

speaking notes

Sept. 23 Council of School Councils Meeting Opening Remarks

Joy Bowen-Eyre
Chair
Board of Trustees

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I am honoured to welcome you to our first Council of School Councils meeting of the year. My name is Joy Bowen-Eyre. I am the trustee for Wards 1 & 2 and currently serve as chair of the Board. Before we get started I would like to introduce my fellow colleagues and our staff here in attendance tonight.

Trustees all do a brief introduction

In attendance from Administration: Susan Church, deputy chief superintendent of schools; Marla Martin-Esposito, chief communications officer, Karen Drummond, communications advisor, and staff from the trustees' office.

It is so valuable for us to connect with you in this way. We appreciate the opportunity to listen to your ideas, better understand your perspectives and talk about the ways we can work together better. We want you to know how important it is to us as a Board that you have taken the time to meet with us to represent your school council. My comments will be posted on the website for you to be able to share with your respective councils.

By a show of hands, how many of you are new to school council this year? Excellent!

Trustees debriefed following our meetings last year and discussed ways we could improve or enhance our meetings together. We recognize that many of you are new to COSC and also that many of you are old, or should I say seasoned? As such, we wanted to ensure that tonight was beneficial regardless of whether you are new or seasoned. Tonight's presentation and discussion is about focusing on school council, what it is, how does it work and how do we work together. We are honored to

learning | as unique | as every student



**Calgary Board
of Education**

have some folks from ASCA, The Alberta School Council Association, Lynda Akers and Mary Marson-Troicuk who will be both the presenters and facilitators. Following our introduction we will be splitting into two groups, one group will be for our newbies or for those of you who would like a refresher, called the Purpose of School Council, the other group is for our veterans and is called Meeting Management. Following the two groups we will bring everyone back together for closing remarks.

But before we get into that, I wanted to give you a brief overview of what trustees do.

The citizens of Calgary elect trustees to govern the Calgary Board of Education.

The board provides oversight and stewardship to ensure that:

- Each student has the opportunity to achieve his/her potential
- Children are safe at school
- The school district's financial and capital resources are well managed; and
- That business is conducted in a legal and ethical manner.

In short, we are elected to lead, represent and serve the citizens of Calgary. We draft and review the mission, vision and values and monitor the expectations, results and goals of the CBE. We also set the long term goals of the organization. We have one employee – the Chief Superintendent and we govern through policy that directs his work and the work of the organization.

As we make these decisions, the Board of Trustees considers the interests of all 117,000 students in our school system – not just the interests of students from a particular school, program or area. We are guided by our basic principles: students come first, learning is our central purpose and education serves the common good. Our focus is always on achieving the best results for our students in the areas of Academics, Personal Development, Character and Citizenship.

The Board of Trustees is an advocate for public education and for our local school system. As an advocate, we consult with our constituents, and work together with our MLAs, other governments and through the Alberta School Boards Association to advance the needs of students.

The board also reaches out to involve members of the community in a dialogue about the needs of the community, its youth and the future. Trustees are elected to bring the voice of the community into the decision-making process. We invite feedback to help us understand whether we are achieving our objectives for our public school system.

We want to hear your feedback. We meet with parents, students, employees and others who care about public education. Understanding our community of Calgary is not something else Trustees do; it is integral to everything we do every day.

As school council chairs and designates we want to support you in your role. There is support for you from the Board of Trustees, your school principal and within the service units at the CBE. If you have questions or need support don't hesitate to reach out to us. It is our goal that today's presentations will help ensure that you have a fabulous school year, we want to thank you for taking on such an important role within your school community.

Before we get started I would like to introduce Daorcey LeBray from the Mayor's office who has a presentation on behalf of our beloved Mayor.

Thanks so much Daorcey, there is also a table out front with information

Next I would like to introduce Susan Church, deputy chief superintendent at the Calgary Board of Education to say a few words.

Thank you Susan

It now gives me great pleasure to introduce Lynda Akers and Mary Marson-Troicuk from the Alberta School Councils Association. At this time, I'd like those of you who chose to attend the school councils purpose workshop to head upstairs into the learning commons space. Please go out the doors and up the staircase in the lobby, and then through the door. It should be unlocked.