



Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board

Board of Trustees

Meeting Highlights

September 27, 2011

During the regular board meeting Jocelyn King was sworn in as student trustee for Sacred Heart High School Walkerton. Welcome Jocelyn.

EQAO Success Story

Valeeta Walsh, Principal of St. Joseph's School Port Elgin, and Natacka Pucan, Grade 6 teacher, were invited to the Board Meeting to share the story of their EQAO success. Through hard work and dedication, the students at St. Joseph's achieved incredible gains in EQAO scoring during the 2010/2011 school year. The Grade 6 Reading score soared upwards by 30%, while the writing score increased 20%.

Ms. Walsh summarized their keys to success as "belief, focus and collaboration: Belief that these kids could do it; Focus on what the needs were; and collaboration, as the fabulous staff all worked together to achieve these successes."

When analyzing the previous year's data to see who was not achieving at target, three clusters were identified. The staff created separate data walls for these three groups, and implemented strategies such as small group focused instruction and detailed tracking of student's needs and goals. Teachers focused their professional learning to increase their knowledge in areas where students were struggling. Ms. Pucan attributes the success to "a great school with great staff". Her approach was to get to know her students and build relationships. She learned their likes and dislikes, honoured strengths and built on weaknesses, and developed content and curriculum based on this knowledge. All grade 6 teachers worked together as a team.

The students themselves reported to the board through video clips, and it was evident from their testimonials that they are happy to share the strategies they used to learn and prepare for the testing, and very proud of their achievements.

Director's Report

Bruce MacPherson, Director of Education, commented on the annual board wide Faith Formation Day which took place on Friday September 16. This was an opportunity to celebrate our faith with Bishop Crosby through the Eucharist. Keynote speaker Michael Way Skinner presented an excellent message that was very inclusive of all staff members, and emphasized the important role each and every one of us has in providing a quality Catholic Education for our students.

The annual Diocesan mass is scheduled for Thursday, September 29 at the Cathedral of Christ the King, Hamilton. A bus will be travelling from Bruce-Grey for all those interested in attending. This is a wonderful opportunity to join in a celebration of Catholic Education with Bishop Crosby and the other Catholic School Boards within the Diocese of Hamilton. Prior to Mass, a keynote address will be given by Fr. Con O'Mahony, Vicar of Education for the Diocese of Hamilton.

Our board has received an invitation from the diocese to involve grade 5 students in the *Adopt a Seminarian Program*. As outlined in a letter from Fr. Kevin Cull introducing the program, “we want our students to begin learning about the seminary and what is involved in becoming a priest...to spark the interest at an early age...and plant the seeds of a vocation in children.” The diocese also recognizes that the students have much to offer in terms of their heartfelt prayers for vocations.

The 28th annual Father Patrick Fogarty Awards dinner will take place Saturday October 29 in Toronto. Every year we have the opportunity to recognize a high school student from each of our secondary schools who promotes Catholic education. This year’s worthy recipients are Eric Van Trigt from St. Mary’s High School in Owen Sound, and Matthew McLean from Sacred heart High School in Walkerton.

The board passed a motion to approach Robert Dixon to write a book on the History of the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board. Mr. Dixon has written a number of historical accounts for school boards in Ontario, and we are very fortunate to have this opportunity to record our history, especially given Mr. Dixon’s personal experiences here in Bruce-Grey as our first Director of Education from 1969 to 1973.

Bruce spoke about our ongoing Healthy Communities Partnership with public health. The partnership promotes implementing policies that establish smoke-free environments as the most effective approach to reducing second- hand smoke exposure among non smokers. Our board has a Smoke-Free Environment policy BP 6-28, that states "it is the policy of the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board to prohibit the use of tobacco products in all board operated facilities, vehicles and on board property either owned or leased, so that a tobacco free environment can be provided for all staff, students and visitors ".

What’s the Big Deal About Alcohol?

Bruce extended an open invitation to all those available to attend an evening sponsored by the Grey Bruce Health Unit on September 29, with Dr. Gerald Thomas speaking about “What’s the Big Deal About Alcohol?” Grey Bruce has the highest rate of heavy drinking in the province at 54%, which leads to lost productivity due to alcohol related illness, premature death, disability and health benefit costs. This also means that we could potentially have a lot of students living in an environment of heavy drinking, and we need to be aware of this in order to support those students.

EQAO Overview

Cathy Montreuil, Superintendent of Education, presented a summary of the 2010/2011 EQAO data.

There was a 2% increase for the board in grade 3 reading, however we continue to fall just behind the provincial average. Grade3 writing showed a 2% increase, which raised us to the provincial benchmark of 75%, and put us 1% above the provincial average. In grade 3 math the board had a 3% decrease, with the province also taking a dip in this area. Focus in 2011/2012 will be to address the gap in math. In summary, Ms. Montreuil commented that we know that grade 3 achievement can be stronger, and will continue with emphasis on focused instruction in reading and writing, and professional development in math instruction.

The grade 6 results show students reading at the provincial benchmark of 75%, ahead of the provincial average, and writing at the provincial average, just slightly below the 75% benchmark. In mathematics we are not where we want to be, but results indicate that our students are slightly above the provincial average.

Growth over time analysis compares the grade 6 students scores with their Grade 3 testing scores, and shows substantial increases in Reading (22%) and Writing (15%) with math maintaining the same level at 58%.

Overall, Ms. Montreuil summarized that the 2010/2011 elementary results indicate “clear areas of work, as well as strong areas of celebration”.

Grade 9 mathematics results indicate that grade 9 applied math scores dipped from 51 to 48%, but remain slightly ahead of the province at 42%, while grade 9 academic scores are down 1% to 79%, slightly below the provincial average of 83%. The need will be to determine who the students are that need the focus, so we can continue our upward trends in secondary math.

Ms. Montreuil cautioned that small boards have to be careful about making decisions based on percentages, as results may vary considerably and differences may look exaggerated. Instead we need to focus on the students and their individual results. As well, trends in small boards are more difficult to identify or interpret, and the EQAO assessment captures the performance of students at one point in time each year. Information from other points in time and about the school community need to be captured for a more complete picture. Triangulating data from EQAO, snapshot assessments in reading writing and math, and ongoing classroom assessment by classroom teachers, will provide the best picture of student achievement and areas needing focus.

In summary, Ms. Montreuil says that “we are pleased with the improvement our students have made, and will continue to target resources and training to ensure success for every student. Throughout the year we will continue to study the EQAO summary of individual school results, and will involve our communities in working together for our students. We rely on the strength that is evident when our communities, schools and parishes work together to support our students. “

All EQAO results are available on their website at eqao.com

Trust Fund Report

Cathy Colton, Superintendent of Business, presented the *Annual Report on Trust Funds* for approval by the Board. The Report included a Multi-Year Analysis of Trust Fund Balances, Recommendations for 2012 scholarships, bursaries, and miscellaneous awards, a list of investments maturing in 2011-12, and funds available to invest. The board approved by motion the *Annual Report on Trust Funds* as presented.

Audit Committee Report

The Audit Committee met on September 13. Among the items discussed were a self-assessment of the audit committee to be conducted through an electronic survey, and updated conflict of interest forms. The internal auditors reported on their work including a gap analysis between the Board's Expense Policy and Procedure and the new Broader Public Sector Expense Directive. Dennis Kraemer from BDO, external auditor for the board, outlined the work to be done in the upcoming yearend audit, and extends an invitation to trustees to discuss and ask questions related to finance directly and confidentially.

Preliminary Enrolment Report

Cathy Colton, Superintendent of Business, reported a summary of enrolment for the 2011/2012 school year.

The prior year enrolment vs. the revised forecast based on preliminary September enrolment indicates a slight decline in total enrolment equal to 1.1%, or 40 students less than the previous year. However, when comparing the 2010/2011 Budget with the revised forecast, the total enrolment for all pupils represents a 0% increase, or 0.5 students more than projected.

This summary is now available on the board website under About Us ~ Departments ~ Finance

The Board acknowledges that declining enrolment continues to be our reality, as has been the trend across the province. Preliminary Secondary enrolments are not always solid indicators of the pattern for the year as they tend to fluctuate. As always, we will continue to monitor these numbers each month.

School Generated Funds Report

Cathy Colton presented the annual *Report of School Generated Funds* as per board policy. All money that flows through a school flows through one account and must be reported, and numbers are consolidated into the financial statements of the board. The report includes revenues and expenses, and calculates an average revenue per pupil of \$473 for 2010/2011. The annual *Report of School Generated Funds* was approved by motion as presented, and is available on the board website at www.bgcdsb.org

Notes of interest from the Student Trustee reports:

Katie Walsh, St. Mary's High School Owen Sound

- SMHS held its first grad luncheon was held at St. Mary's parish hall. It was very successful and there was lots of positive feedback from students in regards to their experiences at St. Mary's High School. This initiative will most likely be carried on next year.
- Opening mass was Thursday, September 15th and was put on by football team
- Mr. Kirby is taking approximately 9 students to We Day in Toronto on Tuesday, September 27th. This was a very successful trip last year with lots of positive feedback.
- The Thanksgiving food drive for the Salvation Army began last week. Students and staff are encouraged to bring in non-perishable food items.
- For the upcoming year Ms. Foch wishes to have more clergy present in the classrooms, and has also changed the process in which religion classes visit the church for reconciliation. In previous years all classes would visit on one particular day. This year confession periods will be spread out over the course of the semester. A group of senior students will visit El Salvador again this year in mid-March 2012. Ms. Foch is always looking for new ideas for religion retreats and is currently in the process of organizing activities and guest speakers for each grade.

Academics:

- approximately 97% of all gr. 9s achieved all of their credits.
- EQAO Math for Grade 9's: 44% of students taking applied math performed at the expected standard (Level 3). 83% of students taking academic math performed at expected standard (Level 3). Mr. Miller has met with math teachers to discuss results and improvement of student scores, the School improvement planning committee is looking at student data and will be drafting goals with staff to increase student achievement, and a school improvement plan should be formed by the end of October.
- Monitoring students at risk is taking place on bi-weekly basis – at risk student are those who are not above 60% in any course. Meetings will continue throughout the year.

- Grade 9 orientation –August 23rd and 24th, was very successful. Thanks to Trinity Peer leaders and teachers that helped out.
- Grade 9 Parent Information night was held on September 13th
- First Annual Celebration of Academic Excellence will take place on Tuesday, October 11th at Hillyer Hall. Letters are sent to parents notifying them of their son/ daughter’s academic achievement. Parents and award recipients are invited to a night led by co-presidents (Jake See and Mary Cassidy). A band will be performing beforehand and refreshments will be served afterward. The following awards will be handed out: Hillyer Award, Grade 10 Science and Humanities award, honor role, Canada Wide Science Fair, Chemistry Contest and Math Contest. Mrs. Buettenarr’s Comp-Tech class will be creating brochures and a slideshow for the event.
- Parent teacher interviews will be taking place on Tuesday, October 20th.

Athletics:

- Football, cross country running, girls rugby, girls basketball, boys volleyball and golf have all started for the fall.
- The girls’ rugby team is travelling to local elementary schools to teach students how to play rugby over the next few weeks.

Extra-Curricular:

- Yearbook, improv and band have all started up.
- The water fountain installed in St. Mary’s early this year has resulted in an extremely positive feedback. Students and staff alike use the fountain regularly to drink from and fill up their water bottles. Since being installed in June over 8000 water bottles have been saved and approximately 6000 since the beginning of the semester.
- SMHS has a new electronic sign that not only shows the school name and emblem, but also rotates time, temperature and school events.
- SAC hosted their first dance on Thursday, September 15th. The themed was “Are you blue?” to promote school spirit and teams.
- Over the upcoming year SAC plans to increase school participation. Invitation for new members will be sent out within the next month.
- As student trustee, I am collecting footage for a provincial documentary that focuses on how the public and Catholic school boards can raise awareness about equality in their schools.
- Lastly, a Student Vote for the upcoming provincial election has been organized. An all candidates meeting will take place in the school cafeteria on Wednesday, September 28th and students will be able to vote over the following days. Results from our school will be sent to Student Vote headquarters where they will be tallied with results from other schools across the province.

Jocelyn King, Sacred Heart High School Walkerton

- The First School Mass was held on September 14

- Jocelyn attended the Catholic Leadership Camp this summer. It was a very exciting experience, and she received valuable leadership training for the When Faith Meets Pedagogy Youth conference. Jocelyn also met other student trustees from across the province, and thanked the board for the opportunity to attend.
- The students have been selected for the Mission Trip to Nicaragua in March
- Gr 9 Parent/Student night was held on Sept 19
- Picture Day was on September 8, and all students have received their Student Handbooks
- Orientation/Grade 9 Appreciation Day was held on Sept 15, and a messy but good time was had by all
- The opening school assembly was September 22
- SHHS welcomes 4 exchange students this year
- SHHS will be hosting a school wide Terry Fox Run September 28, the Community Run two weeks earlier organized by SHHS raised \$3000
- The Herb Miller Peace and Remembrance Project, a play about Remembrance Day, will be staged at Jubilee Hall Nov 4. The group has also been invited to perform in Ottawa on November 9 and 10, at the National War Museum, with three shows scheduled for the 9th, and 2 shows on the 10th
- Senior and Junior Girls basketball has started, as well as Senior and Junior boys Volleyball, and girls rugby is a ready to go

Board Policy and Administrative Procedures

Amendments to the following Policies were approved by motion:

- BP 7-4 and AP 7-4 on Accidents
- BP 6-10 and AP 6-10 on Fees and Guidelines for Learning Materials
- BP 9-9 on Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL)
- BP 6-8 and AP 6-8 on Educational Excursions and Field Trips

The following Policies are currently under review:

- BP 8-1 on Employee Relations
- BP 8-2 on Employment Equity

Policies and Procedures under review can be viewed on the board website at www.bgcdsb.org

Dates of Interest:

Diocesan Mass ~ Cathedral of Christ the King, Hamilton ~ September 29, 2011

Next Board of Trustees meeting is October 25, 2011 at 10:00a.m, at the Catholic Education Centre.