

September 28, 2006 Board Meeting

Student Trustee Report

At this time, Student Trustee J. Ferguson made the following remarks

“Good evening, Mr. Chair, Mr. Director, Trustees, Staff, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Benjamin Franklin once said that, “An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest”. Over the past month, Kimberly and I have attended committee meetings for both the Special Education Advisory Committee and the Race Relations Advisory Committee. At these meetings, we have been able to witness this Board’s commitment to students who are having difficulties. Whether it be a student struggling with a learning disability, a student learning English as a second language, or a student with cultural barriers, it is clear that this Board approaches challenges as “puzzles rather than problems”.

Kimberly and I are very impressed with both SEAC and the Race Relations Advisory Committee. I was thrilled by the amount of enthusiasm the Chair of Race Relations expressed in regard to student involvement. As an active member of this committee, I look forward to delivering student reports.

At our swearing-in ceremony, Kimberly and I both mentioned that one of our greatest struggles will be spreading the word among students about the position and role of Student Trustee. We want students to know that they have a voice and that it is heard. One of the ways we will spread the word is by hosting another Presidents’ Council Gala. We also hope to increase the number of people who run for the position of Student Trustee. We will accomplish this by having an active role in the YRPC and the student councils of various schools.

In the past, there have been several schools that have never taken part in the York Region Presidents’ Council. Due to the fact that YRPC plays such a vital role in voicing student concerns, we will be contacting and/or visiting these schools to ensure that every secondary school representative knows the value and purpose of being involved with the YRPC. We also plan to create posters that describe the role and purpose of Student Trustees in our Board so that the representatives who sit on the YRPC can then post them in their respective schools.

For the month of October, Kimberly and I will start our revisions to the Student Trustee website. With these revisions the Student Trustee website will act as an information centre for our most recent accomplishments and our goals for the near future. This will involve developing a system where the website is consistently updated allowing students to follow our progress. Allowing students to follow our progress will show them that their voice is being heard, considered, and is making a difference.

This past month has been an amazing experience for both Kimberly and myself. We have been able to sit on committees and go to Board Meetings; however, the best part of this past month has been the way we have been received. No matter where we have gone, or who we have talked to, we have been welcomed with warmth and respect.

Thank you.”