during his first year as director. I had my youngest son graduate from RCDSB, we said good-bye to our first ever two-year term student trustee Connor Webster. Then we proudly approved our new Strategic Plan for 2017-2020. Our strategic plan states we will provide excellence in teaching and learning; provide a safe, caring, inclusive and respectful learning environment; and make sure we are wise with our resources; and now we have also made a commitment to measurement. I would say that's a huge, busy, and successful year to be proud of as a district.

We will continue to have meaningful dialogues that create meaningful discussions and resolutions. This will happen alongside of our director and our executive team as we are all working together. I also want to take time to recognize our executive team as they are the ones that meet the daily demands that are upon them. Our Director of Education, Pino Buffone has proven to be an excellent addition & leader in our system. I know I personally have grown to value his dedication to our students over the past year that we have worked together, and happy to call him not only a co-worker but thankful also for his friendship that has developed from having a common interest and dedication to RCDSB. Director, you truly have demonstrated all of our character virtues. You have demonstrated honesty, caring, respect, responsibility, perseverance, initiative, optimism and courage. And I honestly believe because of your leadership it has filtered down to our staff. Our Superintendents, Brent McIntyre, Lisa Schimmens, Gayle Bishop, Jacqueline Poirier, and Steve Blok. You are the ones responsible to oversee all the daily tasks of our principals, system leaders, and many other responsibilities. Thank you for your dedication to our board and to the students who truly rely on us all to give them the best education possible. And to our director's office team as a whole, Shelley McIntyre you are an amazing woman and an excellent Director's Assistant, we all know the office would not fully function without you. And our Communications Manager, Jonathan Laderoute, you have been an amazing asset to our trustees and staff. I know I personally have

appreciated what you have brought to our table. Thank you to each and every one of you, as trustees couldn't and wouldn't be able to do our job without any one of you! And lastly I need to acknowledge our amazing two student trustees, Nic and Sean. You both have demonstrated what a valuable asset it has been to have the students voice represented here at the table. I'm excited to see how your vision with the Student Senate compliments your student trustee role and your learning. Your commitment to the role has been above and beyond and I look forward to what you will continue to bring to us in the New Year.

As we now look forward to 2018, it will bring a year of many new challenges and changes as we begin to carry out our Strategic Plan. Our strategic plan provides us with clear goals, which are necessary so that all team members understand our purpose and the vision. Open and clear communication, this is one of the most important characteristics for high functioning teams. Effective communication will keep a team informed and focused. I know we all are committed to our roles here at RCDSB and have confidence in all of us as we move forward.

"All organizations are involved in learning: learning to succeed, learning about what their clients want, learning what products or services will work for them, learning about the risks and opportunities out there, learning how they can make the world a better place."<sup>1</sup> And RCDSB is no different, we continue to learn from each other, from staff, and our students. I do believe there will be a huge learning curve ahead for me personally and also for our organization.

"Once the strength-based models become entrenched, it draws the morale, motivation, and the momentum of the entire organization into an upward spiral and a culture of possibility."<sup>2</sup> So I look forward to exploring our creativity, leadership and our learning together. I anticipate that we will be driving down a road that will lead to an extraordinary journey!

In closing I would like to share a quote, "The principle goal of education in the schools should be creating men and women who are capable of doing new things, not simply repeating what other generations have done." Jean Piaget. I truly believe that life is a continuous path of learning. "We keep moving forward, opening new doors, and doing new things, because we're curious and curiosity keeps leading us down new paths." Walt Disney

So I look forward to continuing to work with an amazing group of educators and our team around this table as we grow in curiosity and creativity together!

Respectfully,

Wendy Hewitt  
Chairperson

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<sup>1</sup> The Wonder Wall by Peter Gamwell & Jane Daly

<sup>2</sup> The Wonder Wall by Peter Gamwell & Jane Daly





## RENFREW COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

### COMMITTEE ORGANIZATION

**January – December 2018**

#### NOTES

The Board Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson are ex officio members of all committees with the exception of SEAC.

It should be emphasized that **all** trustees are members of all of the major committees as set out below with the exception of the Special Education Advisory Committee. The Committee Organization Chart shows the administration and support staff responsible for each area.

Meeting dates will be as follows:

- |                 |                                    |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|
| TUESDAY         | - Finance, Facilities and Services |
|                 | - Program and Personnel Services   |
|                 | - Joint Session of Committees      |
| THIRD WEDNESDAY | - Special Education Advisory       |
| TUESDAY         | - BOARD                            |

**RENFREW COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD  
COMMITTEE ORGANIZATION – 2018**

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Trustee(s)</b>	<b>Administration</b>
Student Senate	NEW 2017	Kim Dunsmoor-Lough	Pino Buffone Jonathan Laderoute
Communications & Technology	Ad Hoc	1. Dave Kaiser 2. Bryon Morris	Pino Buffone Jonathan Laderoute
Character Development	Administrative	1. Dave Shields 2. Bryon Morris	Gayle Bishop
Director's Review	Standing	1. Wendy Hewitt - Chairperson 2. Susan Humphries - Vice-Chairperson 3. Dave Shields - Past Chairperson 4. Leo Boland - Chairperson of PPS	Pino Buffone
Director's Advisory on Indigenous Education	Standing	1. Leo Boland 2. Marjorie Adam	Pino Buffone Gayle Bishop
Policy Review	Standing	1. Wendy Hewitt - Chairperson 2. Dave Kaiser 3. Bryon Morris 4. Susan Humphries	Pino Buffone Jonathan Laderoute
Calendar	Standing	1. Leo Boland	Gayle Bishop
Finance, Facilities & Services (FFS)	Standing	FFS Chairperson: Marjorie Adam All Trustees	Administration Dawn White
Program & Personnel Services (PPS)	Standing	PPS Chairperson: Leo Boland All Trustees	Administration Kelly Goldberg Linda Sluiman Sharon McCafferty
Joint Session of Committees (JSOC)	Standing	JSOC Vice-Chairperson: Susan Humphries All Trustees	Administration Shelley McIntyre
<b>RENFREW COUNTY JOINT TRANSPORTATION CONSORTIUM BOARD OF DIRECTORS</b> <i>(The Chairperson of the Finance, Facilities and Services Committee automatically sits on the RCJTC Board of Directors)</i>	Standing	1. Marjorie Adam – FFS Chairperson 2. Leo Boland	Lisa Schimmens Robert White
Audit	Statutory	1. Bryon Morris 2. Marjorie Adam 3. Leo Boland	Pino Buffone Lisa Schimmens Tammy Hoffman Dawn White
Parent Involvement	Statutory	1. Kim Dunsmoor-Lough	Pino Buffone Jonathan Laderoute
Accessibility	Statutory	1. Kim Dunsmoor-Lough	Jonathan Laderoute
Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL)	Statutory	Trustee	Gayle Bishop Jacqueline Poirier Steve Blok
Discipline	Statutory	1. Wendy Hewitt - Chairperson 2. Trustee 3. Trustee	Pino Buffone Gayle Bishop Jacqueline Poirier Steve Blok
<b>SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY (SEAC)</b> <i>(According to Ontario Regulation 464/97, this Committee can only have "the required number of members appointed by the Board from among its members". Therefore, the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson CANNOT sit as ex officio members of this Committee.)</i>	Statutory	1. Dave Shields 2. Bryon Morris 3. Dave Kaiser - Alternate 4. Kim Dunsmoor-Lough Alternate	Jacqueline Poirier Bill Smith Jayne Pantuso
<b>Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA)</b>	Ad Hoc	1. Susan Humphries - Director 2. Marjorie Adam - Alternate 3. Dave Shields - Voting Delegate	Pino Buffone Jonathan Laderoute

Thank you Madame Chair.

As part of the *Education Act*, Directors of Education throughout the province of Ontario are required to provide an Annual Report to the Board of Trustees each and every school year in the month of December, and, it is my distinct privilege to present my report to you this evening.

This is my first Annual Report as Director of Education for the Renfrew County District School Board, and as such, I would like to begin by extending my sincerest thanks to our senior staff for their collaboration, dedication, leadership and professionalism in the preparation of this year's report. Their commitment to student learning is evident in their daily interactions with the students, staff and school communities they serve, and, it is reflected in their contributions to this report. I would also like to acknowledge former Director of Education, Roger Clarke, for his leadership of the District up until February 2017...so much of which is reflected in this report.

It has been just under a year since I began as Director of Education, and I have witnessed first-hand across the system instructional leadership, operational management, and organizational citizenship – the behaviour of individuals within the organization that are beyond the normally-assigned duties of any given position so as to demonstrate being a part of a larger organization. In my visits to schools and central sites, I've seen how staff create safe and caring, inclusive and respectful environments where educators are empowered to establish vibrant teaching and learning spaces for students of all backgrounds and abilities to flourish. This is fundamental to all our work.

We know that education is personal. It is a process of self-discovery. We all learn at our own pace, in our own way.

It is why we work with each and every student to understand who they are so that we can better tailor our programs and/or services, as well as our feedback and support, differentiated to meet their individual needs. In fact, this commitment forms the basis of the RCDSB's 2017-2020 Strategic Plan. This document has established before us a pathway to ensure our schools can continue to offer a range of academic, artistic, athletic, and extra-curricular programs and/or services that invest in our students and staff, and, challenge us all to strive for excellence.

As we look back on this past year, the Annual Report includes a variety of highlights and examples of how we are meeting this challenge.

In the area of program, the district received the results of the provincial assessments for primary and junior divisions, as well as Grade 9 Mathematics (applied and academic). The results of the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) were received in the spring of 2017, as well. As is always the case, the assessments reveal areas of strength for celebration as well as areas of growth for consideration. Moving forward, our collective work will need to carefully weave the effective, research-based instructional practices in literacy and numeracy of the past decade into an evolving, innovative vision of teaching and learning environments of the future that continue to enhance global competencies of critical thinking and problem solving, collaboration, communication, creativity, character development and citizenship.

The Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement and Well-being (BIP) developed this fall for the 2017-2018 school year will reflect the trends of the assessment data, including a continued focus on mathematics at the elementary and secondary levels through the Ministry of Education's Renewed Mathematics Strategy (RMS), as well as an engagement survey of staff with respect to their well-being in order to complement the work in this area for our students.

Our work in Indigenous Education is of similar significance and importance to our District as we continue to incorporate strategies for students of aboriginal ancestry, and make progress in realizing the goals outlined in the Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework. Specifically, we offered 39 sections of Indigenous Studies courses at the secondary level in 2016-2017 and in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, the RCDSB hosted a Student Voice and Staff Development Day. Dr. Niigaan Sinclair addressed students and staff from each secondary school and worked with our senior staff in becoming more involved in reconciliACTION. Feedback from participants has informed the strategies we will use to achieve the goals outlined in this year's Action Plan on Indigenous Education. So many elements of this plan align with our strategic plan and staff continue to collaborate with our community partners on inquiry projects centered on traditional teachings, Algonquin history and cultural celebrations.

During the 2016-2017 school year, our work on Mental Health and Well-being was constructive and productive, and, capitalized on strategic gains by considering how future discussions aimed at strengthening student and staff well-being could be better incorporated into all aspects of the teaching and learning environment.

Early in the year, a team of key stakeholders was formed to review the initial three-year plan (2014-2017) and develop strategic directions for 2017-2020. The Mental Health & Well-Being Strategic Plan for 2017-2020 continues to focus on providing school communities with the leadership and support to build capacity related to evidence-based/informed practices for tiered mental health. The plan aligns the “Pathways to Thrive Framework” with the tiered approach to Mental Health. Results from the ‘Our Schools Survey’ highlighted the need to continue focusing on increasing knowledge and application of strategies to support students experiencing anxiety and depression. New areas of focus include system coordination and specific populations that may have unique needs in mental health, including early years, LGBTQ, First Nations/Metis/Inuit, Military and High Achievers.

One of the highlights in the human resources portfolio this year was our Labour Symposium for Principals and HR Professionals. The event attracted participants from throughout Eastern Ontario, and included presentations by Michael Hines, Richard Sinclair, Ralph Cuthbertson and former Superintendent Dennis Jenkins. The keynote address focused on cases involving human rights, and management best practice, while other panelists offered the group insight on a variety of legal topics including performance appraisals, privacy issues, discipline and workplace investigations and human rights. Participants received helpful hints and strategies in relation to investigations involving harassment and human rights from two active and experienced practitioners.

Leadership continues to be a priority within our Board. Two new supervisory officers, and eight new principals and vice-principals were placed as part of our district-wide appointments last school year. Additionally, a new manager in the HR Department has

been hired this past year and has been a great asset to Superintendent McIntyre's team. I am extremely pleased with the addition of these new administrators and wish them continued success in their roles and responsibilities.

As I conclude my remarks, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Board of Trustees for your commitment, cooperation, diligence and wisdom in decision-making for the benefit of our students, our staff and our school communities. Your oversight and guardianship extends beyond being good stewards of the public purse...it speaks to your care for public education in our county. From our conversations at school events, to thoughtful questions and comments at Board meetings, your passion and interest in the wellbeing and success of all is sincere and always on display.

To Chairperson Hewitt and Vice-Chairperson Humphries, specifically, I thank you for your support during this past year. Your encouragement, patience, guidance and support have been invaluable to me as Director of Education.

As we end our calendar year, it is a time to be thankful for all that we have accomplished...and look forward with anticipation and excitement to all that is yet to come in the new year!

Thank you.