



Strategic Directions



Our final Strategic Directions of the year focuses on Governance. For many of us, this strategic direction is the most mysterious, the one to which we might relate least. Although we all work in buildings, have met one or more trustees, and recognize how policies and budgets can tangibly affect our daily work, the concept of governance can seem distant. Invisible. Passive.

This stands to reason. If we look at the root word of "governance", we see it originally comes from the Greek word "kybernan" – "to steer".

At one point in our lives, we have all been in a vehicle steered or controlled by someone else. Think school buses, 747s, ferries, taxis, or trains. Depending on how much you enjoy driving, flying, or boating, or even the conditions outside the vehicle, you might have been relieved by that reality: "Thank goodness I don't have to navigate those treacherous roads or waters! Someone else is doing this for me." Perhaps you had such faith in the steersperson that you became engaged in conversation or another activity, such as texting, reading, working, or sleeping. You might have arrived safely at your destination with barely a thought of how you got there.

The truth is, while you were being transported, somebody else was working very hard to ensure your relative comfort and safety. You might never have seen that person's face, knew their name, or heard their voice. If they did make an announcement, you might have been annoyed by the disturbance it created. Equally likely, you might have been completely oblivious to this person's efforts because you were engrossed in your own concerns.

This is similar to good governance. And it happens every day in this school board.

While the vast majority of us interact on a daily basis with students and their families, a faction of us toils in the background, often quietly, invisibly. We crunch numbers to ensure employees get paid regularly, even when most of the board is on vacation. We make and enforce rules that we hope will make everyone's lives safe, fair, and comfortable. We ask deep questions and make difficult decisions to ensure mistakes aren't repeated. We write proposals, open tenders, write capital plans, and work with contractors so that our schools remain places that function efficiently. We work with systems that challenge and confound us – and try to get our work done before you get into your workplace.

Good governance, just like good steering, is not always glamorous work. In fact, at times, it can be tedious and thankless. But if you've ever been in a vehicle that accidentally hit the gravel shoulder at 100 km/h, you'll know that sometimes, good steering is underappreciated.

At this time of year, I tip my hat to all those who help steer the ship that is the Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board. I am indeed blessed to have many senior leaders and trustees standing right beside me at the helm with their hand on the wheel. As any of you who have ever driven in a blinding snowstorm or through choppy waters knows, it takes guts and a steady hand to steer. I thank all those who have supported me so fervently in this, my first year as Director of Education, and look forward to continuing the journey with you in 2018-19.

God bless,

Rose Burton Spohn
Director of Education

Quoi de neuf!



What's New!



Minwajjimo!



Click on any image to see the story behind the photo.