

**August Student Trustee Reports**  
Sepideh Soltaninia and Jen Serdetchnaia

**STUDENT TRUSTEE REPORTS**

At this time, Student Trustee S. Soltaninia made the following remarks.

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

*It is an honour to sit around this table, where so many decisions regarding my and my peers’ education have been made. For some it may be hard to imagine or remember how much school affects a student’s life. It is not only the place where we learn, it is where life-long friendships are made and where we flourish as concerned citizens, actors and actresses, editors, or writers. Many unique personalities have emerged thanks to the environment created by decisions made at this table and the hard work of the people within this Board.*

*Today, I am privileged to be a student taking part in the decision-making process. I was told often, and proudly, by many of the student trustees who I met at the Ontario Student Trustees’ Association Annual General Meeting in May, that students are the most important stakeholders in education. At first, I did not fully understand this statement, but today it has, in some ways, become a motto for my plans as student trustee. Every decision made here by the Board will have an impact on the students of York Region, and thus their concerns and opinions are tremendously important to the decision-making process.*

*It is a daunting task to represent the thousands of students within the Board, but I am certain that by working with my partner Jen and the York Region Presidents’ Council (YRPC) it is possible. One goal for the next school year is to see an increase in attendance at the bi-weekly YRPC meetings. This meeting, which is nestled in the library of Richmond Hill High School, is a remarkable resource for all York Region secondary students. The York Region Presidents’ Council is a great place to meet other York Region students, brainstorm ideas for future school events and learn more about events occurring throughout the Board. As executive members of the Council, both Jen and I will be attending these meetings to provide information from the Board and listen to any concerns that students may have. It is my primary goal this year to inform York Region students of the many resources available to them and to have students from all towns and schools interacting with one another while taking advantage of these valuable resources.*

*I believe that it is a shame that many York Region students are not aware that the position of student trustee even exists; however, I must say that I too was once oblivious to the work of student trustee. Thanks to the York Region Presidents’ Council (YRPC) annual and truly life changing conference, I was thrust into the world of the YRPC where I met and learned about the role of student trustees. I would like to thank past Student Trustees Jeff Ferguson and Kimberly Hart for their dedication and advice. Kimberly’s goal for us was to “hit the ground running,” a goal that I believe has been accomplished.*

*As a final note, I would also like to thank my parents. It was with the hope of a better education for their children that they moved us to Canada. The York Region District School Board has unquestionably fulfilled these dreams and I am honoured to stand at this table with my own hopes as Student Trustee.*

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

*Good evening my respected colleagues. I feel both privileged and humbled to be speaking to you today, as being here means that I have been elected as one of the Student Trustees for the 2007-2008 school year. I ask myself, what exactly sets me apart from the thousands of students who are a part of the York Region District School Board? I realize that the answer is not much; I am just another one of the thousands of students, which is exactly why I deserve to be Student Trustee. I represent all students in York Region.*

*I have chosen to believe that apathy is boring. This is one trait that may set me apart from some of my fellow students. Once, I was told that if I did not get involved in the process, I would be destined to be governed by those who did. Therefore, I am ready to become a part of the process and through me allow my fellow students to do the same.*

*Before students can use the student trustees as a channel of communication for being a part of the system and for improving their daily education, they need to be aware of how we are capable of supporting them.*

*As one of the student trustees, I would like to work with the educational system to raise awareness of what we do. We will make our presence known through the use of posters, direct mail and simple media, such as the web-site and the ever-popular Facebook. This year, York Region students will know that we are their loudspeaker to the Board. Students will know that we are the ones to approach with an issue. They will know that we can help them make a difference.*

*At the same time, we would like to empower the students of York Region. We have created a newsletter that will profile one school's achievement each month. This newsletter "The York Region Student Voice" will serve as a method for students to share their initiatives with other schools and to see what their peers are doing. The newsletter will help students to learn from the mistakes of others as well as duplicate their successes.*

*I deem that there is no greater social responsibility in life than the responsibility to be a citizen. I am committed to providing the students of York Region with non-partisan political information including information on opportunities of being a Legislative Page or participating in the Model Parliament. I have been politically involved since the age of fourteen and for me there is no better way to enforce positive, organized change. Involvement to work toward change means freedom.*

*Finally, I would like to thank all of those who have contributed to my formation as student trustee including former student trustees Jeff Ferguson and Kimberly Hart.*

*As student trustee, I want to provide my peers with the opportunity to get involved and improve the system by working with the system. After all, apathy is boring.*

*Thank You.”*