



# Board Highlights

*On Tuesday, February 21, 2017, the Durham District School Board held its regular scheduled Board meeting.*

## Michaëlle Jean PS Dance Troupe Brings its Talents to the Board

A very special thank you to music teachers Robyn



Gayadeen and Alexandra Campion of the Michaëlle Jean Public School Dance Crew who performed: Dancing Around the World.

Thank you for sharing your time and to

family, friends and fans for attending the board meeting to support the students in their outstanding performance.

In his introductory remarks, Mr. Barrett outlined, "As Canada celebrates its 150th anniversary, it's important to acknowledge the lengthy history prior to 1867. Indigenous people, the first peoples, have a long history on this land. Treaties were created to support this relationship and the sharing of the land.

The Durham District School Board is proud to acknowledge the lands and people of the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation. We are situated on the Traditional Territory of the Mississaugas and in the territory covered by the Williams Treaties.

"Let's celebrate Canada 150 but also acknowledge that this is an opportunity to learn more about the history of Canada that preceded Confederation.

*"We are Canadian, We are DDSB,"*

## Celebrating Canada 150 — We Are DDSB!

DDSB Chair Michael Barrett kicked off the Canada 150 – We Are DDSB initiative through a recorded video featuring students from Sinclair Secondary School.



## Make a Difference – DDSB's Poverty Strategy

Trustees received an update on the progress of the DDSB Make A Difference – DDSB's Poverty Strategy, which began in September 2013. The initiative was developed to address early learning, preparing our youngest learners for school, reducing the achievement gap at entry levels, addressing the impact of poverty, engaging, and providing supports to Oshawa families. The initiative has expanded this past year to include early years through to adolescents and now includes schools located in priority neighbourhoods across the DDSB district.

Make A Difference (M.A.D.) has many key components including a research partnership with Brock University; Parenting Programs; M.A.D. Foundation; Implementation of the DDSB Youth Strategy; and Involvement in Poverty Initiatives across the region, to name a few.

## Grade 12 Student Maya George Earns Essay Scholarship



scholarship.

Trustees were treated to a recorded video presentation by Maya George, a grade 12 student at Ajax High School. Maya recited her scholarship-winning essay “Overcoming Adversity: The Lesson Impacting Generations”. Maya entered her work in the RBC Black History Month Student Essay Competition and received the \$500

## Afrocentric Perspectives

Trustees learned more about the recently completed Ministry of Education Barrie area family of schools Afrocentric Perspectives: A Kindergarten to Grade 8 Resource Document. Seventeen cross-curricular lessons can be found in the document that covers a variety of subject areas and grade levels.

The lessons will include student voice; promote student leadership skills; incorporate connections to build teacher capacity with regard to instructional strategies, deepening content knowledge around black history and issues; include inquiry-based learning and promote critical thinking skills; infuse technology throughout; and reinforce authentic, real world rich tasks.

## Modified Accommodation Review – Township of Brock – Beaverton PS and Thorah Central PS

New text for Board Highlights in the Modified Accommodation section:

Trustees approved the following accommodation solution for two Township of Brock Elementary Schools: Beaverton PS and Thorah Central PS:

- The closure and consolidation of Beaverton PS and Thorah Central PS into a new school on the Beaverton PS property, pending Ministry of Education approval and funding based on the Board’s business case outlining the project.

- Beaverton PS and Thorah Central PS will continue to adhere to current boundaries until such time as a new school is completed on the Beaverton PS site and a new school year commences.
- Beaverton PS and Thorah Central PS will close and consolidate into a new school on the Beaverton PS site once the school is completed and open.

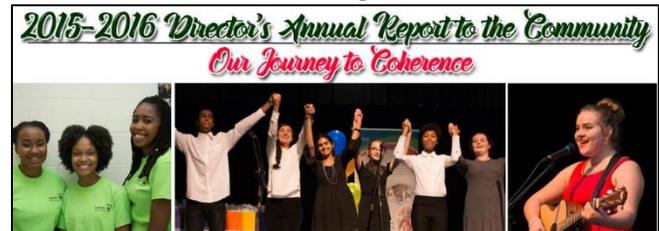
The recommendations also include transitional funding, pending Ministry of Education approval and funding.

## Relocation of Pickering and Oshawa Alternate Programs

The following recommendation was approved by the Board of Trustees:

1. The relocation of the programs currently accommodated in leased space on Bayly Street Pickering, into the Dunbarton Annex building for September 2017, which in turn, relocates Dunbarton HS pupils back into the Dunbarton HS building.
2. The relocation of the programs currently accommodated in leased space in the Westmount building and Galleria office at the Oshawa Centre, into Village Union PS for September 2017.

## Director’s Annual Report 2015-2016



Director of Education Lisa Millar presented her annual report for 2015-2016. Among the many highlights is student enrolment, which has grown to just above 70,000. The report features details on:

- Achievement;
- Engagement;
- Leadership;
- Successes and Awards;
- Trustees;
- Financial Resources; and
- Facts.

View the online report [here](#) or visit our website at: [www.ddsbc.ca](http://www.ddsbc.ca) About Us, Annual Report.

## DDSB Art Contest

Director Millar introduced the DDSB Art Contest that will see students from all grades create artwork using a variety of media including photography, drawings in crayon, markers, ink, pencil and charcoal, acrylic, oil and watercolour paintings. The theme for the Art Contest is for student voice to define who we are in the DDSB. The contest will become an annual event with the top six art pieces chosen by trustees on May 28<sup>th</sup>. The artwork will be displayed at the DDSB Education Centre on Taunton Road in Whitby.

A year later, in May 2018, the artwork will be part of a silent auction to raise money to support the DDSB poverty initiatives. Student art will provide an opportunity for us to give back and support DDSB students in need.

## Director's Good News

The DDSB is recognizing the positive events that have occurred and are taking place to celebrate Black History Month. DDSB students, staff and community have attended many celebrations, posted artwork of African role models and strived to learn more in appreciation of the contributions of our African-Canadian communities.

Two weeks ago J. Clarke Richardson Collegiate in Ajax hosted an outstanding and inspirational event featuring Emmanuel Jal at Together, One Canada Strong – Celebrating Black History in Canada. Mr. Jal is a South Sudanese-Canadian musician, actor, political activist and former child soldier who spoke to those in attendance encouraging them to think about what each person can do to ensure justice, freedom and equality for all. He also spoke to the fact that failure is the infinite source of intelligence because we learn and grow from the challenges we experience.

Last month DDSB elementary students gathered for the first-ever Future City Competition. Our students competed in school teams showcasing their engineering designs for future cities. Student teams from 18 schools across the DDSB came together to share their learning with other students, educators and judges from Engineers Canada. The winning team from A.G. Bell was awarded the opportunity to attend the international competition currently taking place in Washington D.C. A presentation will take place at the next standing committee meeting.

On February 1st, at our fourth Proud To Be Speaker Series of the year, the DDSB was fortunate to welcome Peter Ittinuar, the first Inuk in Canada to be elected as an MP. Peter shared his Inuit history with a large group of teachers and DDSB community members. Inuit communities from Ottawa

and Toronto also connected to this DDSB-hosted event via Adobe Connect. The following week on February 7th, our First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education department in partnership with UOIT continued with the speaker series by welcoming well-known Mohawk Chief, Spiritual Leader and Master Storyteller, Tom Porter.

Our Special Education department has started to meet with the community to host three Community Information Sessions. Our first session took place last month with two more scheduled meetings later this month and in early March. The goal of our Community Information Sessions is to receive community input and ideas in reshaping special education supports and services to improve the delivery of service for students with special needs. The Special Education Community Information Sessions will focus on how to foster student independence, better organize special education supports and services and receive input in the shaping of a renewed model of special education classes.

As you know, the DDSB is committed to continuous improvement in our schools in how we manage our resources. To ensure maximum transportation efficiency, Durham Student Transportation Services, the transportation consortium serving DDSB students, has undertaken an efficiency review to reduce transportation costs while maximizing overall educational services to students.

Recently, we instituted a new procedure regarding the establishment or adjustment of bell times and held three Bell Time Review open houses in Ajax, Whitby and Port Perry.

As a school board we are tasked with balancing the pressure to maintain service levels with predetermined transportation funding while dealing with traffic congestion, fuel costs and pockets of population growth.

On Saturday February 4th, a group of 29 female students from J. Clarke Richardson was invited to participate in the WE Model day at Queen's University in Kingston.

Students involved in the school's 'Cultures of Richardson' club, 'Students Without Borders' group, and the social science studies groups had the opportunity to attend and participate. The University's Free the Children social activist group worked diligently to invite the school's students to the event. Our students had the opportunity to listen to speakers and take part in activism workshops.

*continued on page 4*



## Director's Good News continued

On January 25th our Employee Services department held our first Occasional Teachers Information Evening. The evening provided resources and information for occasional teachers to enhance and support their journey in day to day supply and LTO assignments. We had a great turnout with 203 Occasional Teachers attending and 118 of those teachers have been employed with the DDSB for two years or less.

During the week of February 6-10 many of our school Principals and other administrative staff attended a Traumatic Event Systems Training held here at the Education Centre. Our staff were trained by Kevin Cameron, the Executive Director of the Canadian Centre for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response.

We also want to recognize students from Valley View Public School who through their Halloween Dance, samosa sales, Winter Dance and December Pizza Day, generated \$1,200 to donate to the Sick Kids Foundation. Valley View students are showing how they can make a difference when they put their hearts and minds to a cause.

## Upcoming Events

- **February 27** – Special Education Community Information Session
- **March 1** – Special Education Community Information Session
- **March 6** – DBEN – And Still We Rise Secondary Student Conference
- **March 10 - 17** – March Break – All Schools
- **March 21** – International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

## Regular Board and Committee Meetings

### Student Senate Meeting

Monday, March 6, 2017  
4:15 p.m. — 6:00 p.m.

### Standing Committee Meeting

Monday, March 6, 2017  
Public Session — 7:00 p.m.

### Board Meeting

Monday, March 20, 2017  
Public Session — 7:00 p.m.



COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT  
DURHAM DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

