



# Trustee Newsletter

Spring 2017



**Fran Morgan**

*Municipality of Meaford  
Town of The Blue Mountains*

## Welcome Spring!

As the school year begins to wind down, our Bluewater schools are bustling with activity! While students and staff prepare for year end class trips, exams and important transitions, I am pleased to report on some happenings from a system wide perspective.

### 2016-17 Accommodation Reviews

On April 18, trustees approved final [recommendations](#)



for the Markdale and Chesley/Paisley area accommodation reviews. We thank our many local organizations, municipal partners, parents, students, staff, and other

community stakeholders, who spent hours attending meetings and coming up with creative solutions to address some of the tough challenges faced by our board. Your consultation was imperative to informing the staff recommendations and final decisions made by trustees! We have an excellent education system in Bluewater. Our challenge as trustees is to make informed, and sometimes very difficult, decisions from a broader perspective that balance the educational needs of all students within the vast geography of our district, so that we can continue to deliver this high level of excellence within the resources available to us.

### Minister Hunter Visits

Minister of Education Mitzie Hunter visited Bluewater on April 19 to tour Paisley Central School and Beavercrest Community School. It was an excellent opportunity to provide the Minister with a firsthand glimpse of our vibrant rural schools, and demonstrate the commitment by our board and community partners to work collaboratively to

serve the best interests of our students. View our



[media release and photo gallery](#).

### 2017-18 Budget

Trustees are currently working through the



budget process with the requirement of submitting a balanced budget to the Ministry of Education by June. Thank you to those who participated in our recent online public survey. We hope that you found it to be an easy and convenient way to submit feedback. Please let us know if you would like us to continue with this format in the future. Staff have been busy

compiling results from the 193 responses received to help trustees prioritize the key areas of importance as expressed by our communities in moving forward with next year's budget.

### **In Other News....**

Some of the most exciting news we have heard lately is that our students are graduating in higher numbers than before, which continues a trend of close alignment with the provincial rate.

One of the highlights of a recent board meeting was the opportunity to meet two students that were involved in the Regional Technological Skills Challenge (more on page 3 below). They were both excited and engaged in regard to their courses, and it was a true delight to hear them talk about what they were doing as they go forward with their lives.

Closer to home, there are great things happening for the Meaford area as the plans and drawings move forward for the new school. I am waiting with anticipation to see what our new school will look like in the not-to-distant future.

There is, of course, much buzzing as students, staff and parents prepare for the move down the street from Sydenham to East Ridge Community School. Items of importance to the school community, which must be remembered for the move include, the original Sydenham Township school bell, the memorial for Donna Earl, among other keepsakes.



### **How to Contact Me**

Your questions and feedback are always welcome by contacting me by phone at 519- 986- 2731 or at the e-mail address below. General trustee information is also available by visiting [www.bwdsb.on.ca/trustees](http://www.bwdsb.on.ca/trustees).

As always, our shared commitment remains focused on providing quality education for every student in a safe and caring environment.

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# Across the Board....



## Summer School 2017

Registration for summer school is now open at [www.bwdsb.on.ca](http://www.bwdsb.on.ca). In addition to regaining a lost credit, many secondary students enrol in summer school for a cooperative education experience or an extra course to get ahead. Students increase flexibility in their paths to success in fun classes with energetic teachers and students from across the area. Elementary summer school, one or two-week courses, are also available to Grades 7 and 8 students. There are no course fees or transportation charges for elementary students!

## Medals in Skilled Trades

The [Regional Technological Skills Challenge](#) was held in Owen Sound on March 24 with the top performing students advancing to the Skills Ontario Competition in Toronto, which took place from May 1 – 3. Four Bluewater students won top honours at the provincial challenge in the form of two GOLD and two BRONZE medals! One of the GOLD winners will now be competing once again at the Skills Canada National Competition in Winnipeg from May 31 – June 3.

## Celebrating our Science Stars

Our top young scientists competed in the 2017 Bluewater Regional Science & Technology Fair (BRSTF) in Owen Sound on April 5 (senior) and April 12 (junior). At both levels, the Best of Fair Award recipients were from Bluewater District School Board! One of these students has also made BRSTF history by becoming the first from our area to join “Team Canada” at the International Science and Engineering Fair in May! Other Bluewater senior students were chosen for the Canada Wide Science Fair Team at the national competition in Saskatchewan, also during May. Learn more [here](#).



## Bluewater Students Excel in Public Speaking

Our students continue to develop essential literacy and research skills through public speaking. Thirty-three students from 11 elementary schools competed on March 29 in this year’s French public speaking contest in Chesley with the top speakers advancing to the provincial contest in May. In English public speaking, students participated in the Bruce and Grey County regional championships, among several other district competitions. Thank you to all of our community partners for their sponsorship and support of these initiatives, which teach students the skills of summarizing and synthesizing their ideas, experiences and points of view; to inform, convince and entertain their listeners.



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