



InTouch

Aboriginal Leadership Conference

On April 14, a group of five secondary students from Thunder Bay Catholic traveled to the regional First Nations, Metis and Inuit Student Leadership Conference at the Tim Horton Children's Foundation Camp in Parry Sound.

At Monday night's Board meeting, Janine Landry, our Aboriginal Outreach Worker, introduced some of the students to Trustees.

"The Ministry (of Education)

piloted this program last year, and based on its overwhelming success, they decided to run it again on a larger scale. Because of its size, they decided to break it down by region, so we were part of the Northwestern Ontario group, where there were students from Marathon all the way to Kenora," she said.

She added that roughly 65 students attended the week-long conference.

Throughout the week, students engaged in confidence building and team building sessions. Also, leadership activities included traditional cultural teaching sessions and many outdoor physical activities.

Throughout all of the sessions, the main message was confidence and pride. "It was evident throughout the week that these teachings were hitting home for the students as you could see them begin to open up and become more comfortable with themselves and their peers. This was certainly an experience that will remain with these students throughout their lives."



From left, Janine Landry, Aboriginal Outreach Worker, and students: Kiyana Chief, Ashley King, Rose Skead, and Martin White, Aboriginal Student Counselor. Missing are students Jade Therriault and Owen McWatch-Hall.

Update on the Board's Environmental Project

Committee member Joel Biesenthal provided an update to the trustees on the Board's major environmental focus: Ontario EcoSchool Certification. By the end of the month twelve schools including St. Martin, St Bernard, Pope John Paul II, Bishop EQ Jennings, Our Lady of Charity, St. Francis, St. Elizabeth, St. Paul, St. Patrick High School, St. Ignatius High School, St. Margaret, and St. Pius X will qualify for either Bronze, Silver, Gold and even Platinum levels of certification.

Schools seeking certification form an eco-team and work towards reducing a school's carbon footprint through various activities that reduce waste, conserve energy and teach children in, for, and about the environment. The committee also reviewed how the EcoSchool program supports various aspects of the Board's Strategic Plan 2014-2020.

Some of the other short-term goals of the committee are:

- Increase the number of schools applying for EcoSchool certification and provide mentorship to support them.
- Support existing certified EcoSchools.
- Provide support to schools that have school ground greening projects.
- Advocate for professional development that will improve our teachers' prior knowledge of environmental education.
- Improve recycling in all schools



New Student Trustees Welcomed

The Thunder Bay Catholic School Board selects two student trustees, one from each high schools. Next year's student trustees attended their first Board meeting.

From left, Courtenay Costanzo (current - St. Ignatius High School), Michael Coccimiglio (in-coming), Nicole Miniely (in-coming - St. Patrick High School) and Sarah Ficek (current).

Health and Safety Update

Karen McKissick, Safety Officer, provided a brief update on Health and Safety activities over this past school year.

“We have a new Occupational Health and Safety Program that we are currently rolling out board-wide. This process will continue during the next school year. It has been a great opportunity to discuss legislative requirements and answer questions and concerns,” she said.

“We’re also happy to announce that we recently completed our new “paperless” web-based inspection for all our schools. This tool connects the inspection teams, principals, the plant department, the safety office and custodial staff.”

She added that other recent improvements include the audit of all of the Board’s non-traditional classrooms, a multi-year accessibility plan and a website which posts all schools’ Material Safety Data Sheets on-line.

“I also want to let Trustees know that staff at all of the schools should be commended for taking such an active role in ensuring our buildings continue to be safe places to learn,” she added.

Friendly Reminder

Our "Safety Selfie" contest ends Friday, May 15 at 4 p.m.!

Please forward your contest entries to the attention of Karen McKissick at kmckissick@tbcdsb.on.ca to be entered to win a Smart TV, iPad or Intercity Gift Certificates!

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