THAMES VALLEY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

INAUGURAL MEETING, PUBLIC SESSION
2006 DECEMBER 12

The Board met in session for its annual Inaugural meeting on 2006 December 12 in the Board Room at the Education Centre, meeting in public session at 7:00 p.m. The following were in attendance:

TRUSTEES
J. Bennett M. Hendrick S. Polhill
S. Doub P. Jaffe T. Roberts
F. Exley J. Koscik P. Sattler
T. Grant K. North J. Stewart
G. Hart S. Peters R. Tisdale

ADMINISTRATION AND OTHERS
B. Bryce J. Empringham G. Ball-Straughan
B. Greene K. Havelka S. Christie
C. Murphy L. Hutchinson J. Cuddie
M. Sereda B. Tucker C. Dennett
J. Thorpe B. Wagner K. Meeson
K. Dalton K. Wilkinson J. Neville
K. Bushell J. Roth W. Scott

1. CALL TO ORDER - Board Chairperson Peggy Sattler called the meeting to order.

2. INVOCATION - Rev. Susan Eagle delivered the invocation.

3. O CANADA AND MUSICAL PRESENTATION
The Dunwich-Dutton P.S. "Dynamo Singers" of Dutton with conductor John Robertson led in the singing of “O Canada” and performed three musical numbers. Trustee Grant extended the Board’s appreciation to the students for their participation in the Inaugural meeting and for opening the meeting in a most spirited fashion.

4. CEREMONIAL DECLARATION AND OATH OF ALLEGIANCE
Director Bryce explained the process for the swearing in of Trustees. Chair Sattler led the Trustees in reading the Ceremonial Declaration and Oath of Allegiance.

5. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS
James Stewart, Vice Chair of the Board, on behalf of the Trustees and the Senior Administration welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the 2007 Board. He introduced the Trustees and visitors in the gallery from representative groups of the District.

6. PRESENTATION TO 2006 CHAIR
Joyce Bennett, Chair of the Information Committee of the Whole, presented Chair Hart with a commemorative gift in appreciation for serving as the 2006 Chairperson.

7. SPECIAL GREETINGS
James Stewart, Vice Chair of the Board, welcomed and introduced special guests in attendance. The following community representatives brought greetings on behalf of their affiliates:

Ministry of Education Regional Office  Gerry Townshend, District Manager
Corporation for the City of London  Bud Polhill, Controller
London District Catholic School Board  Paul Whitehead, Chair
Thames Valley District School Council  Brenda Hopkins, Chair
Thames Valley Council of Home and School Associations  Teresa Blum, President
8. **APPROVAL OF 2007 COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS**

Appointments to 2007 Committees of the Board were presented. It was noted that to assist in ensuring a quorum is available for SALEP and the standing, ad hoc and community committee meetings, trustees to serve as alternates have been identified for the following committees:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee</th>
<th>Alternate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SALEP</td>
<td>CEC Central - Jaffe</td>
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<td></td>
<td>CEC East - Stewart</td>
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<td>CEC South - Exley</td>
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<td>Chippewas of the Thames - Bennett</td>
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<td>Budget Advisory</td>
<td>Jaffe</td>
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<td>Policy Working</td>
<td>Grant</td>
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<td>Children’s Safety Village</td>
<td>Peters</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ontario Public School Boards’ Association</td>
<td>Doub, Roberts</td>
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</tbody>
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In accordance with Board Bylaws, Trustees were asked to contact the Chair of the Committee should they be unable to attend a committee meeting of which they are a member. Trustees are welcome to attend all statutory, standing and ad hoc committees to participate as non-voting members.

The following recommendation was adopted on motion of T. Roberts, seconded by P. Jaffe:

That the 2007 list of Committees of the Board and community representation be approved.

9. **APPROVAL OF 2007 OFFICERS OF THE BOARD**

Chair Sattler introduced a report identifying the Officers of the Board who shall have signing authority on behalf of the Board along with the Chair and Vice-Chair for the period 2006 December 12 to 2007 December 11, in accordance with Board Bylaws, Inaugural Meeting of the Chair (6.4):

“The Board, by resolution, shall appoint by name the Officers of the Board who shall be the Secretary of the Board and Treasurer, both of whom, along with the Chair and Vice-Chair shall have signing authority on behalf of the Board.”

The following recommendation was adopted on motion of R. Tisdale, seconded by J. Stewart:

That the following persons be appointed signing officers on behalf of the Board for the period 2006 December 12 to 2007 December 11:

Peggy Sattler, Chair of the Board;
James Stewart, Vice-Chair of the Board;
Bill Bryce, Director of Education and Secretary;
Brian Greene, Executive Superintendent of Business Services and Treasurer.

10. **PRESENTATION OF GAVEL**

On behalf of the students, trustees, staff and community of the Thames Valley District School Board, the gavel of office was presented to Chairperson Sattler by her children Jon Bradford, a student at Northridge P.S. London; and Emily Bradford, a student at Huron Heights French Immersion, P.S., London.

11. **MUSICAL INTERLUDE**

The Parkside Collegiate Institute “Parkside Voices”, St. Thomas, performed two musical numbers under the direction of conductor Angela Southern.
INAUGURAL ADDRESS
Chair Sattler delivered the following inaugural address around the theme, “Strong Schools, Strong Communities”.

“Honoured guests, friends and family, fellow trustees, administrators, staff and teachers, tonight it is my great privilege to welcome you to the Inaugural meeting of the 2007 Thames Valley District School Board.

Not only does tonight’s meeting launch the 2007 term of the Board, but it also marks the beginning of our official coming together as a Board of Trustees for the next four years. I want to begin by acknowledging the commitment of each of the trustees sitting around this table. Although we travelled here by different roads, we are all here for the same reason – because we care about kids. Together, we have been entrusted with the responsibility of governing the public school system in the best interests of students.

Since our Board first came together as Thames Valley, we have worked hard to maintain a determined focus on students and student achievement. It is up to us, as a new Board, to preserve that focus in every issue, every report, every decision that comes before us.

Given the many different backgrounds and diverse perspectives we bring to our role as trustees, I have no doubt that some issues will generate passionate debate. But by respecting and learning from each others’ points of view, I am confident that we will make thoughtful, fair, and forward-looking decisions that will truly serve the interests of all the students of Thames Valley.

To our teachers, staff, and administrators, I want to applaud the caring and commitment to students you demonstrate every day, and your contributions to making our schools such extraordinary places to learn. We are proud of your efforts, and pledge our ongoing support as you continue to make a difference in the lives of young people.

To our school councils, home and school associations, and parents, I want to express our sincere thanks for your involvement in creating caring, learning environments for students.

My theme tonight – “strong schools, strong communities” – celebrates the role of schools in building healthy, vibrant communities, and the role of the community in contributing to safe, effective, and excellent schools. My remarks are built upon three fundamental beliefs:

First, that the core business of schools is student learning, that is, providing students with the skills they need to be successful in school and in life;

Second, that schools are the natural setting for supporting children and families, and preparing young people to take their places as citizens of our communities;

And third, that children, families, and schools work best when they work together.

Unlike any other public institution, schools connect with almost every family with schoolage children within a community, and also touch the lives of people who do not have children in the system. Schools are the logical places to provide supports, services, and opportunities that contribute to improved student learning, stronger families, and healthier communities. But schools cannot, and indeed must not, do this work alone– the success of students must be the responsibility of the entire community.

By “community,” I am referring not to physical boundaries and geographic borders, but to community in its broadest sense – the social relationships, networks, and interactions that bind us together as a community of Thames Valley.
And by “strong schools,” I am referring not just to schools that demonstrate improvement in EQAO results – although that is a critically important component – but rather to schools that value social inclusion, celebrate diversity, and prepare students for fulfilling, compassionate, and responsible adulthood.

From the police and the health units, to child care providers and home-builders, Thames Valley has developed wonderful, exciting partnerships with a wide range of community agencies, many of whom are here tonight. Across the Valley, there are many inspiring examples that demonstrate how the synergy between schools and communities is enhancing student learning and improving community outcomes.

Some schools are bringing the community in to deliver programs and services: Lorne Avenue Public School in London is providing on site physician services through the Lorne Avenue Learning Clinic, and Plattsville Public School in Oxford is sharing space with the local public library.

At schools like Summers’ Corners Public School in Elgin, Adult ESL classes are helping new Canadians gain the language skills they need to enter the workforce, and helping immigrant parents overcome the anxieties they may feel about our facilities.

The Oxford Technical Training Centre at College Avenue Secondary School in Woodstock is providing Thames Valley students, Fanshawe College students and adult learners with technical experience and apprenticeship opportunities.

Our Ready for School program, offered in collaboration with the London District Catholic School Board and community partners, is operating at 46 locations to prepare preschoolers to begin school eager to learn and ready to succeed.

Some schools are reaching out to the broader local, national, and international community:

- Students at Kensal Park Public School in London are addressing complex issues of globalization and international development by raising funds to build a school in Haiti, and working to adopt a village in Kenya;

- Students from Medway High School in Middlesex and secondary schools across the Valley are participating in GuluWalk to raise awareness of the civil war in Uganda and the rights of children to attend school free from violence;

- Students at Bishop Townshend Public School in London are learning more about Aboriginal culture through a unique twinning program with Walpole Island Elementary School;

- And students across Thames Valley are organizing phenomenally successful campaigns to raise money for worthy causes, from cancer research to shelters for abused women.

Some schools are acting locally to make a difference in their own buildings and neighbourhoods:

- There are Eco-schools, like Dunwich-Dutton Public School in Elgin, where students, teachers, staff, and parents are working together to protect and preserve the environment for future generations, and help reduce global warming;

- There are schools that are taking proactive approaches to peace education, like Parkview Public School in Komoka, the first Ontario member of Peaceful Schools International;
- There are “Schools in Bloom,” like Colborne Street Public School in Strathroy, that are greening their school yard and raising environmental awareness;

12. INAUGURAL ADDRESS - cont’d

- There are schools where proven violence prevention programs like the Fourth R, Forum Theatre and Roots of Empathy are contributing to safe, respectful learning environments for students, and schools like Rolph Street Public School in Tillsonburg, where students care for a companion pet, and take turns accompanying the dog on visits to a seniors’ residence.

None of these programs would happen without the imagination, leadership and initiative of our teachers, administrators, students, and parents, as well as the active engagement of our community partners.

If we are to truly prepare students to meet the challenges of citizenship in a rapidly changing world, it is imperative that we not only support – but expand – such innovative and student-focused school-community partnerships.

That’s why I’m encouraged by the government’s recent launch of its character education initiative. That the initiative is being spearheaded by Dr. Avis Glaze, head of the provincial Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat, is important – it signals the province’s recognition of the links between character and student achievement. As my examples have shown, Thames Valley has been “doing” character development for years, and we look forward to additional resources to foster the growth of community partnerships so vital to the success of character education.

Clearly, as we move forward into 2007, there is much to celebrate in Thames Valley. But some key challenges lie ahead.

The first is continued improvement in student learning. Our Board is making significant progress toward meeting the provincial EQAO targets of 75 percent of students at or above level three, and we must continue the momentum achieved with last year’s results.

Second, like school boards across the province, funding remains a critical issue for Thames Valley. While we welcome recent funding announcements by the Ministry of Education, we must continue to advocate for funding that addresses Thames Valley’s unique needs, and enables us to sustain the programs identified as priorities – programs like Reading Recovery, Partnerships for Excellence, and Reconnect. Although declining enrolment is reducing the total funding available to our Board, we have not seen a comparable decline in the numbers of students with special needs. Last year we faced a significant deficit in our special education envelope $5.3 million and were able to balance the Board’s budget only by moving money out of reserve funds, a one-time option that will not be available in future budget years.

As we deal with these serious budget pressures, we continue to wait for funding that addresses the actual facility and operational costs associated with maintaining surplus capacity and keeping small schools open, for new benchmarks to reflect the real costs of salaries and benefits, and for a transportation funding model.

Finally, capital planning presents an ongoing challenge.

Over the last two years, accommodation study review committees, the CN Watson report, and the recommendations of the draft capital plan have raised anxieties about the future of Thames Valley schools, and contributed to ongoing frustrations about lack of direction and process. Now, with new provincial guidelines on pupil accommodation, and our capital planning advisory committees in place, we can move forward with plans to address declining enrolment, build new schools in growth areas, and meet the increasing demands for French Immersion.
We owe it to parents and the community to let them know what’s next, and guarantee that their voices will be heard. Although we may not be able to reach consensus on the outcomes of our capital planning efforts, we have an obligation to ensure transparency and meaningful opportunities for participation in the process.

12. INAUGURAL ADDRESS - cont’d

Before I close, I’d like to take a moment to acknowledge the support of my family, especially my children Jonathan and Emily Bradford, and my husband, Neil Bradford, who has juggled his own busy professional life around my schedule, hockey, ballet lessons, and the typical challenges of family life. I was first elected to the school board just as Emily began Junior-Kindergarten and I don’t think she remembers a time when her mother wasn’t attending Board meetings. There is no doubt that serving as a trustee has entailed some sacrifices – for me and also for them – and I thank them for their understanding.

I’d also like to recognize my employers, Rod Skinkle and Ken Steele, who truly value public education, and have been unbelievably accommodating in providing me with the flexibility I need to do my job as trustee.

Educator Charles Ungerleider said: “Public schools help to transcend our differences to see what we have in common. They free us from the encapsulation of our own experience by exposing us to others. They cultivate our individual strengths and dispose us to treat others as we would like to be treated.” To me, that is the true genius of public schools.

To all the guests, staff, and parents assembled here tonight, thank you for your involvement and belief in public education. To my colleagues around the Board table, thank you for the opportunity to play a leadership role in this great Board. It’s an exciting time to be moving forward – I welcome the challenge and look forward to working with all of you.”

Peggy Sattler
2007 Chair of the Board

The following motion was moved by T. Roberts, seconded by G. Hart and carried:

That the Chairperson’s Inaugural Address be spread upon the minutes of the 2006 December 12 Inaugural meeting and posted to the Board’s website.

13. BENEDICTION - Rev. Susan Eagle delivered the benediction.

14. MUSICAL INTERLUDE
Everyone present enjoyed two additional musical numbers sung by the “Parkside Voices”. Trustee Exley thanked the students and the conductor for their participation in the Inaugural meeting.

15. CLOSING REMARKS
Director of Education Bill Bryce commented that the evening marked the 10th Inaugural of the Thames Valley District School Board, a very special evening for everyone, especially for the new trustees. He also introduced and welcomed Laura Elliott, incoming Executive Superintendent of Program Services, who will be replacing Executive Superintendent Cathy Murphy on her retirement in January.

He emphasized that each year brings its own challenges in public education and noting the coming year will also bring new opportunities. He noted that to have this number of education partners represented at tonight’s Inaugural meeting is an example of the commitment to young people that is shared across the District.
The Director invited everyone to the cafeteria for a reception to renew acquaintances and to extend best wishes to Chairperson Sattler, Vice-Chairperson Stewart, and Information Committee of the Whole Chair Bennett and Past Chair Hart.

17. **ADJOURNMENT**
The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m., on motion of S. Peters and F. Exley.

CONFIRMED:______________________________

Chairperson
SUMMARY OF APPROVED RECOMMENDATIONS OF 2006 DECEMBER 12

- That the following persons be appointed signing officers on behalf of the Board for the period 2006 December 12 to 2007 December 11:
  
  Peggy Sattler, Chair of the Board  
  James Stewart, Vice-Chair of the Board  
  Bill Bryce, Director of Education and Secretary  
  Brian Greene, Executive Superintendent of Business Services and Treasurer

- That the Chairperson’s Inaugural Address be spread upon the minutes of the 2006 December Inaugural meeting and posted to the Board’s website.

- That the following 2007 list of Committees of the Board and community representation be approved.

### 2007 COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD AND COMMUNITY REPRESENTATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committees (Board, Statutory, Standing, Ad Hoc, Administrative &amp; Community/Professional)</th>
<th>Trustee Representation Required</th>
<th>Please indicate your Committee interest</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BOARD COMMITTEE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Information Committee of the Whole</td>
<td>All Trustees</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>STATUTORY COMMITTEES</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) - (4-year term)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bennett, Grant, Tisdale</td>
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</tbody>
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| Supervised Alternative Learning for Excused Pupils (SALEP) | CEC Central - 1 + alternate  
CEC East - 1 + alternate  
CEC South - 1 + alternate  
Chippewas of the Thames | Bennett, Jaffe-alt  
Hart, Stewart-alt  
Grant, Exley - alt  
Hendrick, Bennett-alt |
| **STANDING COMMITTEES** | | |
| Budget Advisory | 3 | Exley, Jaffe, Roberts, Tisdale alt? |
| Capital Planning Advisory | All trustees by region | ---- |
| Chairs’ | Chair, Vice-Chair, Past Chair, Info. Committee Chair | Chair - Sattler  
Vice-Chair - Stewart  
Past Chair - Hart  
Info Chair - Bennett |
<p>| Native Advisory | 2 + Native Representative | Bennett, Grant, Hendrick |
| Negotiations Advisory | 3 | Exley, Hart, Peters |
| Policy Working | 5 | Bennett, Doub, Jaffe, Roberts, Tisdale, Grant - alt |
| Trustee Professional Development | 3 | Polhill, Roberts, Stewart |</p>
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<tr>
<th>AD HOC COMMITTEES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Long-term Community Partnerships</td>
<td>Board motion - Oct. 24/06</td>
<td>Grant, Jaffe, Peters, Roberts, Stewart,</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEES</td>
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<tr>
<td>Award of Distinction</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Polhill</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children’s Mental Health Study</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Grant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communications &amp; Public Relations</td>
<td>2 + Student Trustee</td>
<td>Doub, Roberts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Week</td>
<td>1+ Student Trustee</td>
<td>Roberts, North</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environmental Advisory</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bennett</td>
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<tr>
<td>Principal/Vice-Principal Interviews</td>
<td>2 as required</td>
<td>Bennett, Exley, Hart, Jaffe, Peters, Roberts, Stewart</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suspension/Expulsion Appeals</td>
<td>3 as required</td>
<td>Bennett, Exley, Hart, Jaffe, Peters, Roberts</td>
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<tr>
<td>COMMUNITY/PROFESSIONAL REPRESENTATION</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ontario Public School Boards' Association</td>
<td>2 + alternate</td>
<td>Hart, Sattler, Doub - alt, Roberts - alt</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children’s Safety Village</td>
<td>1 + alternate</td>
<td>Bennett, Peters - alt</td>
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<tr>
<td>City of London Safety &amp; Crime Prevention Advisory Committee</td>
<td>4-year term</td>
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<td>City of London Accessibility Advisory Committee</td>
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<td>Doub</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of London Advisory Committee on the Environment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sattler</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parent Involvement Advisory</td>
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<td>Bennett</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thames Valley District School Council</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Polhill</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thames Valley Education Foundation</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>London - Polhill Oxford - Stewart Middlesex - Peters Elgin - Exley Chair - Sattler</td>
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<tr>
<td>Western Fair Representative</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Peters</td>
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