



# InTouch

## School Year Calendar 2013-14

Education Officer Dave Bragnalo presented the 2013-14 School Year Calendar to Trustees for approval on Monday night. School will begin on Wednesday, September 4, following a PD Day on September 3. Under the current Memorandum of Understanding, the Ministry has designated Friday, October 11, Friday, December 20 and Friday, March 7, 2014 as unpaid PD Days for educators.



*Principal Pepe Garieri at Monday night's Board meeting*

## Improving Student Achievement and Supporting Teachers

Our Board is now in its fourth year of District Reviews, which involve an extensive examination of a school's operations, from school improvement plans to student achievement. A total of seven schools are reviewed each year, and this year's group included Bishop E.Q. Jennings. According to Principal Pepe Garieri, "Teachers understand that the review process is designed to help us get the most from our students. DRs are supportive rather than evaluative, and they foster an atmosphere that is open to learning for all involved. Using the DR feedback, teachers can have frank, meaningful conversations on how to create deeper, richer learning experiences for our students."

## We're Leaders in Health!

Ontario Physical and Health Education Association (OPHEA) has presented our Board with their prestigious **School Community Award**. The honor is given to a school or community organization that has "demonstrated leadership and excellence in successfully bringing together members of the community, including parents, teachers, boards of education, public health, sport and recreation organizations, community coalitions, local businesses, and municipal governments. The recipient has demonstrated enhanced active, healthy living opportunities for children and youth, and created an environment that encourages and supports active, healthy living." The award was presented to our **Healthy Schools, Healthy Communities** project leads, Shelley Taylor and Frank Lacaria.



*Shelley Taylor and Frank Lacaria*

## Energy Retrofit Program Pays Off

"Our energy retrofit program is a tremendous success," reports Superintendent of Business Tom Mustapic. Actual savings in energy costs of over \$2,158,925 have been achieved over the past six years, a figure that exceeds our target by over \$700,000. He added that assuming typical savings in 2012-13, the original investment by the Board will have been repaid through savings in seven years, which is 3.5 years earlier than original projections.

## Planning for our Future

Our Board of Trustees approved two recommendations to engage the services of professional consultants to help ensure a strong future for our students and our system. Director of Education Joan Powell noted that as we begin building our next Strategic Plan, it will be important to conduct a series of effective, in-depth consultations with our various stakeholder groups, using the services of a consultant. Related to Strategic Planning, Ms. Powell talked about the external circumstances that are having a significant impact on our system. These include declining enrolment, increased competition for students, and the emerging presence of a 'one school system' movement. Ms. Powell recommended to the Board that in this time of challenge, we would do well to contract a professional marketing firm to review our current practices and to refresh our communication strategies and tools. "Given that retention and recruitment are more important than ever," she stated, "our Board needs to ensure that our communications practices are the very best that they can be."

## Sharpening Our Leadership Skills

This week, our school leaders deepened their understanding of effective leadership in a full day session led by Catherine McCullough. Ms. McCullough, a six-year veteran as Director of Education at Sudbury Catholic DSB, has studied extensively in the field of leadership development and coaching. In the morning session, she helped our principals and vice-principals better understand their leadership 'type'; in the afternoon, she oriented the group to the new **Ontario Leadership Framework**.



*Catherine McCullough  
Director of Sudbury Catholic*



## Getting Excited About Technology!

Recently returned from a trip to Apple's world headquarters in Cupertino, California, secondary principals Francis Veneruz and Barry Quarrell were eager to share what they learned about the amazing potential of mobile technology in high school classrooms. Joining the school leaders on this once-in-a-lifetime PD opportunity were IT Manager Chris Hanley and Finance Manager Sheila Chiodo. The entire group met with Senior Team last week to provide highlights of their experience and to begin developing a vision for technology in our secondary schools.

## Another Graduate Success Story

J.P. Gladu graduated from St. Ignatius High School in 1991. Aboriginal in heritage, J.P. now has more than two decades of experience in the natural resource sector, working with Aboriginal communities and organizations, industry and governments across Canada. He has produced a number of publications related to First Nations issues, and is currently the President and CEO of the Canadian Council of Aboriginal Business. Following St. Ignatius, J.P. completed a Forestry Technician Diploma at Confederation College, an undergraduate degree from Northern Arizona University, and an Executive MBA from Queen's University in Kingston. J.P. is now helping our Board identify co-op placement opportunities in Aboriginal businesses and organizations.

