



Date of Meeting: 2019 November 05

Item #: 5.0

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Administrative Council	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Program and School Services Advisory Committee
	<input type="checkbox"/> Policy Working Committee	<input type="checkbox"/> Planning and Priorities Advisory Committee
	<input type="checkbox"/> Board	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> IN-CAMERA
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	Strategic Priorities in Action: Relationships – Employee Appreciation	
<b>PRESENTED BY:</b>	Trustee Bruce Smith	
<b>PRESENTED FOR:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Approval	<input type="checkbox"/> Information <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advice
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>		
<b>Purpose:</b>	To receive feedback from Trustees on a proposal to support the recognition of individual TVDSB employees by Trustees.	
<b>Content:</b>	See Appendix D for Rationale.	
<b>Cost/Savings:</b>		
<b>Timeline:</b>		
<b>Communications:</b>		
<b>Appendices:</b>	Appendix A: Proposed process Appendix B: Form Appendix C: Draft letters Appendix D: Letters of Appreciation (Rationale by Trustee Smith)	

**Strategic Priority Area(s):**

<b>Relationships:</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Students, families and staff are welcomed, respected and valued as partners. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Promote and build connections to foster mutually respectful communication among students, families, staff and the broader community. <input type="checkbox"/> Create opportunities for collaboration and partnerships.
<b>Equity and Diversity:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Create opportunities for equitable access to programs and services for students. <input type="checkbox"/> Students and all partners feel heard, valued and supported. <input type="checkbox"/> Programs and services embrace the culture and diversity of students and all partners.
<b>Achievement and Well-Being:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> More students demonstrate growth and achieve student learning outcomes with a specific focus on numeracy and literacy. <input type="checkbox"/> Staff will demonstrate excellence in instructional practices. <input type="checkbox"/> Enhance the safety and well-being of students and staff.

Form Revised October 2018

## Trustee Letter of Appreciation

TVDSB Board Bylaws  
Appendix A  
Guidelines for Trustee Communications

### 2.2 Letters

From time-to-time a letter may be deemed an appropriate form of communication with constituents. Trustees may use Board letterhead to send congratulations, to provide special recognition of student achievement, or to thank a community member for a significant contribution that directly benefits student achievement and well-being. Any correspondence produced by a Trustee on Board-issued letterhead must be approved by the Chair of the Board prior to distribution.

Step One: Superintendent of Student Achievement forwards the completed form as a recommendation of a staff person to the area Trustee(s) for consideration of issuing a Letter of Appreciation.

Step Two: Trustee(s) determines whether or not to issue a Letter of Appreciation as per the completed Form of recommendation by the Superintendent. The Letter of Appreciation is then to be approved by the Chair of the Board through Chair's Committee.

Step Three: Upon Chair's Committee approval, through the Office of the Chair, the Letter of Appreciation is prepared, printed on TVDSB letterhead, and sent to the recipient.

## **Trustee Letter of Appreciation**

### **Date:**

Name staff member or group:

TVDSB School or Department:

Please select one or more criteria for which the staff member is being acknowledged:

- ☐ Innovation in the classroom
- ☐ School/family engagement and communication
- ☐ Inclusivity and equity in the classroom
- ☐ Contributions beyond the classroom
- ☐ Contributions to school climate
- ☐ Staff leadership (not formally assigned)

### **Optional information**

If you wish to do so please give a brief description of the incident which prompted you to initiate this process.

### **Signature and Date**

Supervisor/School Principal:

Superintendent of Student Achievement:



Arlene Morell, Chair of the Board

Date

**Support Staff Name**

Location

Address

City, Ontario

Postal Code

Dear XXX:

I would like to formally commend you for the excellent service you provided to/for *[event, school, individual]*. In my opinion, the level of service that you extended was far beyond expectations.

*[Provide details of what was done/service provided]*. This work directly supports our Board's Strategic Priorities of student achievement and well-being, equity and diversity and relationships.

As a trustee, I am charged with ensuring that the Thames Valley District School Board provides a world-class education system for our students. It's a simple fact that we couldn't do this without you.

Our valued support staff are critical front-line employees ensuring our students receive the best possible education in a safe and inclusive environment. Your time, effort and willingness to go beyond the call of duty is admirable. As a trustee, I am grateful to you for your dedication and commitment to your work.

In closing, I believe that you truly deserve to be recognized for providing outstanding support/customer service well beyond the expectations of Thames Valley.

Sincerely,

Arlene Morell  
Chair of the Board

Trustee Name  
Trustee

/sh

c: principal/supervisory officer  
Date

**Thames Valley District School Board**

1250 Dundas Street, London, Ontario, N5W 5P2 Tel: 519-452-2000 Fax: 519-452-1499 website: [www.tvdsb.ca](http://www.tvdsb.ca)

***We build each student's tomorrow, every day.***

Date

Teaching Staff Name

Location

Address

City, Ontario

Postal Code

Dear XXX:

I would like to formally commend you for the excellent service you provided to/for *[event, school, individual]*. In my opinion, the level of service that you extended was far beyond expectations.

*[Provide details of what was done/service provided]*. This work directly supports our Board's Strategic Priorities of student achievement and well-being, equity and diversity and relationships.

As a trustee, I am charged with ensuring that the Thames Valley District School Board provides a world-class education system for our students. It's a simple fact that we couldn't do this without you.

Our educators have the most important job – to provide students the benefit of exceptional role models. It gives me great pleasure to be part of a school board that is represented by staff members such as yourself.

The demands of teaching in today's classrooms are not insignificant and this becomes even more so when the responsibility extends beyond the curriculum.

In closing, I believe that you truly deserve to be recognized for providing outstanding support/customer service well beyond the expectations of Thames Valley.

Sincerely,

Arlene Morell  
Chair of the Board

Trustee Name  
Trustee

/sh

c: principal/supervisory officer

Date

Support Staff Name

Location

Address

City, Ontario

Postal Code

R

Dear XXX:

We recently received a note from XXX in which they expressed their sincere gratitude for your work regarding XXX.

The work that you continue to do is integral to our students success and I hope that you find it both personally and professionally rewarding. To be recognized for what you do each day is indeed an honour for which you should feel very proud. We appreciate all your efforts to be responsive, innovative and collaborative. It is this capacity for shared responsibility that makes our educational system successful.

Your commitment to our *Mission – “We build each student’s tomorrow, every day”*, ensures that our students achieve academic success and that the student experience is at the centre of all that we do. We know that our success in implementing our Strategic Plan depends on the knowledge, passion and dedication of everyone working together.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, please accept our sincere thanks for your exceptional work. It was wonderful to learn about your contributions and we hope that you continue enjoy your important work.

Sincerely,

Arlene Morell  
Chair of the Board

Bruce Smith  
Trustee

/sh

c: principal/supervisory officer

Date

Teaching Staff - Name

Location

Address

City, Ontario

Postal Code

Dear XXX:

I recently received a note from XXX in which they expressed their sincere gratitude for your work regarding XXX.

As an educator, the opportunity to positively influence our students is both personally and professionally rewarding. To be recognized for what you do each day is indeed an honour for which you should feel very proud. Thank you for providing a signature learning experience for your students.

Your commitment to our *Mission – “We build each student’s tomorrow, every day”*, ensures that our students achieve academic success and that the student experience is at the centre of all that we do. We know that our success in implementing our Strategic Plan depends on the knowledge, passion and dedication of everyone working together.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, please accept our sincere thanks for your exceptional work. It was wonderful to learn about your contributions and we hope that you continue enjoy your important work.

Sincerely,

Arlene Morell  
Chair of the Board

Bruce Smith  
Trustee

/sh

c: principal/supervisory officer

### **“Letters of Appreciation”**

To improve student achievement through better recognition of good work done by front line staff.

We acknowledge that the work of teachers and other front line workers is “of utmost importance in our system having the greatest impact on student achievement”, yet with our present process we recognize embarrassingly fewer of these frontline people than we do other participants in the system. For example, in 2018 we recognized 5 of 5300 teachers or less than 1 per 1100. Learning co-ordinators were recognized at a rate of 6% or 3 of 50. If teachers were recognized at the same rate we would have recognized the good work of 330 teachers and front line staff.

I’m sure that this inequity is not the result of some lack of respect for our front line staff, but rather the result of a complicated and onerous nomination procedure that our staff in the schools increasingly do not have the time or energy to push forward whereas other members of our system have jobs that allow them to participate more easily.

It’s imperative that we find a way to recognize excellence on the part of staff who work directly with our students without increasing the admin workload.

This program is designed to meet three criteria:

1. Correspond to our Strategic and Operational Plans
2. Respond to and acknowledge excellence as opportunities arise
3. Not create an encumbrance on the system

#### **One: Corresponding to our Strategic and Operational Plans**

I suggest that we recognize people using the following criteria which correspond to our Plans:

- Innovation in the classroom
- School/family communication
- Inclusivity and equity in the classroom
- Contributions beyond the classroom
- Contributions to school climate
- Staff leadership activities (not formally assigned)

The criteria suggested above are a starting point. I think that being too specific and formal would result in a high maintenance program and increase the burden put upon frontline administration.



## **Two: Respond to and acknowledge excellence as opportunities arise**

My daughter, Stephanie, works as a dispatcher for police, fire, and ambulance. She has received a number of commendations recognizing times that her work has been especially effective either in saving a life or handling a difficult situation or protecting an officer's life.

On these occasions Stephanie received a "Letter of Commendation" that acknowledged the work that she had done, said "Thank you", and reinforced the knowledge that she is a valued and important member of the team. These commendations she saves.

What I am suggesting is akin to this commendation idea. To recognize 330 front line staff in a year in our 168 schools we need to recognize 2 staff per school or 1 per term. I suggest that there be no timeline or deadline by which the names be put forward, simply that each principal be awarded the privilege of having one staff member per term recognized as an opportunity arises. The principal would forward the name to the Chair's office and a kind "Letter of Appreciation" would be issued on behalf of the Chair of the Board to the teacher. It would simply: acknowledge their exceptional work, say "Thank You" and let them know that they are a valued member of our team.

## **Three: Not create an encumbrance on the system.**

No formal nomination or application procedure.

No expectation of deadline or timeline to which the principal must adhere.

The principal is not required to describe the activities which warranted the "Letter of Appreciation". Although most principals would probably do that, it would be sufficient to forward the name and criteria area in which the teacher has shown especially good work.

That only two names per year be expected from a principal. (To simplify things school size should not be a part of the equation.)

The letters would go out in the courier system to the school.

This suggestion is intended to begin a conversation that will lead to increased recognition and appreciation for our frontline people. It falls in with the Strategic Plan and its ultimate goal of improving student achievement.

**Organizational Management**, Owens – wages can only bring the job satisfaction level to zero. A positive work culture and recognition is important to bring job satisfaction into the positive range.

**Culture Code**, Coyle –

- It's more important to invest in good people than in good ideas.
- Celebrate hugely when a group (or individual) takes initiative
- **Avoid sandwich Feedback** – Handle positives through ultraclear bursts of recognition and praise.
- **Overdo Thank Yous** – When you enter highly successful cultures, the number of thank yous you hear seems slightly over the top.

A “Thank You” isn’t only an expression of gratitude; it is a crucial belonging cue that generates a contagious sense of safety, connection and motivation.

**Forbes** - We tend to forget is that receiving honors for our work doesn’t get any less motivational as we grow up.

### **Successful Culture International**

The timing of recognition and linking the program to your culture is

-The timing of recognition and linking the program to your culture is everything when it comes to offering a recognition program that delivers real impact.

- Your **culture** should be the driving force behind your recognition program. Base your recognition around the shared values, beliefs and mission of your organization.

**Reward in real-time** and even on-the-spot for outstanding performance. Gone are the days of rewarding for performance only at the annual review cycle.

This proposal is not meant to replace the “The Award of Distinction” which has its challenges and I believe it should be looked at and adjusted to better suit our needs and resources. That being said, I want to find a way to acknowledge the excellent contributions of many deserving people who never get recognized.

I believe a laudable goal for us as trustees would be to create a safer, more positive culture at TVDSB in which the frontline staff would operate. The intended result is the continual improvement of the learning environment for our children.