

P4E 2015 was held on November 7th at Rotman School of Business, U of T

Address by Annie Kidder, Executive Director and a founder of People for Education.

Annie spoke of our “forest of public education” and how we (the people) provide the nutrients that help it grow. How fortunate we are with our public education and that we need only look across the border and to England to see how many people feel they need to pay for what we take for granted. We seem to be a society that doesn’t like to pay taxes; having said that we need to realize that it is our tax dollars that provides this widely available education for our children.

Last year the conference was on “Measuring What Matters”, which ties very well with our “Feed All Four” here at Trillium Lakeland.

I was happy to hear from our Director Larry Hope at the conference that morning, that he will be attending a forum with the Ministry of Ed and People for Education on the topic of “Measuring What Matters”.

To learn more about the five domains being *Health, Creativity and Innovation, Social-emotional skills, Citizenship and Quality Learning Environments*. visit <http://peopleforeducation.ca/measuring-what-matters/the-domains/>

This year our focus is on Citizenship and to that our

Keynote Speaker was Dr. Alan Sears who is a Professor of Social Studies Education at the University of New Brunswick, and the lead researcher for the citizenship domain in People for Education’s [Measuring What Matters](#) project. He will be releasing his book “[Education, Globalization and the Nation](#)” this fall.

Dr. Sears spoke of the 4 lessons he suggests we teach our kids/students-

1. **Take Citizenship Seriously** –We should look at our required 40 hours of volunteering and see if they in fact incorporate civic duty. e.g. working at a soup kitchen or food bank. *Are we asking our kids what they learned from that experience?*
2. **We Should Take Civic Knowledge Seriously**-Avoid the “correct answer compromise”, instead work on developing the Complex conceptual and procedural knowledge.
3. **We Need to Take Students Seriously** -He spoke of the Research on cultural universals; students show an interest in learning a greater range of social studies. Also research in historical thinking, students demonstrate an advanced understanding of abstract concepts.
4. **We Need to Take Teaching Seriously**-Teaching is more than information delivery; learning experiences that support understanding and effective action are different from those that simply support the ability to remember facts or perform rote sets of skills. Teaching should combine both pedagogical and content knowledge.

We then broke into groups and discussed how we would **define citizenship**; *Belonging, Advocacy, Informed, Connected, Participation*, Acceptance were some of the terms we thought of. **Is there a value to 40 hours of volunteering?** *Should we utilize student council to evaluate and step up our reporting requirements? What kind of learning environment or structures would encourage a student voice and experience active citizenship in our schools. What is social justice? Perhaps we could look at re writing our grade 10 civics course to incorporate a placement for our native government model? Form debating teams to discuss things like the environment? Student voting for decision making? Ever more exposure to current events? What is power and privilege? We could incorporate Peer tutoring and hold conferences at our schools.*

Morning Session: School Councils

We discussed various ways to engage parents and connect them with council while respecting that what parents do at home has the biggest impact on student success, parental involvement in school events and activities can help foster a sense of community and build strong relationships between parents and school staff. *I would invite council members who would like more information or like to organize a forum on building our councils to come forward. There are many ideas I now have to share and collectively we could work on some initiatives to engage more parents to share the workload for extra tips visit [://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/involvement/gettingstarted.html](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/involvement/gettingstarted.html)*

Or _____---

We could do a survey as we had discussed at our last school council meeting and talk to the community through survey's by asking questions like...

-Do they want paper or email ...what type of communication do you like?

- Would you like to join a meeting from your computer or mobile device? This is great for people living some distance away.

-What do you want your school council to do?

-Would you be interested in workshops on A< B< OR C (Social Media, Mental Health, Citizenship, other)

-Would you be interested in a helping with a sub-committee for A>B> or C

What cause do you think is important A<B<or C...(bullying, robotics, nutrition, busing,)

Would you be interested in listening to speakers on A>B> or C...Universities to speak, New to High school, Schools as community hubs.

Events:

Grade 8 open house for parent councils....what to expect

Send student council to feeder schools to talk about what it's like first year

How can we support you in helping your child at home?

Our job is to communicate information. It was great to get the notice of the meeting on the phone. Just hoping we could add a topic to that message that we will be discussing at the meeting. Who does the recorded message?

Skylar a grade 11 student here at BMLSS who is presently teaching Jasmine and I an HTML class at our public library is here to listen in and discuss how we could implement remote access to our meeting via google talk vs skype or periscope. My daughter Jasmine, who won last years Leadership award at Monck, is interested in being involved with Student councils communications. It was through her liasions between administrators, teachers, parent and student councils that made our "Spring Fling Magic Show and Fundraiser" such a huge success last year.

Perhaps our director would facilitate a workshop to enable all schools to reach out" to parents by these other means.

Also we could have all chairs of the elementary school go to the high school and share best practices at the beginning of the year...and meet again at the end of the year to see how the year went. *This would also help those parents who typically get involved to be more comfortable with the new surrounding and format of the high school council.*

New parents on council should receive or be directed to the Ministry of Ed.'s download of "School Councils" (which I still need to download myself) <https://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/council/guide.html>

We are a body of volunteers....bear in mind your succession...reach out to the community to invite parents in.

I heard of many successes where council held events outside the school...going into another organization or group of people where they felt safe (and did a lot of the organizing) which in turn made them feel comfortable after that coming into the school.

*Review conflict resolutions. This is a great tool in the download from the Ministries website for parents or councils that may have some difficulties to overcome amongst their group.

Plenary: Connecting the Dots Insightful session examining big picture & connecting the dots on how economy, health, environment & aboriginals play into public education.

Craig Alexander from www.cdhowe.org "Solve income inequality by removing barriers to opportunity."

Dr. Carolyn Bennett P.C., M.P., Minister of State (Public Health) Canada

"We want more health and less health care!" Let's educate people on how to be healthy.

Faisa Moola from the David Suzuki Foundation. [@faisal_moola](#) Educators have to make children fall in love with nature. We are at a critical tipping point and we need to overhaul the ways our natural resources are used. If we look at the laws of our Indigenous people they can teach us. We also need to honor the Treaties and respect the land.

Wanda

cllww - children, land, language, water, and women - let's cllww in to the priorities

There are more First Nation children in care today than at the height of the Residential School System

This conference has a powerful call to action for social change. More than any year

Building Student Engagement: a panel of four students, 3 in grade 12, 1 first year at humber.

Ryan Hunter: from Rainy River First Nation. Got engaged through [@OntarioAdvocate](#)'s Feathers of Hope, as a youth amplifier.

PK Boateng: raised in Jane Finch. Knows the image, but it is a strong community. Shout out to [@SuccessBL](#) program that helped him. - two of our student panelists

teachers can help by recognizing students' individual interests and encouraging them

The students all say that being able to talk and interact with each other in the classroom is key to engmt

Abigail: youth are always engaged - it's a matter of what they are engaged in. If we're not engaging them in schl, watch out.

Loving the [#p4e2015](#) student engagement panel dropping gems like "just because there's youth in a space doesn't make it a youth space"

I got to talk one on one with Peter Garrow of Mohawks of Akwesasne, First Nations Trustee, in the Upper Canada School board as he was preparing for his session on Aboriginal Education.

What I heard loud and clear throughout the day was how Aboriginal ed is for everyone! "non-natives need to be educated about indigenous people and then move action together as allies".