

*Quarterly Verbal Report to the Board*

*Mario Pascucci*

*Board Meeting of August 25, 2009*

Ladies and gentlemen, staff, fellow trustees ..... it is my pleasure to bring you the third quarterly report from the chair relative to events, activities and issues concerning the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board. Since my last report in May, this board has continued to push the envelope of excellence in many areas ...trustees and staff continue to work hard on behalf of our students to maximize opportunities for success.

I came across an unattributed quote recently that I believe embodies our board's philosophy of continuous improvement ...it goes like this ..."Good, better, best, never let it rest ... your good gets better and your better gets best!"

2008-09 saw many bests for Dufferin-Peel. I'll mention a few including ... continued improvement in EQAO test scores ...a balanced budget ...a continued strong emphasis on safe, healthy, caring and inclusive classrooms ... a homework policy translated into 12 of the top languages spoken by our diverse community.

Our Kindergarten registration campaign was another success this year as we cast a wide net to make our community and parents/guardians of potential students aware of the outstanding Catholic education available to them. We will continue to actively promote our system again this year.

In June, trustees attended elementary and secondary graduation ceremonies bringing a common message of the good news of Catholic education.

Dufferin-Peel schools are very involved in social justice issues. This was highlighted in a recent letter I received from the charitable organization, War Child Canada, which provides assistance to war-affected children around the world. The letter was thanking three schools in particular, St. John Fisher, St. Cecilia, and St. Rafael, for the generous contribution made by students and staff. This is the very embodiment of the giving spirit of students and staff from across the board.

This year, we were proud of the achievements of many of our students. One such top achiever, Richard Ha, a graduate of St. Francis Xavier Secondary School was profiled in the Toronto Star this summer as one of the top GTA graduates with an average of 99.34.

I would also make mention of our Summer Institute, which recently wrapped up continues to provide high value professional development for teachers ...another example of our proud tradition of excellence.

But has it always been a smooth ride? Of course not. We will always face issues that challenge us. This comes with the territory. But let's put things in perspective....we are an organization of 10,000 plus employees, including our adult learners, some 13,000 students ...we have more than 150 sites. We operate within an area that encompasses some 2,700 square kms. There are no two ways about it...we are a very large organization. Please know that it is our commitment as trustees and senior staff to meet those challenges head on, seeking solutions that are in the best interests of our students and community.

As we continue to celebrate our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, it is clearly evident that we truly are a system with a proud tradition and brand of excellence that permeates all that we do. And that brand of excellence continues ... We begin the 2009-10 school year in 13 days with two new secondary schools opening in Brampton....Cardinal Ambrozic and St. Roch. As well, work is well underway on St. Michael Catholic Secondary School, our first secondary school in Bolton.

As we prepare to embark on the journey that will be the 2009-10 school year, our promise to our community remains the same ...a Tradition of Excellence in Catholic Education.

To our parents/guardians and students, thank you for choosing a Catholic education. To my fellow trustees and staff, thank you for all you do to make Dufferin-Peel a leading school board in this country.