

# Highlights

## ***Council of Commissioners' meeting of Tuesday, August 23, 2011.***

- Mr. Bruce Banfill, Superintendent of Student Transportation Services, was introduced to and welcomed by the Council of Commissioners. Mr. Banfill expressed that he is very happy to join the ETSB and that he and his team are busily preparing for the first day of school on August 31<sup>st</sup>;
- The following administrative appointments were approved;
  - Ms Norma Humphrey was confirmed in her position as Principal 40% of Sawyerville Elementary, Principal 40% of Pope Memorial Elementary and 20% special projects, after successfully completing a one year probationary period;
  - Mr. David Scott was confirmed in his position as Vice-Principal at Massey Vanier High School, after successfully completing a one year probationary period;

We would like to congratulate both Ms Humphrey and Mr. Scott and wish them continued success.

- Director General's Report:
  - Welcome back to all staff, students and parents;
  - Weathering change;
  - Development of a shared vision for the ETSB;
  - The "Respect" dossier – working on increasing respect for educators;
  - Community development.  
(For more on these items, please see the attached report)
- Report from the Chair:
  - Welcome back to all staff, students and parents;
  - Perception of public education;
  - Positive change for success;
  - Leadership: fostering, teaching, supporting and rewarding it.  
(For more on these items, please see the attached report)
- Correspondence:
  - The ETSB received a letter from the *Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport* (MELS) giving final authorization for the purchase of a building in Magog to relocate the head office. The Director General elaborated on the decision to move the head office from its current location pointing out that the move will be cost effective for the school board and that there had been much uncertainty with the landlord about renewing the lease at the current location.

### **The following resolutions were adopted:**

- Confirmation of administrative positions after the probationary period;
- Modifications to Deeds of Establishment.

<b>Dates to Remember</b>	
<b>August 31<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>First day of classes – Youth Sector;</b>
<b>September 5<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Labour Day holiday;</b>
<b>September 17<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Townshippers' Day in Stanstead;</b>
<b>September 23<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>Planning day</b>
<b>September 27<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Council of Commissioners meeting.</b>

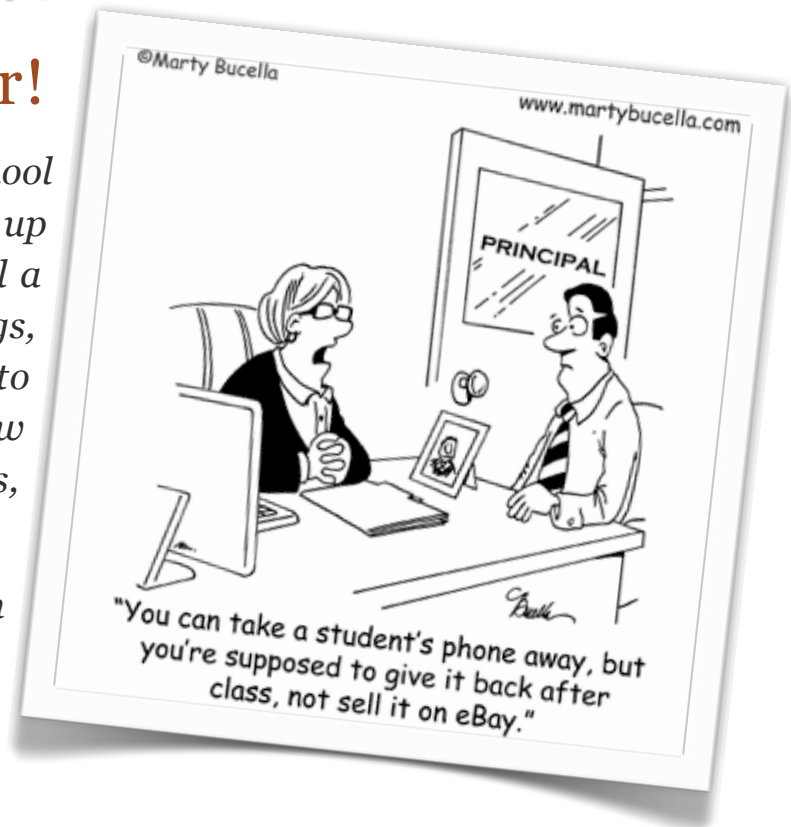
# DIRECTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

August 23, 2011

## Happy New School Year!

*Well... Here we are. A brand new school year just starting. Another chance to fire up a young man's mind, to give a young girl a opportunity to shine. In between meetings, lesson plans and ad hocs, a time to strengthen old friendships and make new ones. I love this time, full of promises, shining new ideas and best laid plans.*

*I feel especially blessed to work with people who have the potential to make such a huge difference for children and young adults.*



## On our plate for 2011-2012

This school year promises to be exciting, to say the least... Indicators on the horizon seem to be converging towards important changes in the education system of Quebec. Depending on which rumor you retain, whether it's mergers of school boards, creation of super regional offices or restructuring of councils of commissioners, this is bound to create turbulence in our system. Our goal, at central office, will be to shield our schools and centres as much as possible and act as a buffer whenever feasible. As long as we keep our focus on the needs of our students, we should emerge out of the squall unscathed...

Many initiatives will continue to retain our attention this year:

- renewal of the ELS,
- review of our Adult Education and Vocational Training sector,
- addressing the needs of our students with behavior issues,
- further reducing dropouts,
- working on the MESAs and the Partnership Agreement, and
- supporting arts and sports in our schools and centres,

to name a few.

Other important dossiers that will involve me personally will be:

- the direction of the ETSB following the development of a shared vision,
- working on increasing respect towards educators, and
- community development.

I intend to continue participating in the work our focus groups have started for the development of a shared and compelling vision for the ETSB. This exercise is not only energising and rewarding, it will actually help us focus on what is important while others obsess over politics.

What I now call the "Respect" dossier is of particular interest to me. Discussions with employees, unions and associations will help us design an approach to stem the unsettling trend we see more and more around us: educator bashing.

For the ETSB, taking its place in the community is crucial, in this era of partnerships and collaboration. Our community development plan will be refined and tested in the upcoming months.

And, of course, we will always review our practices to make sure we offer the best education possible for our students.

With all of this in mind, on behalf of the head office administrators, I wish you a fulfilling, exciting and rewarding 2011-2012 school year. Welcome back!

Report to Council  
August 23, 2011

Welcome back. I hope everyone had a great break during the summer and renewed your reserves of energy and enthusiasm. Here we go with a new school year.

We will need all that fresh energy to meet the ongoing challenge of providing the best possible education for our students and clients. Despite all our efforts and commitment there is a perception in society today that public education is inadequate and underperforming. In other words, we are not doing the job society requires. At the same time complacency reigns in much of public education, beginning with the belief that if we open schools students will come, and continuing with the attitude that too much change is disruptive, that traditional tools and techniques are good enough and that educators, not parents or politicians, know best what students need.

I am forcibly reminded of the many examples around us of organizations that have suffered grievously from similar complacency. Think of the post office and how quickly its monopoly was lost to courier services because it offered poor service. Subsequently its first-class mail was decimated by e-mail. Think of American auto manufacturers so committed to annual model changes and decorative frills that the competition stole a huge slice of their domestic market with reliability and moderate prices, literally bankrupting them. Can you recall all the airlines that disappeared, merged or went bankrupt when they refused to adapt to price competition from budget carriers? Huge department stores like Eaton's and Simpsons were national institutions that disappeared because they failed to respond to change. Television networks are on the brink of disappearing thanks to cable channels and the internet that offer endless choice to consumers of entertainment. Still, there are outstanding successes as well, but they all transformed themselves to meet new realities. Banks embraced change with automated tellers, online banking and longer hours in branches, and consolidated their dominance of financial markets. Telephone companies leapt into cellular services to avoid losing more of their formerly captive clients to other providers. I could continue, but the point is that organizations that don't change suffer the consequences.

Public education is facing an environment that requires transformational disruptive change. Already the challenge from private schooling is a major issue for many public school districts, and the cost of private schooling can be frighteningly low. Home schooling is on the rise as parents perceive they can provide equal or superior quality without many of the negatives of schools. Emerging technology extends the reach of educational institutions and that makes education competitive in a way never before seen. Parents and students have increasing choice in schooling. They want the best possible outcomes. In the case of the Eastern Townships School Board and English education in Quebec, every student makes a choice between our schools and the mainstream public system. We need to produce excellent results merely to

survive. Our society now expects schools to graduate almost every student. Colleges and universities expect arriving students to have the literacy, study and personal management skills necessary for success in higher education. Employers need workers who have a strong work ethic, accept responsibility and accountability and understand that their sole assurance of security is the continuing success of their enterprise or organization. Parents require us to provide security, adequate nutrition and career counseling as well as a variety of services addressing special needs of individual students.

We share a common vision that places the student at the centre of our concerns.

Personal theme for this year is Leadership. We need to teach it, support it, foster it and reward it.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century leadership is required to cope with rapidly changing conditions, rising expectations, and new mandates. Leadership in current understanding is not confined to a few people at the head of an organization. Everyone at all levels of the organization must become a leader, a change agent, an early adopter of improved processes and tools.

We must cope with near-instantaneous transformations in technology. Just think, a year ago we were planning our future classroom technology around the new and promising netbooks when along came the i-pad. Fifteen months later, the netbook is obsolete and tablet computers are the new norm. The pace of change is dizzying but we can't afford to stand still. Every year that passes without adapting to new realities sees another cohort of students being shortchanged. We care too much to let that happen.

Effective leadership has defining characteristics. It is consultative, inclusive, empowering and inspiring. Leaders build teams around common visions and objectives; they share credit with all participants; they encourage risk-taking and understand that not all initiatives will succeed. Leaders rise to challenges,

Some leaders are born but the skills can be taught and learned. Until now in the ETSB and in public education have relied far too much on natural leadership talent because it was accepted that only the people at the top of the hierarchy need to be leaders. Now we realize that we need leaders as well as managers, at every level of the organization. We must systematically develop leaders, by fostering natural ability and teaching specific skills. We also need to do the same for and with our students so that they will become leaders in their families, careers and communities. That is our mission, not only for the year we are beginning, but forever. I hope you will all join me in a crusade to enhance leadership in the Eastern Townships School Board for the benefit of current students and future generations.

I am indebted to Ian Jukes for a timely reminder; "We often get so caught up in managing stakeholders that we can forget who we're really doing this for." With this in mind, here are 5 key things students have voiced their desires for according to

Meris Stansbury, editor, eSchool News. For those who don't subscribe to the Committed Sardine Blog, and I urge you to sign up as soon as you can, here are the student requests, in order of priority. Read the complete article at [www.fluency21.com](http://www.fluency21.com) for details on each item.

- 1. Real-world application and relevancy**
- 2. Choice**
- 3. Innovation** (teachers are often boring – make it interesting)
- 4. Teacher mentors**
- 5. Interactive technology**