

From Your Catholic School Trustee

As I write to you and look outside it is snowing. For some this is good news and for others, not such great news. For me, I am entering one of my favourite seasons, Christmas. As a trustee I am fortunate to be invited to many Christmas concerts, school Masses, Advent events and school council meetings. It is especially at this time that I am always fortified to be a trustee in our Catholic school board where we may openly and with great enthusiasm celebrate the birth of Christ.

Since my last note to you, we have received a draft homework policy. When it is policy I feel that you will find it to be a balanced approach which will be a positive tool for students, parents and teachers. You will receive more information in the near future. We continue to work hard to develop more Pathway programs for our students in secondary schools in my wards and I thank our administrative staffs who are working hard to meet the needs of all students. Another bit of good news is that all of our unions and employees groups have signed four year contracts. We are proud of the work of our teams both at the school board and in the individuals unions who worked hard to meet the deadlines set down by the province. These agreements are great for our students for the next four years.

I want to send special thanks to our schools who took the time to remember our war veterans on Remembrance Day. With both of my parents being veterans of World War II, this kind of outstanding work finds a special place in my heart. I hope that your were able to see and participate in the presentations at our schools. Recently I attended the launch of a movie which was written and directed by a teacher at one of our secondary schools called "Mouse". With local student actors, Mouse tells the story of a young boy who is lured into a gang. This powerful movie will be available to all of our schools along with a teaching guide. It would be a wonderful activity for school councils to share with their community.

I ask for your prayers for the school communities who have experienced decisions for school closures over the last few weeks. This is a very difficult time for these schools. While we will provide a transition team, you can only imagine how hard this will be. Our System Review has been completed. Thank you to all who participated. The final report will come to the board in January. I am very proud of the results of this report. It will be an excellent tool for us to use to plan for the next few years. Please accept my best wishes to you and your families for a blessed Christmas. If you have to travel I ask God to bless you on your journey. Let us ask God to bless all of us in 2009!

May the good Lord always hold you in the palm of His hand.

Sharon Hobin
Wards 2 and 8