



# Board Meeting Highlights

From the Regular Board Meeting of  
Tuesday, February 9, 2010



**2010**

## CHAIR'S REPORT

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### *Keeping Our Kids Safe at School Act*

Chair Elizabeth Crowe noted that last Monday (Feb. 1, 2010), new reporting measures came into effect as part of the Bill 157 -- Keeping Our Kids Safe at School Act. A key component of this new legislation is mandatory reporting of all serious incidents to the principal, along with a stipulation that principals should contact parents of victims.

Chair Crowe noted that this legislation enhances what is already taking place in our York Catholic schools – we have always supported victims.

Training has already occurred at our School Board. Principals along with two additional representatives from each school participated in training sessions during the week of January 12<sup>th</sup>. Principals then provided in-servicing to school staff during our February 1<sup>st</sup> PA Day.

Chair Crowe indicated that the Board's new Safe Schools Policy will be approved at tonight's Board meeting, and that our Policy will be in alignment with the new legislation.

### *Georgina War Museum*

Chair Crowe reported that recently, she and Trustee Theresa McNicol and Superintendent Mike Nasello, had the opportunity to visit the new Georgina War Museum. Our School Board has donated a surplus portable from Sacred Heart to the Museum -- that houses exhibits from prior to the First World War (the Boer War) to Canada's current mission in Afghanistan.

Chair Crowe said that the Museum is staffed by some very committed volunteers who want to expand the exhibits to become the primary war museum in Southern Ontario.

Chair Crowe added that Museum staff are converting our donated portable into a re-creation of an actual air raid shelter. They are hoping to get three more portables that they plan to join together to simulate what it was like to be in the trenches during World War I.

Our Northern schools will benefit from the educational opportunities the Museum has to offer – and we will be encouraging visits by Grade 10 History classes, and others.

Chair Crowe indicated that she and Trustee McNicol and Superintendent Nasello were totally amazed by this experience. The amount of donated memorabilia and the commitment and knowledge of the museum volunteers definitely made this worth the visit. Chair Crowe encouraged everyone to take the time to visit the Museum.

### *Black History Month*

Chair Crowe reported that several of our schools are currently honouring Black History Month with a variety of activities and guest speakers.

Chair Crowe and Superintendent Debra Cormier attended a kick-off to Black History Month at the York Region Community Safety Village on January 30<sup>th</sup> where the new 2010 Black History Month Poster was revealed. The poster honours four prominent Canadians, including: Reverend Elias Mutale; Canada's first lady of Gospel, Jackie Richardson; former Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, the Honourable Mayann E. Francis; and journalist Royson James.

The poster artist, Robert Small, also attended the event. His poster has been distributed to government agencies, schools, libraries and community centres throughout Canada and will be viewed by millions of people during Black History Month.

### *News from the Ministry of Education*

Chair Crowe summarized recent news from the Ministry of Education, including:

- We are expecting to receive the regulations on PIC's sometime this spring.
- We are also expecting the regulations on Trustee Codes of Conduct in late spring – this will be a consultative process. The OCSTA is recommending that our Codes of Conduct include a commitment to our Catholic faith.

## DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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### *Fraser Report*

Director of Education, Susan LaRosa, reported to Trustees that the Fraser Report on Ontario's Elementary Schools is expected to be publicly released in the next three weeks, and that we understand that three of our schools are on the list of the top ten schools in the province. Congratulations were extended to the students and staff at St. Julia Billiard; St. Justin Martyr; and St. Joseph (Aurora).

### *Recognition of our Secondary School Math Educators*

Director LaRosa extended congratulations to the entire Math Department at St. Joan of Arc CHS – who have received the Kenneth D. Fryer Award for 2010. This award recognizes a mathematics department that fosters collegiality, teamwork and excellent classroom teaching; contributes to the overall development of students and demonstrates leadership in the mathematics education community.

In addition, Cheryl Costigan, Math Dept. Head at St. Elizabeth CHS, has been awarded the OAME Award for Exceptional and Creative Teaching in Secondary Mathematics. Congratulations were extended to our excellent math educators for their hard work and well-deserved recognition.

### *PRO Grants Released*

Director LaRosa noted that the Ministry has just released the PRO Grants for School Councils for 2010. Fifty-one of our schools submitted applications totaling \$49,827 to support a variety of council initiatives, and we received almost that entire amount – \$44, 927. A complete list of the PRO grants for our Board was provided to Trustees.

### *2010 Trustee Elections – Governance*

Director LaRosa also reported that we have also just received a notice from the Ministry regarding 2010 Trustee Elections – the Determination and Distribution of Number of Trustee Positions. We expect to receive our MPAC data on February 15<sup>th</sup>, and our Board will be required to pass a resolution determining our trustee distribution by March 31<sup>st</sup>.

### *Olympics*

Director LaRosa noted that this Friday marks the beginning of the Olympic Games in Vancouver, and that we congratulate St. Theresa of Lisieux CHS student and snowboarder Megan Farrell, who has been invited to be a forerunner to test the slopes of Cypress Mountain. Megan will test the run prior to the actual competition to allow officials to check the accuracy of their timing and video equipment. As a junior competitor, Megan is too young for the games, but she is already a champion, winning two gold medals in slalom on the recent Nor-Am Snowboard Tour.

Director LaRosa extended congratulations to Megan, and wished all our Olympic athletes the best as we go for the best Canadian showing ever.

### *VICE-CHAIR'S REPORT*

Board Vice-Chair, Micheal Carnovale, noted that he was pleased to announce that he and Trustee Ann Stong have nominated Board Chair, Elizabeth Crowe, for the position of OCSTA Vice-President.

As Vice-President of the OCSTA Board of Directors, Elizabeth will play a key role in addressing important issues in Catholic education that will, no doubt, arise as we edge closer to the 2011 provincial elections.

Vice-Chair Carnovale noted that, as a dedicated advocate of Catholic education, Elizabeth is an ideal candidate for this position. She is a clear and effective communicator, who can and will take on the responsibility to speak out when

legislation or political action threatens to compromise the unique nature of our Catholic system.

Vice-Chair Carnovale noted that he and Trustee Stong believe that Catholic trustees throughout Ontario will benefit from Elizabeth's leadership -- in determining the present and future operation of our Catholic schools and in determining education policy in Ontario as a whole.

Board Vice-Chair Carnovale said that he looks forward to the election that will take place at the OCSTA Annual General Meeting in April in Thunder Bay.

### ***STUDENT TRUSTEE REPORT***

Student Trustee, Olivia Suppa, noted that now that secondary school exams are over, second semester is in full swing. The annual Leadership Links Conference (hosted by the YSCPC) will take place at Jean Vanier CHS on February 19, 2010, where students from every York Catholic high school will participate in a variety of leadership-building activities. The Ontario Student Trustees' Association Board Council Conference is also coming up, and will take place in Ottawa from February 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup>. Student trustees will participate in community services activities, hear from informative speakers, and engage in various spiritually-enriching discussions and workshops with fellow Catholic student trustees from around the province.

### ***HAITI EARTHQUAKE FUNDRAISING PRESENTATION***

Director of Education, Susan LaRosa, thanked the Board and guests for attending this very special presentation.

Director LaRosa noted that we are truly blessed at our School Board to be part of a Catholic learning community where all partners work together to build a better world. Director LaRosa said that, "Our staff, students and parents are always generous when called upon to help others. Our school communities really pulled together and raised an amazing \$173,797.14 to support the victims of the Haiti earthquake."

Director LaRosa indicated that the funds we have collected will go to ShareLife and on to the Catholic Church's relief agency, Caritas Internationalis. The funds will be used to re-establish damaged medical clinics in Haiti and provide food, shelter, clean water and much-needed supplies.

Student Trustee Cassandra Curcio spoke about some of the very successful fundraising initiatives that were held in our secondary schools, including: students paid for henna tattoos and sold pins and heart-shaped cookies to raise funds for Haiti. A basketball game to honour two York Catholic students who recently passed away also raised a significant amount of funds.

Director LaRosa noted that our elementary schools also held many events to enhance our loonie-toonie day fundraising. For example, students organized lunchtime movie days, held bake sales, popcorn sales and sports jersey days to motivate participation in the fundraising.

St. Catherine of Siena CES Principal Susie Quadrini-Ferguson, who participated in the presentation, said her school held a “Hair for Haiti” campaign – where teachers shaved their heads to fulfill a promise to students for their fundraising achievement.

Director LaRosa introduced Helen Pierre, wife of honorary consul Dr. Eric Pierre from the Haitian Consulate in Toronto. Helen is also a York Catholic teacher. Director LaRosa noted that, for many years, Helen and her husband have been committed to improving the lives of children in Haiti, collecting toys, school supplies and medical equipment and shipping them to those in need.

Helen Pierre said she has always been proud to be a York Catholic teacher. She read a letter from her husband that said the Haitian Consulate is deeply moved by the compassion being shown by so many people in our province and country. Dr. Pierre noted that, “I applaud your initiative and leadership in a community of generosity to support the victims and their families. You have been immensely successful in generating funds in order to support Haiti in providing food, water and medicine. Your attention to the plight of Haitians is immensely appreciated, and I congratulate you for providing a Catholic vision to your students that extends beyond the classroom.”

Director LaRosa noted that, as Canadians, we are known for our willingness to support others throughout the world in times of need, and that through the Canadian government’s program to match funds for Haiti; our contribution will grow to almost \$348,000.

Mr. Paul Calandra, Member of Parliament for Oak Ridges-Markham attended the presentation and thanked the York Catholic students and staff for their remarkable efforts in raising funds to support Haiti. The government of Canada will be matching dollar for dollar moneys raised. Mr. Calandra said the money raised will provide up to 40 tractor loads of food for the Haitian people. Mr. Calandra also said that he will be reporting the amount raised by our Board to the Prime Minister.

ShareLife Executive Director, Arthur Peters. accepted the cheque for \$173,797.14. Mr. Peters said he was very inspired to hear from the students and staff about the many ways that our schools raised funds to support those in need in Haiti. He expressed his sincere appreciation for everything the Board has done.

Director LaRosa extended appreciation to everyone for their attendance and for making the presentation so special. She noted that she is truly grateful to all of our school communities for rallying around this important cause and helping to make a difference for the people of Haiti.

Board Chair Elizabeth Crowe expressed her appreciation to the staff and students for all they have done to raise funds in such a relatively short period of time. She stressed the importance of continuing to remember Haiti in the months ahead as the country endeavours to rebuild.

### *DESIRE FOR CHANGE SYMPOSIUM REPORT*

On Nov. 4 and Nov. 12, 2009, a group of students and staff from each of our secondary schools and Alternative Education Programs gathered at the YCDSB Centre for the Arts for a Symposium called “Desire for Change.” The Symposium for student leaders emphasized working together to shape positive school cultures by leading anti-bullying initiatives, equity and global awareness activities. The Symposium that coincided with Holocaust Education Week also included a reflection from the students who took part in the Poland/France excursion, a video presentation about the Holocaust, and a reflection from a Holocaust survivor.

Mary Cosentino and Michael Nasello, Superintendents of Education (Secondary), described elements of the Symposium that focused on building cultural proficiency among students.

As part of the Symposium, students attended the opera performance of “And the Rat Laughed,” based on the novel by acclaimed Israeli author and child of Holocaust survivors, Nava Semel. During the Board meeting, Cardinal Carter CHS students also presented an inspirational theatrical representation of a segment of the novel “And the Rat Laughed.”

Trustees also heard that last summer, a group of students and staff took part in a pilgrimage to Poland and France in honour of the namesakes of our two newest Catholic high schools: St. Maximilian Kolbe (Poland) and Jean Vanier (France). During the Board meeting, students from Fr. Michael McGivney, St. Maximilian Kolbe and Sacred Heart Catholic High Schools shared their reflections of their experiences.

Holocaust survivor Max Eisen also spoke to the Board and retold his story of losing his entire family as a young boy to fend for himself. Mr. Eisen survived the Holocaust, was liberated in 1945 and came to Canada shortly thereafter.

### *POLICY REVISIONS*

The Board approved the following revised/reformatted policies:

1. Policy 202 (Safe Schools)
2. Policy 210 (Pediculosis)
3. Policy 303 (Educational Out of Classroom Activities)

These policies can be viewed on the Board website at [www.ycdsb.ca](http://www.ycdsb.ca).

### ***STUDENT DRESS/UNIFORM***

Trustees approved a Motion from Trustee Dino Giuliani stating that:

If a schools does not meet the percentage required (85%) to implement a dress code/school uniform (crested), the school council can recommend either school colours or school spirit wear on a voluntary basis; and

If a school does not have a line of spirit wear, the school council may form a temporary sub-committee to address this.

### ***INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE (IB)***

Trustees approved a recommendation to approve the IB applications from Cardinal Carter CHS and Father Michael McGivney Academy to be submitted to the appropriate authorities by April 1, 2010. A team of IB officials will visit the schools to determine whether the schools are positioned for IB programming and, if approved, the IB designation would be in effect for September, 2011.

### ***PERSONNEL***

#### **Elementary Principal Transfers**

The Board approved the following elementary principal transfers:

- Nancy DiNardo (from St. Joseph, Richmond Hill) to Our Lady of Hope, effective March 8, 2010.
- Mary Battista (from Fr. John Kelly) to new Block 18 School, effective September 1, 2010.
- William Morrison (from Our Lady of Peace) to new Valeta Lifford School, effective September 1, 2010.
- Elena Naccarato (from St. Andrew) to new Block 33 West School, effective September 1, 2010.

#### **Principal Retirement**

The Board accepted the retirement of:

- Tom Jones (St. Elizabeth Seton CES), effective July 1, 2010.

***MARCH/APRIL CALENDAR OF EVENTS***

March 8	<b>Policy Review Committee</b>
March 9	<b>Regular Board Meeting @ 7 p.m.</b>
March 15-19	<b>March Break</b>
March 24	<b>S.E.A.C.</b>
March 25	<b>S.A.L.E.P.</b>
March 28	<b>Palm Sunday</b>
March 28 - April 2	<b>Holy Week</b>
April 2	<b>Good Friday (schools closed)</b>
April 4	<b>Easter Sunday</b>
April 5	<b>Easter Monday (schools closed)</b>
April 6	<b>Regular Board Meeting @ 7 p.m</b>
April 7	<b>Joint Board Consortium Meeting</b>
April 8	<b>OSSLT</b>
April 20	<b>Accommodation Committee Meeting</b>
April 22	<b>Earth Day</b>
April 26	<b>S.E.A.C.</b>
April 27	<b>Regular Board Meeting @ 7 p.m.</b>
April 29	<b>S.A.L.E.P.</b>
April 29 – May 1 <sup>st</sup>	<b>OCSTA Annual General Meeting</b>