

School Board is committed to Acton students

School Board Trustee Gerry Ockenden's report did not arrive in time to be included in the New Tanner's annual graduation issue last week (June 25) because he was dealing with a painful affliction. Here is his report in full. Sorry for the delay.

**By Gerry Ockenden
Public School Trustee,
Halton Hills,
Wards 1 & 2**

You may remember the Board's establishment of its 2007-10 Strategic Plan, which highlights the Board's commitment to students, striving to:

- Inspire and support learning,
- Create safe, healthy and engaging environments, and
- Provide opportunities for challenge and choice.

The living documents of the Strategic Plan are the annual Operational Plans which outline implementation initiatives to see goals for Students, Staff and System come to fruition. The Operational Plans for Students specifically address strategies relating to student success, literacy and numeracy, safety and well-being. For staff, goals are targeted to staff development, leadership and wellness. System plans relate to program and accommodation, communication, and information technology.

The success of the Operational Plans, and hence the Strategic Plan is like a report card for the Board. By achieving these goals, the Board is meeting its

commitment to students. While trustees have a role to individually speak up for their communities, their values, and their commitment to public education as we continue to monitor the progress of the system in reaching its Strategic Plan goals, also critical to this success is the collaboration of all trustees, the Board's leadership team and staff in all its workplaces.

There is also a leadership role for trustees, not only in working to achieve the Strategic and Operational Plan goals, but also to contribute individually to the challenges and issues facing the system.

As a trustee, I share in the tremendous pride of parents, staff, friends and community members when our students are recognized for their achievements. We have had occasion to celebrate the outstanding accomplishments of many Halton Hills Wards 1 & 2 area students this year. Achievements were honoured in the areas of academics, technology, athletics, music, drama and the arts. We celebrated regional, provincial and national awards, and tribute was paid to both individual and group efforts.

Other successes are also celebrated – the implementation of new environmental initiatives – such as the daily litterless lunches, extra efforts shown by schools during Earth Hour on March 27th which proved how turning off the lights can significantly reduce the kilowatts used, and implementing



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Wards 1 & 2 Halton Hills**

recycling program with green & blue bins. This year a group of Halton Hills Wards 1 & 2 students traveled to Lima, Peru to assist in the collection of scientific data for wildlife conservation.

These environmental efforts in schools continue to be recognized with Eco-schools certification. Numerous schools improved their 'ranking' from Bronze to Silver and, even to Gold level certification.

Our schools also show their continued commitment to daily physical

fitness and healthy living programs with recognition like the CIRA Ontario award for outstanding intramural programs. Other examples include participation in the "Walk to School" pilot project. This year alone, Acton High School had seven sports teams/individuals participate at OFSAA-level competitions.

And our local students and school communities continued to lend their support to many worthwhile events such as Jump Rope for Heart, Relay for

Life, and Terry Fox charity runs. They have raised thousands of dollars for Sick Kids Hospital, Heart and Stroke Foundation, the Make a Wish Foundation, and many other fundraisers which demonstrates their commitment to good citizenship.

Many schools worked with their community this year to have physical improvements made to parking lots, signage and landscaping.

Musicals, talent shows, dramatic performances, school choirs showcase the arts programs in our schools and the talents of our students.

While the Board's continues its focus on student achievement, we would be remiss if we did not applaud those who collectively support our students in Halton Hills Wards 1 & 2. Some schools introduced interactive technology such as SMARTboard's with support from their school councils. Successful breakfast and snack programs were implemented to provide nutritious food twice a week. These programs were implemented with the generosity and support from community volunteers.

A number of our schools participated in district school reviews and all received glowing feedback from the HDSB school review team led by Associate Director Ruth Peden.

In school effectiveness survey's students reported high measures of pride in their school.

Many schools introduced the Literacy Place program

and timetabled blocks of time into the school routine to focus on literacy. Schools organized visits from authors and created literacy rooms where students and staff have easy access to books and resources.

From the outstanding staff in the classrooms of our community schools to the leadership of our school administrators; from the support staff either in the schools or at the Board office, we all contribute to provide rich learning experiences for our students. Thank you to all who work tirelessly to support the Board's commitment to students.

Thank you is also extended to those who give freely of their time and effort to support their School Councils. Volunteers are also to be commended, as our schools could not operate as efficiently without their commitment and dedication. We are indeed fortunate to have many community and business partners who provide tangible support to our students and school communities. Thank you!

With summer here, I would like to offer congratulations to those students and staff who are moving on to new schools, new careers, new challenges. Whatever pathway you choose, best wishes for continued success in all you do.

Once again, congratulations to staff, students, and all community partners on a very successful school year. Have a safe and happy summer!

Varsity soccer team makes OFSAA finals

The Acton District High School Varsity Soccer team made an impressive showing at OFSAA, going to the quarter finals.

Following ties in their first two games, the team needed to win their third game by a 4 goal differential in order to guarantee a spot in the quarterfinals. The team came together with a superb effort taking the third game by a score of 5-0.

Ben Jolly was instrumental to the win, finishing on 3 occasions, with goalies Scott Brown and Harry Checchia shutting out the opposition. Unfortunately, the team was outmatched in their final game losing 5-3 despite their best efforts.

Special mention goes out to Luke Van Dinther, the team MVP, and the following players who will be graduating this year: Vic Thompson, Dan Dreise, Jeff Becker, Matt Bigg, Alex Wenzel and Mike Kovacevic. The soccer team will miss you!



ADHS VARSITY SOCCER TEAM: OFSAA quarter finalists: Front row - Harry Checchia, Scott Brown. Middle - Jordan Montgomery, Jesse Volkner, Mike Shortt, Luke Van Dinther, Jeff Becker, Danny Holmes. Back - Dana Selby (coach), Janine Pugh (coach), Eric Cardoso, Alex Wenzel, Ben Jolly, Dan Dreise, Dave Tysoe, Tris Hannah, Rane Simpson, Zack Loewen, Mike Kovacevic, Matt Bigg, Vic Thompson, Christopher Braun (coach). -Submitted photo