

Chris Glover

PUBLIC SCHOOL TRUSTEE
Etobicoke Centre

Winter 2016



"A great school in every neighbourhood"

www.chrisglover.ca

Dear Neighbours,

It's going to be an exciting year!

I hope that everyone had a wonderful winter break. The holiday season brought out the best in many of us. TDSB schools helped raise over \$100,000 as part of the *tdsbCARES* refugee crisis relief (*see article on page 3*). Like the student shown in the photo on the right, many schools led toy and food drives, mitten and sock collections, family Christmas gift sponsorships, and shoebox campaigns.

There have been a lot of changes at the TDSB over the past year. The new board, which was elected in October 2014 has now been in office for one year. Half of the Trustees – 11 of them – are new to the board. We also have a new Chair, Robin Pilkey, a new Vice Chair, Jennifer Arp, and a new Director of Education, John Malloy (*see article on page 3*). It's a lot of change, but I believe it is for the best. The employee contract negotiations are also drawing to a close, all of which bodes well for the new year.

This year, I will be bringing forward a motion to have all students in grade 4 learn keyboarding (touch typing). It is something that is long overdue and an essential skill for this next generation who will be spending much of their working lives in front of computers. I am also continuing to work with parents, students and staff to continuously improve the special education services in our schools through the Special Education Forum (*see article on page 4*). I am also conducting research to find ways to reduce community violence and the impact it has in some parts of our city.

Please join me at my next Ward Council meeting on **Tuesday, February 23, 6:30 pm** at Scarlett Heights (15 Trehorne Drive) where we will be discussing this year's budget. You will find a list of my upcoming meetings on page 4 of this newsletter.

As always, it's an honour to serve as your Trustee. If you have any questions or comments, please email me at chris.glover@tdsb.on.ca.



Grade 4 Wellesworth JS student Kenan Hadzic organized a toy drive for Sick Kids as a way to show his thanks for the gifts he received during his stay in the hospital last Christmas.

Chris Glover



PROFILE:

Les Dobbin

Music teacher extraordinaire

Les Dobbin is a community volunteer and a stalwart on the Etobicoke music scene. For three decades, Les has been the volunteer conductor and director of the Etobicoke Youth Band (www.eyb.com) and is part of the Toronto Concert Band (www.torontoconcertband.com), a community band made up of over 60 local musicians.

Les recently retired after 20 years as the much-admired itinerant band instructor and inspiration of John G. Althouse Middle School's exceptional music program. He is very proud to have led the school's stage bands and honour orchestras which have done so well at music festivals in Ontario and around the world.

In 2013, Les was an integral part of a group of parents, students and community members that led the fight to stop cuts to school music programs. Due to the overwhelming outcry of support, those cuts were averted by the board.

"I spent ten years on a music advisory committee defending and supporting music education. When the news of possible cuts came to my attention, I thought, 'Haven't we done this before?' Fortunately, parents, students and administrators see the value in a good musical education and were prepared to fight for it."

Les' interest in music started at age five when he began playing the piano and singing in choir. By the age of nine, he had already sung with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. He continued his education at the University of Toronto as a vocal music major and sang professionally with the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir for nine years. When he took a supply job in 1982, Les discovered his natural knack for teaching. He taught music at several Etobicoke schools including Parklawn, Humber Valley Village and Islington until 1995 when he began at John G. Althouse.

But Les has no plans to sit back and relax in his retirement. He hopes to continue conducting and keeping the EYB and TCB very busy with different concerts and trips. He also plans to be an adjudicator at some of the music festivals he attended for many years with his students.

When asked about one of his more memorable moments, Les recalls, "While I've had many musical accomplishments in my career such as performing at Massey Hall and trips to New Orleans and New York City, I treasure the kids and the families that I've had the pleasure to work with and become friends with over the years."



Les spent the last 20 years as a band instructor at John G. Althouse Middle School.

Board welcomes new Director of Education John Malloy

The Toronto District School Board is pleased to welcome John Malloy as the Board's new Director of Education.

John brings with him a wealth of experience in public education, having served as Director of Education for the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board and a Superintendent of Education with the York Region District School Board and the Durham Catholic District School Board. Most recently, John was an Assistant Deputy Minister and Chief Student Achievement Officer with the Ontario Ministry of Education.

As Director, John's key priorities include improving student achievement and well-being. He is focussed on increasing student engagement, ensuring learning environments are supportive, and providing equitable access to opportunities for all students. John also believes very strongly in the importance of collaboration, especially with parents and the community.

For more information about John Malloy, visit www.tdsb.on.ca/AboutUs/DirectorofEducation or follow him on Twitter [@malloy_john](https://twitter.com/malloy_john).



Think outside the desk

"Fidgeting, which has long been viewed as a negative activity in children, is actually very healthy," says Jennifer Spreckley, a teacher and owner of Kingsway Pilates. Jennifer presented some interesting ideas about health and wellness in the classroom at my January Ward Council meeting.

"Sitting research informs us that being still for long periods of time is a risk factor for some major diseases and yet most educational environments still equate stillness with good behaviour and learning. Let's educate our children on the health benefits of regular movement and provide an environment for it."

Jennifer suggested that classrooms could be set up with various stations: traditional desks in one area, stand-up desks in another, and areas where students could either sit on the floor or perhaps lay down while reading. The idea is to periodically change positions.

"Learning will not be diminished because of movement," she says. "Movement will increase blood flow which increases oxygen to the brain helping to keep children more focussed."

To learn more, visit:

www.facebook.com/thinkoutsidethedesk

Refugee Resettlement and Support Strategy

On October 2, 2015, in response to the Syrian refugee crisis, City Council approved the establishment of the Inter-Agency Task Force of which the TDSB is a member. As a board, we have extensive experience in welcoming and integrating newcomers, immigrants, visitors and refugees into our classrooms. We have formed an internal cross-departmental working group to ensure the appropriate services and supports are accessible to new students and families. To date, we know of fewer than 20 Syrian refugee students who have enrolled in our schools. Once more details are known about the number of refugee students entering our system, as well as their locations throughout the city, we will be working to finalize more specific plans to meet their needs at the local school levels. Thanks to the generosity of students, staff and school communities, the TDSB has also helped raise approximately \$116,000 (including a donation matching by the Government of Canada) as part of *tdsbCARES: Refugee Crisis Appeal*. The money raised is being donated to the Red Cross.

Special Ed Forum discussed overcoming stigma

Parents, students and educators filled the library at Hollycrest Middle School to attend my Special Education Forum held on November 24. Lawyer and inclusivity advocate, Devon Sivill, discussed ways we can eliminate the stigma that surrounds students with special needs. The root causes of stigma are fear, misinformation and apathy. He believes that sharing information, creating dialogue and community building are the keys to help combat stigma. Having a physical disability himself, he spoke of his experiences in high school and university that helped make him the advocate he is today.

“Our kids are media-saturated and bombarded with messaging including ideas about the limitations of special needs,” he said. “While one in seven Canadians have special needs, they often don’t appear in the media. And when they do, it is often not a positive image.”

When asked what advice he would give to the young people in the room, Devon replied: “The habits that you’re going to develop in your formative years are going to carry you through. You’re all going to be advocates whether you think so or not. That advocacy will be part of your life. Continue to persevere. You will get tired, but continue. Be part of the community. Develop a sense of who you are and where you fit. Reach out to others because we can’t do this alone.”



Devon Sivill spoke of his experiences in high school and university that helped make him the advocate he is today.

MEETING SCHEDULE 2016

WARD COUNCIL MEETINGS:

Tuesday, February 23, 6:30 pm

Scarlett Heights EA, 15 Trehorne Drive

Focus: Budget

Tuesday, March 22, 6:30 pm

Princess Margaret JS, 65 Tromley Drive

Focus: Class Allocation Process

SPECIAL EDUCATION FORUMS:

Tuesday, February 2, 6:30 pm

Burnhamthorpe CI, 500 The East Mall

Focus: Individual Education Plans (IEPs)

Tuesday, April 12, 6:30 pm

Seneca School, 580 Rathburn Road

Speaker: John Guido, L'Arche Toronto

Contacting Chris

I am here to help you with your questions and concerns. You can reach me by phone, e-mail, fax, mail, or through my website.

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