

THAMES VALLEY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

INAUGURAL MEETING, PUBLIC SESSION 2019 DECEMBER 10

The Board met in session for its annual Inaugural meeting on 2019 December 10 in the Board Room at the Education Centre, meeting in public session at 7:00 p.m. The following were in attendance:

TRUSTEES

A. Morell (Chair)	S. Hunt
J. Bennett	P. Cuddy
L. Pizzolato	S. Polhill
M. Ruddock	B. Smith
C. Rahman	S. Chun
C. Antone	E. Butler

ADMINISTRATION AND OTHERS

M. Fisher	P. Skinner
S. Builder	K. Wilkinson
A. Canham	M. Moynihan
R. Culhane	S. Powell
P. Skinner	P. Sydor
R. Kuiper	L. Nicholls
D. Macpherson	L. Griffith-Jones
C. Lynd	J. Pratt
T. Testa	K. Edgar
A. Chahbar	B. Williams
	S. Smith

REGRETS:

B. McKinnon, J. Skinner,
B. Yeoman, C. Kennedy

1. CALL TO ORDER

Board Chair A. Morell called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. O CANADA

River Heights Public School Choir led in the singing of O Canada.

3. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION OF TRUSTEES

Trustee Bennett, Past Chair introduced the Trustees noting their area of representation.

4. MUSICAL INTERLUDE

Trustee Cuddy introduced A.B. Lucas Secondary School Choir and welcomed them to perform their first of three musical selections.

5. TRADITIONAL OPENING

Mark Peters, Munsee Delaware Nation, provided a traditional opening and land acknowledgement.

6. REFLECTION

Jacob Rowe delivered the Reflection.

7. MUSICAL INTERLUDE

Trustee Hunt introduced the River Heights Public School Choir to perform a musical selection.

8. SPECIAL GREETINGS

Trustee Rahman, Chair, Planning and Priorities Advisory Committee acknowledged representatives of various groups and organizations in attendance. The following guests brought greetings on behalf of their affiliates:

- John Jevnikar, Chair, London District Catholic School Board
- Delany Leitch on behalf of MPP Jeff Yurek
- Sarah Thomson, Chair, Thames Valley Parent Involvement Committee
- Laura Gonzalez, President, Thames Valley Council of Home and School Associations

- James Stewart, President, Thames Valley Education Foundation

9. MUSICAL INTERLUDE

A.B. Lucas Secondary School performed their second selection.

10. RECOGNITION OF 2019 CHAIR

Vice-Chair Ruddock extended appreciation, on behalf of the Trustees, to Chair Morell for her commitment and dedication as Chair in 2019.

Chair Morell briefly addressed the Board, sharing her appreciation for past work, noting the success she believes is still to come.

11. MUSICAL INTERLUDE

River Heights Public School Choir performed their next music selection.

Trustee Pizzolato thanked River Heights Public School for their performances.

12. PRESENTATION OF THE GAVEL

On behalf of the students, trustees, staff and community of the Thames Valley District School Board, the Gavel of Office was presented to Chair Morell by Everleigh Morell.

13. INAUGURAL ADDRESS

Chair Morell presented the following Inaugural Address:

“Trustee Colleagues, Director Fisher, Associate Director Pratt and Associate Director Culhane, the team of Superintendents, staff and honoured guests, I would like to begin my remarks this evening with my sincere thank you to all of you for attending our evening of celebration here in Thames Valley. There are many supporters in the audience who are sharing this evening with us. My family, my son Trevor and his wife Kim, friends, past Trustees, Mayors and Municipal leaders, members of Provincial Parliament, and many more. I thank you for sharing in our celebration of public education. With thanks, we recognize that we couldn't do this without your support.

I am honoured and humbled by the confidence my fellow Trustees have placed in me, elected to serve a second term as Chairperson of the Thames Valley District School Board for the upcoming year.

Our Inaugural is a night of celebration and reflection, and as I prepared for this evening, I reflected on how education has evolved in our schools and in our school board through the guidance of Trustees and our system leaders.

Reflecting on the successful growth of Thames Valley, as we begin our second year in public office as Trustees, we honour past leadership, while maintaining the balance between our local community interest and the broader public interest. Along with the Education Act, each Trustee brings personal values, beliefs and vision for improving student outcomes. As Trustees, we have the responsibility not only to lead the system to continued success, but also to act as leaders with integrity, with a focus always on the students and families we serve. This was the message I brought one year ago at our 2018 Inaugural. During that night I spoke about how Trustees are the guardians of public education. As Trustees, we have the responsibility to create the conditions that enable each student to achieve to their fullest potential, to enhance a positive culture for learning and innovation within a school environment, and ensuring safety and promoting well-being.

Embracing these responsibilities requires everyone to be fully engaged and by making an intentional contribution to the learning for all students through our collective leadership.

OPSBA's guide to ethical leadership and good governance states/promotes "when the Board of Trustees move to the higher level of authentic governance that is truly student-centered and make teaching and learning their first priority" change occurs.

We have and will continue to make a difference, as Board of Trustees, not individuals, but as an entire Board committed to ensuring a strong foundation upon which all other work will be built. Equally important is our focus on helping to create a positive climate for teachers, administrators, parents and our communities to engage in student achievement, well-being, building relationships and creating equitable and diverse learning and working environments. When our students see themselves reflected in our school and community leadership, they are able to see paths for themselves; pathways of impact and filled with success.

In addition, our relationships with our Indigenous communities is one based on trust, mutual respect and sharing that will support and nurture the growing success of First Nations, Metis, and Inuit students and staff in our school board. It affirms cultural identity and pride, and encourages students to reach their full potential. As Trustees it is our moral imperative to support this work and continue to foster relationships in support of ALL student achievement.

Looking ahead, reflecting on our successes, there is much more for us to accomplish, through student voice and the leadership of the Student Trustees, through the Parent Involvement Committee, School Councils and Thames Valley Council of Home and School Associations and their local Home and School Associations, AND with parents as leaders as we move from parent involvement to true family engagement, Trustees as ambassadors for student achievement and well-being, through the Director and the outstanding leadership of Associate Director Pratt, Associate Director Culhane and the work of our Superintendents promoting the Operational Plan in improving student outcomes in numeracy, literacy, and doing better on equity and communication--ALL with an underpinning of positive mental health and well-being.

Past Vice-Chair Bennett, I am very pleased to have had your leadership and knowledge this past year, as you have always inspired me to set high expectations for myself. You have never wavered as a champion of public education.

Vice-Chair Ruddock I look forward to our collaboration. You bring to this work an earnest perspective that is always focused on how we can do better for the students we serve. With three young children in our system, you are grounded by grass roots leadership that will serve us well. To each and every Trustee looking ahead as a call to action as we must endeavour for equity and outcomes for our students, a commitment to work as a team to respond to the needs of our district with flexibility integrity and principled actions.

In closing, I would like to thank Corporate Supervisor Williams and her team for truly making this a very special evening for all. To all here in Thames Valley and the community who are invested in the success of the Board of Trustees please know your trust is valued and appreciated. A strong public education system is built on the collaborative efforts of all, regardless of our role, I look forward leading alongside."

The following motion was moved by Trustee Ruddock, seconded by Trustee Cuddy and CARRIED:

THAT the Chairperson's Inaugural Address be spread upon the minutes.

14. APPROVAL OF BOARD COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The following motion was moved by Trustee Ruddock, seconded by Trustee Smith and CARRIED:

THAT the appointment of Trustees to committees of the Board for 2019-2020, as outlined on the Committees of the Board Community Representation 2019-2020 be approved.

15. MUSICAL INTERLUDE

A.B. Lucas Secondary School Choir performed their final selection.

Trustee Smith thanked A.B. Lucas Secondary School for their performances.

16. CLOSING REMARKS

Director M. Fisher brought closing remarks to the Inaugural meeting of the Thames Valley District School Board of Trustees noting the Inaugural meeting is held to mark the beginning of a renewed focus on student success. Trustee Arlene Morell was welcomed as Chairperson and Trustee Meagan Ruddock as Vice Chairperson. On behalf of the Senior Administrative team, Director Fisher expressed the ongoing commitment of working together.

The student performers were thanked for their special performances and sharing their talents. Families, friends, staff, partners in education and special guests were thanked for attending.

Director Fisher invited guests to attend the reception in the Atrium.

17. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:11 p.m. on motion of Trustee Smith, seconded by Trustee Cuddy.

Confirmed: _____

Arlene Morell
Chairperson