

FOUNDATIONS FOR LEARNING

2007-2008

Director's Annual Report

VALUES:

Bluewater District School Board values our public education system that promotes a joy of learning for everyone.

In our public education system we value:

Quality

Equity

Partnerships

Accountability

Healthy and Safe Environments

IMAGE OF THE LEARNER:

The Bluewater District School Board learner demonstrates the knowledge, skills and values necessary for present and future success.

Each individual:

Learns for Life

Acts Responsibly

Sets Priorities

Develops Positive Relationships

Works Effectively



Foundations for Learning

BLUEWATER
CHARACTER
DEVELOPMENT

Caring
Commitment
Dependability
Honesty
Integrity
Respect
Responsibility
Self-Discipline
Teamwork
Trust



Character
for a Lifetime

Foundations for Learning was developed through an extensive consultation process with our staff and communities and informs all our system decisions and actions. The *Values* articulated in **Foundations for Learning** and the *Image of the Learner* include many examples of character attributes which are part of our Bluewater culture. The 10 Bluewater Character Attributes which were chosen by students, staff and parents came from our **Foundations for Learning** framework. During the 2007-08 school year, we have emphasized the importance of demonstrating these important character attributes and have celebrated the many examples that illustrate what they look like in action within Bluewater.

While this report contains a limited selection of the highlights of the 2007-08 school year, you will see many examples of our Bluewater students and staff demonstrating our 10 Character Attributes. The Director's Annual Report is organized around the elements of **Foundations for Learning** and clearly shows how this document frames our collective work to support student learning.



(l-r) Brenda Booth – Superintendent of Business and Treasurer, Lori Wilder – Superintendent of Student Services, Steven Reid – Superintendent of Instruction, Mary Anne Alton – Director of Education, Alana Murray – Superintendent of Secondary Education, Richard Gerson – Administrator of Employee Relations, Marnie Coke – Superintendent of Elementary Education

System Administrative Team:

The System Administrative Team is guided in their work by the values and image of the learner in **Foundations for Learning**. While each member of the team has specific responsibilities, their shared knowledge and moral purpose ensures that all decisions are based on supporting student learning.



(Back l-r) Jan Johnstone, Rick Galbraith, John Chapman, Ross King (Chair), Marg Gaviller (Front l-r) Cindy Aitken, Marilyn McComb, Tim Reaburn, Jennifer Yenssen (Vice Chair), Nataalka Pucan

Trustees:

The Trustees of Bluewater District School Board model the importance of positive relationships as they perform their system governance role. The trustees are committed to decisions that support student learning and reflect the values described in **Foundations for Learning**.

WE VALUE

Quality

Bluewater Schools Provincial and National Award Winners

Bluewater District School Board students and staff have been recognized at the provincial and national levels in the areas of the arts, science, athletics, language, the environment, and skilled trades.

The following examples illustrate a standard of excellence throughout the system:

- Canada-wide Science Fair – Josie Mielhausen, Bruce Peninsula District School
- Senior Concert Band (Gold) – Saugeen District Secondary School
- Senior Jazz Ensemble (Gold) – West Hill Secondary School
- National French Immersion Creative Writing – Brianna Cavan, West Hill Secondary School
- Ontario Envirothon Champions – West Hill Secondary School Envirothon Team
- Skills Ontario Competition (Small Powered Equipment – Gold) – Tom Eckenswiller, John Diefenbaker Secondary School
- Ontario Elementary Nordic Ski Championships (overall title) – Hepworth Central Public School
- Ontario Girls Rugby Championships (Gold) – Saugeen District Secondary School

- OFSAA Senior Girls Rugby Triple A (Consolation champions – senior girls) – Grey Highlands Secondary School
- Special Olympics National Games (100 m Nordic Skiing – Gold) – Peter Trapp, Walkerton District Secondary School
- World Special Olympic Games in Shanghai, China (4x400 m relay – 5th) – Michael Bailey, John Diefenbaker Secondary School

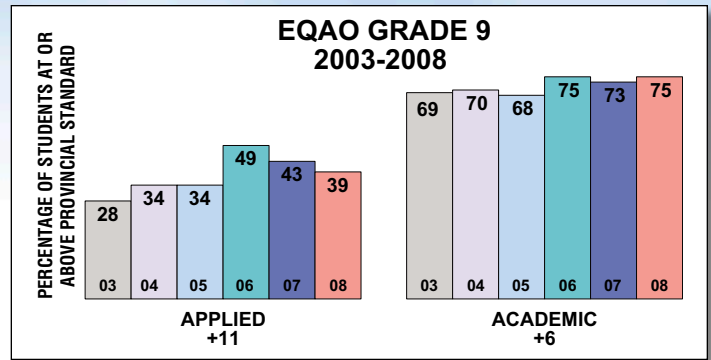
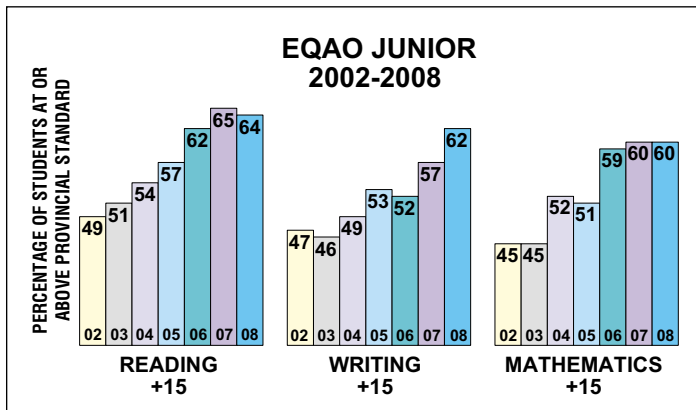
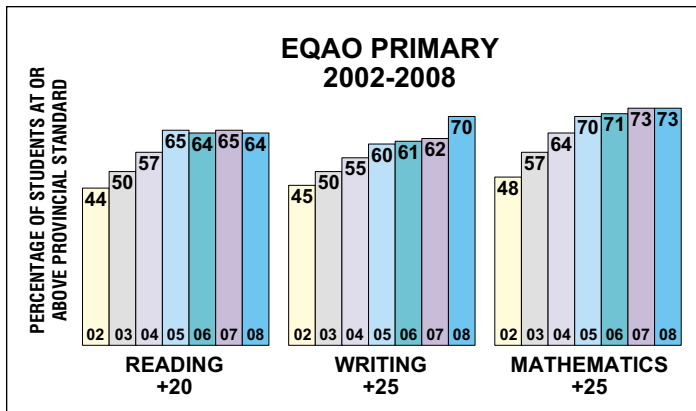


Bluewater Graduation Rates

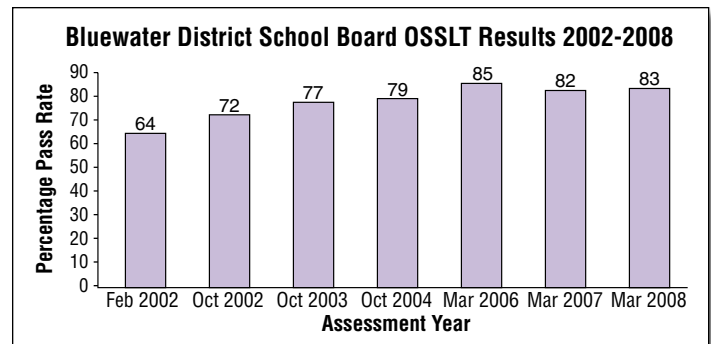
Bluewater District School Board's graduation rate continued to increase over the past school year. The 2007-2008 rate was 78.8%, an increase of 5.9% over 2006-2007. This represents an overall increase of almost 7% since the province began reporting graduation rates in 2004-2005. The Ministry of Education has set a provincial target of 85% for 2010-2011.

Bluewater EQAO and OSSLT Test Results

The performance of Bluewater District School Board students on provincial assessments continues to confirm the impact of our focus on effective instruction. The grade 3, 6 and 9 students who wrote the tests last school year maintained the improvements of 4 to 25 percentage points made in these core subjects over the last several years.



The EQAO Assessments of reading, writing and mathematics provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their achievement as outlined in The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Language (revised 2006), The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Mathematics (revised 2005) and The Ontario Curriculum, Grade 9: Mathematics. Each assessment measures the knowledge and skills that students are expected to have acquired by the end of grade 3, 6 or 9.



Results from EQAO testing are an important indicator of student learning and measure achievement in relation to a common provincial standard. The objective and reliable information gained through these assessments adds to the current knowledge about how Ontario students are doing and has become an important tool for improvement planning at the student, school, school board and provincial levels.

UNESCO Designation

On June 2, students, staff, friends and family of Bruce Peninsula District School in Lion's Head, and St. Edmunds School in Tobermory, celebrated in fine style. A full day of events were enjoyed, as the two schools celebrated their National Designation for UNESCO Associated Schools. Celebration assemblies focused

on students' work and accomplishments within the four UNESCO themes: Environment, World Issues, Human Rights and the role of the United Nations, and Intercultural Learning. Plaques were presented to the school by MP Larry Miller, Mayor Milt McIver, Bluewater District School Board trustee



Tim Raeburn, and board representative Jacqui Traverse-Thomas. Canadian Commission for UNESCO representative Aslyouk Lynhiavu sat with students for the assemblies and then turned the whole affair into a dance celebration with a gym full of students, staff, and guests enjoying the music and the spirit of the day. The evening was topped off with a Fish Fry in support of the Outers program. This designation is a journey for these two schools and in no way a final destination. The desire to create global citizens who can recognize the relevance in their learning is part of what makes this designation so meaningful. Future goals within the UNESCO framework include sending a Canadian student delegation to the model United Nations in New York City in December 2008.



Beat of the Drum Symposium

BEAT of the DRUM, our first Aboriginal Symposium provided a wonderful opportunity to celebrate aboriginal culture and accomplishments. The symposium provided the background of a culture rich with history, success stories, and role models. As well, the many trials and tribulations were identified to help understand the historical context of our aboriginal students and parents.



The intergeneration trauma and impact of the residential school system on the aboriginal communities was highlighted by the Bluewater District Aboriginal Advisor, Ray Auger.

Chief Ralph Akiwenzie from Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation and Chief Randall Kahgee from Chippewas of Saugeen First Nation brought greetings to the celebration with kind words and the history of the aboriginal culture. Shirley John,

a First Nation elder, set the stage with a prayer and smudging. The Directors from Bluewater and Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Boards spoke of the importance of partnerships and the genuine

commitment to supporting the learning of all aboriginal students.

The guest speaker, Dr. Pamela Rose Toulouse was a powerful and engaging speaker who masterfully modelled her philosophy of what is best for the aboriginal learner in her very active, visual, and humorous hands-on presentation. She had many people in the room actively participating in a workshop that was extremely engaging for all. Many schools from both Bluewater and Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Boards highlighted the successes of our aboriginal children and youth.



The cultural celebration included drumming and singing with the women's singing group from M' Wikwedong Native Cultural Resource Centre and students and parents from G.C. Huston Public School. The symposium ended with a powerful performance from a group of male drummers and singers, as well as fancy, jingle and traditional dancers performing in front of the many truly engaged participants.

Please visit www.bwdsb.on.ca/instruction/aboriginal for further information about aboriginal education and the Beat of the Drum Symposium.



Far From The Heart

In the spring of 2008, approximately 1700 Bluewater students in grades 7 to 12, and 90 teachers participated in an Interactive Performing Arts Program entitled 'Far From The Heart'. This educational program used the performing arts, interactive discussions, an educational guide, teacher training, and in-class activities to send a message in the areas of sexual health and violence prevention.

Classroom teachers worked with students before and after the presentation to come to a deeper understanding of safe dating relationships and the factors related to violent and assaultive behaviour.

The performance story line has a small group of girls and guys, played by young professional actors, concerned about image, popularity, and sexual conquest at 'The Big Party'. Felicity finds herself first

tormented by her controlling boyfriend, and about to be assaulted by the guy who seemed to want to help her. Name-calling, threats, and cunning manipulation are their tactics. Her judgment is clouded by alcohol and inexperience. In this interactive show, students from the audience provide solutions to the problems presented in the play by getting up on stage and changing the action. After the show, trained professionals discussed the issues with the students and teachers in small group settings.

'Far From The Heart' is a SHEATRE production that was developed in partnership with youth, Bluewater District School

Board, The Sexual Assault and Partner Abuse Care Centre (Grey Bruce Health Services), The Men's Program (Grey/Bruce), Women's House serving Grey Bruce, Parent Action on Drugs, Victim Witness Assistance Program, Grey Bruce Health Unit, Mixed Company Theatre and teachers.

Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) and Programs for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)

In the spring of 2007, the Ministry of Education distributed PPM 140, Incorporating Methods of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) into Programs for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). Its purpose was to provide direction to support the use of ABA in the education of many students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). The use of ABA instructional approaches is also effective for students with other special education needs.

The Implementation Plan was jointly created with input from the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), the Geneva Centre for Autism, and Thames Valley Children's Centre. The growing body of knowledge about educational practices that are effective for students with ASD was used.

Many stakeholders and staff members participated in training to implement PPM 140. All Bluewater educational assistants participated in the provincially mandated Geneva Centre for Autism two day modules and ABA electives.



Partnerships

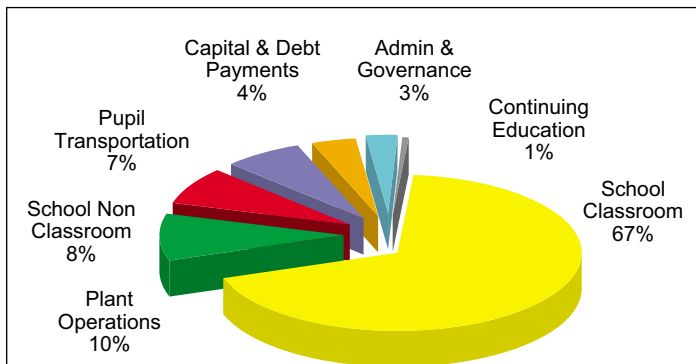
Many educational assistants joined in the professional development sessions provided by Thames Valley Children's Centre.

Training sessions for principals, vice-principals, Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) members, system based staff, Learning Resource Teachers, Behaviour Teachers, Section 23 teachers, Supervised Alternative Learning for Excused Pupils (SALEP) teachers, and teachers of Developmental Learners have taken place.

All of the training sessions focused on strengthening collaborative working relationships between parents, schools and the community, the development of Individual Education Plans, special education programs and services, and transition planning. These active learning sessions have allowed for the continued learning of the Bluewater staff and have had a positive impact on student learning.

Accountability

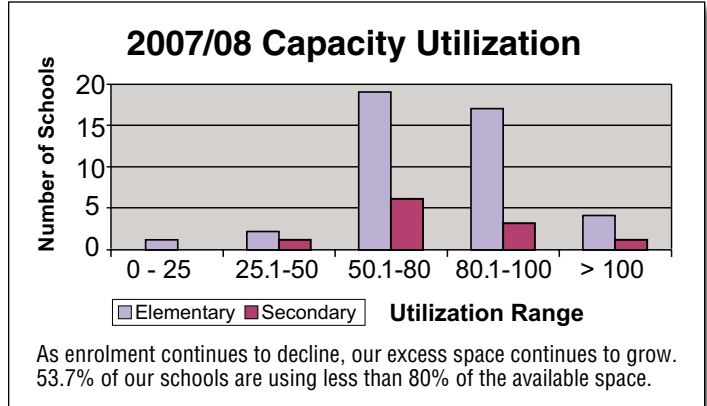
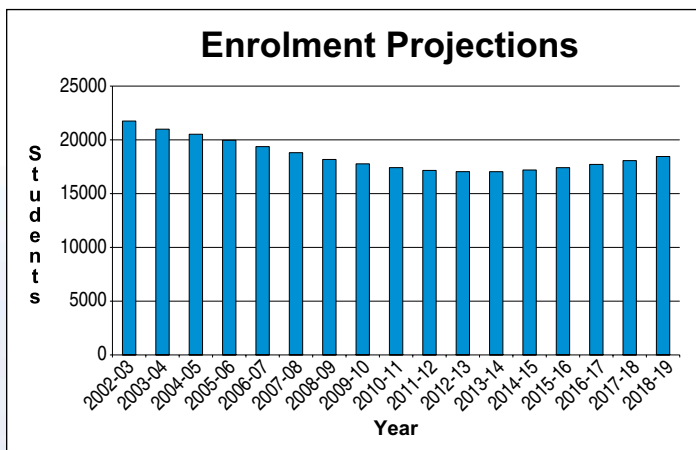
2007/08 Budgeted Expenditures



School Classroom	\$125,115,882	67%
Plant Operations	\$17,605,158	10%
School Non Classroom	\$14,187,381	8%
Pupil Transportation	\$12,946,358	7%
Capital & Debt Payments	\$7,110,126	4%
Admin & Governance	\$5,074,149	3%
Continuing Education	\$949,735	1%
Total	\$182,988,789	100%

Enrolment Projections

Enrolment continues to decline in Bluewater District School Board. On average, the 2007-08 enrolment declined by 3.45% in both the elementary schools and secondary schools.



Transportation

Bluewater District School Board's transportation department is part of the Student Transportation Service Consortium of Grey Bruce. The other partners are the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board and Conseil Scolaire des Ecoles Catholiques du Sud-Ouest. Jointly they transport 15,452 students daily, operate 356 bus routes which cover 44,244 km daily.



Consortium staff includes a Transportation Manager, a Systems Administrator and three Route Planners. All staff members will respond to enquiries from the public regarding school bus transportation policies and procedures, eligibility and school attendance areas. Staff work with school bus operators to ensure safe and efficient bus routes. Schools provide student information to the consortium. Eligibility for transportation is determined according to individual school board policies. When a student is eligible for bussing, arrangements are made and co-ordinated with the school bus operators, the school and the parent/guardian.

The following factors are considered when planning school bus routes:

- condition of the roads to be travelled
- school schedule
- distances between homes and schools
- distances between homes and routes
- safety of walking routes between homes and routes
- length of bus ride
- number of passengers to be served
- size of area
- location of bus stops
- location of safe turn-around points

More information regarding the Student Transportation Service Consortium of Grey Bruce can be found at www.bwdsb.on.ca/tran/

Bluewater “School Support and Services Centre” Sod Turning Ceremony

The official turning of the sod for the construction of the new School Support and Services Centre took place on Tuesday, December 18, 2007.

Members of the official sod turning included Gail Fullerton of the Bluewater Parent Involvement Committee, Student Senators Luke Albert and Ethan Lawrence, representatives from Makrimichalos Cugini Architects Ltd. and Melloul Blamey Construction, Bill Murdoch M.P.P., Mayor of Arran Elderslie Ron Oswald, Bluewater District School Board Chair Ross King, Vice Chair Jennifer Yenssen, and Director Mary Anne Alton.



Since 1999, over 90 million dollars

have been invested in school renewal in Bluewater. The time has come for practical and efficient working space to be created for staff who support student learning at the system level.

The construction of a new School Support and Services Centre will provide a healthy and safe environment that will house staff currently working out of the Markdale and Chesley offices.

During the 2006-07 school year, the original plan underwent major revisions to reduce the overall size to simplify construction and to ensure that the cost would be within the projected budget.

Construction began in January 2008.

Kincardine District Secondary School GreenSpace Team Students Practice and Teach Sustainable Living

Beginning with three students in May 2007, Kate Ellis, Caitlin Finlay, and Chrissy Morrison, the KDSS GreenSpace Team has established a working model of how to socialize and teach their fellow citizens about environmentally sustainable options that are a perfect fit for our daily lives. Networking with School Community Council member, Carol Blake, they wove the use of Green Cones/Solar Cones and Green Shift products into the conscience of KDSS and Bluewater District School Board communities.

The group prepared food with locally grown and “in-season” ingredients, utilizing biodegradable dishes, cutlery and napkins



to serve approximately 600 people who attended the KDSS Commencement and memorial for graduate John Forrester. Using a water cooler with filtered municipal water they raised awareness about the unsustainable practice of plastic-bottled “non-local” spring water so prevalent today. The group is inspired by the 100 Mile Diet.

Teaching and working with grade six students from Mrs. Tuck’s Kincardine Township-Tiverton Public School class, the group taught about our ecological footprint and rose to the challenge of how to make an everlasting positive impact on the environment by planting over 200 trees in the area. The group was deservedly recognized by the Kincardine Chamber of Commerce with the OPG (Ontario Power Generation) Environment Award. They networked with the School Community Council of G.C. Huston Public School for various events. On June 2nd, they were also recognized by Canadian Geographic and Panasonic (Canada) at the Canadian Environmental Awards gala in Toronto. The group’s zeal continues to be their work with others to create a smaller ecological imprint.

Bluewater Schools Achieving Zero Worker Injuries

A healthy and safe school environment is a strongly held Bluewater District School Board value that isn’t meant only for students. Twenty schools reported no worker injuries for the entire year in 2007. These schools demonstrate that the goal of zero worker injuries board-wide is an achievable goal if we all do our part to safeguard our own safety and that of our co-workers.

The following schools/work sites have a zero injury record in 2007:

- Arran-Tara Elementary School
- Bayview Public School
- Beaver Valley Community School
- Brant Township Central School
- Dawnview Public School
- Derby Public School
- Dundalk & Proton Community School
- Elgin Market Public School
- Hillcrest Central School
- Huron Heights Public School
- Institute for Outdoor Education and Environmental Studies
- Keppel-Sarawak Elementary School
- Mildmay-Carrick Public School
- Northport Elementary School
- Osprey Central School
- Paisley Central School
- Port Elgin-Saugeen Central School
- St. Edmunds Public School
- Sullivan Community School
- Walkerton District Secondary School



Walkerton District Secondary School Health and Safety Committee

Bruce Power Environmental Learning Centre at the IOEES

On November 4, 2007, the new Bruce Power Environmental Learning Centre at the Institute for Outdoor Education and Environmental Studies was opened. Approximately 150 attendees enjoyed a tour of the new facility and emotions were stirred as they listened to speeches from trustees, teachers, and foundation directors. The Mayor of the Town of South Bruce Peninsula, Gwen Gilbert, shared her memories of 11 years there as caterer. The formal celebrations concluded with the ringing of the bell by Ray Fenton, President of The Bluewater Education Foundation and

Duncan Hawthorne, CEO of Bruce Power.

"Wow! This is so cool!" This exclamation is heard many times from children who are participating in a program at the Centre. The work of the Foundation is not just about bricks and mortar, it is about helping children to build teamwork and leadership skills. It is about providing an environment that fosters participatory, experiential learning. It is about children having fun and developing the excitement of being life long learners.

e-Learning

In 2007/08, both students and teachers in Bluewater waded into the waters of the provincial e-learning strategy. Five courses were offered in semester two, representing new learning experiences and challenges for 4 teachers and 73 students in four secondary schools within the board. The projected success rate in these courses is over 90%.

In April, 50 secondary teachers attended an e-learning information session, and 25 teachers completed e-learning training in May and June. Sixteen of these teachers will be teaching 14

senior level courses through e-learning in the 2008/09 school year. These courses are available to all Bluewater secondary school students and are being offered in the curriculum areas of: Business, Canadian and World Studies, Media, English, Math, and Science.

Our e-learning experiences this year have built some excitement among both students and teachers. Students are looking forward to having a broader range of courses available to them than would be possible in their own school, and teachers are eager to provide a variety of learning experiences to students using a new delivery model.



Premier's Awards for Teaching Excellence

Tracy Napper Sharpe, teacher at Spruce Ridge Community School in Durham was the recipient of the Provincial "New Teacher of the Year" award and exemplifies the qualities of a life long learner.

Tracy Napper Sharpe may be a new teacher, but she is a master at creating integrated learning experiences. When teaching about global communities, she transformed her classroom first into an African hut and then into an Arctic landscape. Immersed in these environments, students learned not just facts but how to connect them to media events and to their own lives. She believes sharing helps all children learn, so she freely shares her plans, resources and time with other teachers.

The Premier's Awards for Teaching Excellence celebrate the outstanding individuals who work in Ontario's schools and school boards. Twenty-three educators and support staff received provincial education awards for their contributions to student learning and achievement.



Tracy Napper Sharpe

Impact '08 Student Character Education Conference

On March 26th, 2008, one hundred and twenty students (approximately ten students from every secondary school) attended Impact '08, a Student Character Education Conference at the Institute for Outdoor Education and Environmental Studies near Wiarton.

The goal of this conference was to assist students in exploring how they can build character into the culture of their schools. By encouraging students to think about the values enunciated in the Bluewater District School Board Character Development

documents, students are empowered to start the process of making a positive difference in their school community.

Two young presenters from the YouthSpeak Performance Co. and Matt Evans who works with OSAID (Ontario Students Against Impaired Driving) engaged Bluewater students. Grey Highlands Secondary School students led workshops on the topics of:

- Embracing Diversity
- Creating a Climate of Respect
- Character Development in Sports
- Concrete Ideas to Improve Participation
- Academic Honesty
- Being the Change you Want to See
- Escaping the Image Trap
- Committing to Your Interests

A "Bravo and Well Done" goes to teacher, Sue Ferris, who provided leadership and inspiration, by doing all of the ground work and pulling everything together to make this conference a success.



Positive Behaviour Support Approach Training

This school year, approximately 150 special education staff from all Bluewater schools participated in four, day-long training sessions. Positive Behaviour Support is a proactive approach to dealing with behaviour which focuses on prevention, assessment to understand the behaviour, and teaching of new skills. Staff was provided with:

- information about the evidence-based strategies of Applied Behavioural Analysis,
- a framework to help them more effectively plan for students with behavioural needs and,
- support to develop or enhance a student's Individual Education Plan and Positive Behavioural Support Plan.



Student Services staff, in conjunction with staff from the Thames Valley School Support Program, designed and presented the training sessions. Support was also provided by staff from Regional Support Associates. Funding was provided by the Council of Directors of Education. A team of staff members from the Bruce

Grey Catholic District School Board also participated.

Since the sessions, there are encouraging reports of students who have benefited from the application of this approach, including increased engagement in learning tasks and in demonstration of positive behaviour.

Hope Runs at Macphail

The "Run till You're Ugly" running club at Macphail Memorial Elementary School hosted a fundraising dinner in November to raise money for the Tumaini Children's Home in Kenya, Africa.

The running club was started by teacher Michael Kulakowsky last spring to prepare students for the upcoming track and field season.

The club consists of students from grades 6, 7 and 8. After a successful inaugural season, the club started training in September in preparation for the cross country running season. The students were given a story from Runners World magazine that told the story of the Hope Runs program. The runners at Macphail immediately connected with the story and the kids, and decided they wanted to help. The running club prepared a package to send to Kenya to share information about the Macphail runners, Flesherton and Canada. They are hopeful this will be the start of something special.

The running club set a goal of raising \$500. They more than tripled that goal raising just under \$1700. Mr. Kulakowsky committed to run home from Flesherton for every \$500 raised.

He lives in Meaford; a marathon distance of 42 kilometres away.

For more information, visit www.hoperuns.org



Student Senators/Trustees

We thank our Student Senate for working very hard this year, continuing to demonstrate their dedication to student success and public education. The Senate provided the perspective of students on various issues throughout the year. For example, Senate members supported Earth Hour in the board and in the community, promoted an understanding of various student centered issues, and assisted in the development of a Bluewater student-based character development poster. In addition, two of our senate members, Laura Campbell and Lauren Best, participated in the Ontario Student Trustee Association as committee members.



(Front L-R) - April Thompson (SDSS), Alex McAlpine (GHSS), Sienna Forster (PSDS), Chantelle Eckenswiler (BPDS)
(Back L-R) - Lauren Best (OSCVI), Nathan Lang (JDSS), Stephanie Code (SDSS), Ethan Lawrence (CDHS), Laura Campbell (WHSS), Luke Albert (WDSS), Dylan Smith (GBSS)

Inaugural Footprints Conference

On September 26th and 27th, Bruce Peninsula District School held the inaugural Footprints Conference - Exploring Pathways to Careers in the Environment. The objective of the conference was to expose students to many of the career opportunities within the environmental sector and the various skill sets that are required to work in those areas. Through these experiences, it is hoped that students will develop a greater appreciation for the planet and the skills required to care for the environment. The conference was for students from all secondary schools in the Bluewater District



School Board and the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board. Approximately 200 Bluewater students were in attendance.

During the conference, students had the opportunity to explore career choices in eleven different streams: Environmental Arts; Outdoor Leadership; Flatwater Canoeing; Environmental Science;

Back Country Construction and Maintenance; Outdoor Leadership; Hike Ontario; Marine; Municipal Systems; Emergency Response; Ropes; Sustainable Energy Solutions; Local Food.

Sessions took place at a variety of locations on the Bruce Peninsula, including Bruce Peninsula National Park and Fathom Five National Marine Park, the Institute for Outdoor Education and Environmental Studies, Harvest Moon Bakery, buildings of the Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula, Larkwhistle Gardens, the Hyperbaric Chamber in Tobermory, on the Chi-Cheemaun, and at the Celtic Sports and Arts Camp.

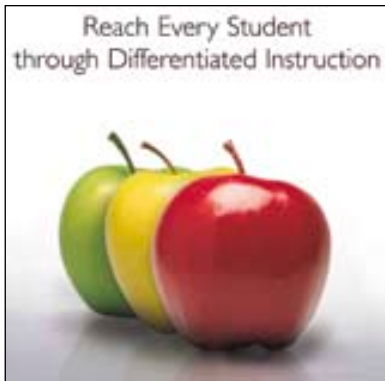
The conference was very generously sponsored and supported by Bluewater District School Board and a variety of community partners: Bruce-Grey-Perth-Huron-Georgian Triangle Training Board and Passport to Prosperity, Bruce Peninsula National Park and Fathom Five National Marine Park, Celtic Sports and Arts Camp, RBC Financial Group, Zehrs, Sky Generation, Georgian College, Bruce Peninsula Society of Artists, Ontario Clean Water Agency, Bruce Peninsula Environment Group, Bruce Peninsula Biosphere Association, Institute for Outdoor Education and Environmental Studies, Ontario Provincial Police, Municipality of the Northern Bruce Peninsula, Dr. George Harpur, Grey-Bruce Water Supply, OYAP, Laidlaw Transportation, Lion's Head and District Lioness

Club, Barbetta Orchards, Owen Sound Transportation Company, Canadian Coast Guard, Harvest Moon Bakery and Larkwhistle Gardens, staff at Bruce Peninsula District School, as well as many others. We are so appreciative to all who helped to make this event a worthwhile learning opportunity for Bluewater students

Positive Transitions to Secondary School

We have completely re-vamped our approach to planning for a successful transition from grade eight to grade nine.

Based on the Early School Leaver research of Dr. Bruce Ferguson at the Hospital for Sick Children, we have placed a renewed emphasis on making strong and successful connections for all students as they begin secondary school.



Early success in high school will establish a sense of belonging for students which is the best predictor of future success. We begin this transition process with the work of Transitions Teachers in our elementary schools. These teachers work with students to begin to identify pathways, use myBlueprint software to plan courses and destinations beyond school, and complete clear and concise profiles for each student. Our transition teams include guidance, student success and learning resource teachers who work closely with their elementary colleagues. Purposeful timetables are created to target student strengths early in grade nine.

Student Success teachers and Link Crew teachers have been trained to work with senior mentor students to provide a highly spirited first day of high school for all new grade nine students. This mentoring relationship is sustained throughout the school year, and is having a

positive effect on school culture. At West Hill Secondary School, more grade nine students than ever before attended tryouts for the football team. No student is ever cut from the team, and the teachers involved credit this to the confidence established on the first day.

Our Student Success teachers have been tracking data for all students who are identified early as needing a watchful eye as they transition to high school. Our data clearly reveals that early recognition and intervention are definitely factors that contribute to success. Most of these students achieved all credits in their first semester to establish a positive pattern of achievement in high school.

Accommodation Review

The school year 2007-2008 saw two areas reviewed under Board Policy 3101-D 'Student Accommodation Review'. The Owen Sound area involved Sydenham Community, Bayview Public, Alexandra Community and Strathcona Senior Public Schools. The Walkerton area involved Brant Central, Walkerton Public and Walkerton District Schools. Two Accommodation Review Committees (ARC) were formed, one for each area.

Public input was sought by the two accommodation review committees. Input was received through public meetings, presentations, letters, surveys and school community councils. All information gathered by the ARC was filtered through the value statements of: value of the school to the student; value of the school to the community; value of the school to the economy, and value of the school to the board. The ARC also took into consideration transition plans for the students before making their final recommendations to the Board of Trustees.



Strathcona Senior Public School closed June 2008

The Owen Sound ARC recommendation of closing Strathcona Senior Public School and reconfiguring Alexandra Community, Bayview Public and Sydenham Community Schools as JK-8 schools was approved by Bluewater District School Board in June. The Walkerton ARC recommendation to build a new JK-12 school to house students from Brant Township Central, Walkerton Public and Walkerton District Secondary Schools will be considered by the board in September 2008.

ARC members dedicated hundreds of volunteer hours to assist the board in the review process.

Section 23 Success Story

Education Programs for Pupils in Care, Treatment, Custody or Correctional Facilities, more commonly referred to as Section 23 programs, allow students to further their education while also receiving support to address their additional needs. These supports may include the involvement of a social worker, a child and youth worker or health care professional. Bluewater District School Board partners with four community agencies to run eight Section 23 classes. Each class has an enrolment of eight students. In this small and caring learning environment students often show potential beyond what they have demonstrated in the traditional school setting. Key to the long term success of the student is a smooth transition back to their local school. Danielle Aikewenzie is an example of how collaborative support by the school and the Section 23 staff, as well as student determination, can result in a successful

transition from a small alternative learning environment to a larger secondary school setting.

Danielle reports that her difficulties with school hit a crisis in grade 7 and 8. She did not experience difficulties with the academic work but simply had no desire to attend school, so she didn't. It was not until the spring of 2006 in what should have been her grade 9 year that she regained her desire and commitment to continue her education. At this time she was admitted to a Section 23 program in the Owen Sound Area. She forged strong relationships with the Child and Youth Worker and



Danielle and Lizzie

teacher in the class. She felt safe in the learning environment the classroom had to offer. In the thirteen months that she attended the class she obtained seven credits. Even though Danielle was successful in the Section 23 class it was only the beginning of her journey. The next big step was transitioning to OSCVI. In order to prepare for this transition, Danielle completed all of her compulsory math credits in the class as she knew that she would experience anxiety in a large math class. In February of 2007 she registered for one course at OSCVI. It was recognized that in order to develop a commitment to attend OSCVI regularly she would need to start slowly and take advantage of her strong support network. The Section 23 staff held her accountable to her commitment to attend the art class. They often provided her transportation and spoke frequently with her art teacher. They encouraged her and celebrated her successes. When Danielle originally registered for art she did so thinking it was an easy credit. What she did not realize is that she is a gifted artist. Danielle completed her art credit with a 90%. This success led to more success. In September 2007, Danielle enrolled at OSCVI full-time. She continued to keep in touch with the Section 23 staff allowing them to continue to celebrate her success. Although Danielle admits that she still sometimes struggles with attendance, she has obtained all of her credits this year and participated in a school trip to New York. With a lot of determination and support Danielle has made a successful transition back to school. In June 2007, Danielle was presented with the Student Achievement Award for her class. Pictured on page 8, is Danielle presenting this year's recipient, Elizabeth (Lizzie) Mariette, with this same award. Lizzie has also travelled a challenging road but is now only five credits short of obtaining her diploma. A year from now she will not only be able to pass on a success story to next year's winner of the Student Achievement Award, she will also be able to say that she is a secondary school graduate.

Assistant Deputy Minister George Zegarac Visits Bluewater District School Board

On Thursday, February 7, 2008, Assistant Deputy Minister George Zegarac visited Bluewater. The Ministry of Education has indicated its desire to provide more "hands on" learning opportunities for students in grades 4 - 8. While in Bluewater, Mr. Zegarac saw first hand examples of effective hands on learning experiences we have created for our students. He had a tour of the Technology Centre at Georgian Bay Secondary School and

observed grade 8 students from Meaford Community School. The Food Services students at Georgian Bay Secondary School created a gourmet lunch which was professionally served. Students from Meaford Community School and Beaver Valley Community School shared their experiences at the Institute for Outdoor Education and Environmental Studies. A round table discussion with classroom teachers and school

and system leaders on the topic of "Engaging Students through Effective Instruction and Transitions" provided many examples of Bluewater structures and strategies that support all learners. Mr. Zegarac was inspired by the links between Ministry support and program implementation in Bluewater. He complimented the

Board on their willingness to learn from other boards and to share their expertise with other boards.

Union Partners

Bluewater union leaders support their members and provide valued leadership within the Board.

This year we introduced a new series of meetings for all union leaders, system administrative team and trustees. We held three sessions focussed on "Working Together to Support Student Learning" with presentations and follow up discussions. Dr. Helen Bochar and Justin Trudeau were two presenters who provided the context for engaging conversations related to our learners in the 21st century. Union leaders continued to be involved in the budget process and held an additional meeting to assist trustees in understanding the implications of budget decisions within individual employee groups.

Our union partners provide insights related to organizational health, support workplace wellness initiatives and serve on many board committees and councils. While we all have our roles to play, we are fortunate to have positive relationships between system staff and union leaders.



(L to R) – Nancy Lawler - ETFO Teachers, Ross Haley - ETFO Occasional Teachers, Bob Farrell - OSSTF, Occasional Teachers, Linda Law - Student Services Personnel, Don McAngus - CUPE, Rosanne Gallinger - Association of Bluewater Administrators, Chris Thomson - OSSTF Teachers, Penny Huettlin - OSSTF Office Professional/Technical, Paula Robinson - OSSTF Educational Assistants

Parent Involvement Committee (PIC)

In 2006, the Ministry of Education encouraged each school board in the province to create a Parent Involvement Committee at the board level with parents from across the entire board. A call went out to any interested parents in Bluewater District School Board in October 2006.

In January 2007, a small group of four parents, three trustees and the Director of Education, had their first meeting. Currently the committee membership has grown to include thirteen parents, three trustees and the Director of Education.

The Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) is a committee of Bluewater District School Board consisting of a majority of parents representing various geographical areas of the school district. Consistent with regulatory requirements, Ministry of Education guidelines, and board policy, the committee's principle goal is to encourage and assist effective parent involvement in their children's education.

Under the leadership of Gail Fullerton as Chair, the accomplishments of this committee are many and include:

- hosting School Community Council Networking Meetings during May in each of the past two school years;
- the presentation of six workshops across Bluewater "Raising



(Back L-R) – Ross King - Board Chair, Kevin Larson - Parent, John Chapman - Trustee, Wendy Stewart - Parent, Brenda Foster - Parent, Julie Gorman - Parent, Meranie Plews - Parent, Tim Reaburn - Trustee, Jim Thorpe - Parent
(Front L-R) – Gail Walden - Parent, Helen Risteen - Parent, Gail Fullerton - Committee Chair, Rhonda Beckenhauer - Parent, Susan Geisel - System Communications Assistant, Mary Anne Alton - Director of Education.
Missing from the photo are: Nancy Ackroyd - Parent, Rosie Harrison - Parent and Helen Peppler - Parent

Develops Positive Relationships

- Healthy Children” with Randy Calvert of McMaster Children’s Hospital in September/October 2007;
- facilitating family network meetings in November 2007;
- improving the electronic communication resources available;
- hosting the annual Parent Conference in October 2007 “Better

Understanding the World of Our Students” for all parents. This committee is dedicated to working effectively and constructively to achieve the goal of improved parent engagement and other related goals consistent with the Bluewater District School Board Foundations for Learning document.

Works Effectively

Administrators are students too! Building Instructional Leadership Capacity

Administrators have an important role in their schools to ensure improved student learning is of the highest priority. In order for principals and vice principals to fulfill this expectation they need to be supported in their own professional development as instructional leaders. Throughout the 2007-2008 school year all administrators increased their understanding of the complexity of education in the 21st century and how they can facilitate change in their schools that will lead to increased student performance.

Many administrators extended their learning by participating in an additional project that focused on the evidence of student

learning within the classrooms of their schools. Administrators were partnered with each other and then received guidance from a ‘critical friend’, using an apprenticeship model. Discussions (during and after the learning events) assisted administrators to collaboratively explore potential changes and upgrades that could move their school forward.

The overwhelming support

from participating administrators for this type of professional development has encouraged us to offer more extensive sessions in the future.

Without knowledge the world is bereft of culture. And so we must be educators and students both. ROBERTA BONDAR

Professional Sharing Opportunity in Bluewater

A team of administrators from Lakehead District School Board visited Bluewater District School Board in February to build their capacity related to the provincial School Effectiveness Framework. They spent a day at Alexandra Community School to learn from the tremendous growth in student success which has occurred there. They visited every classroom and dialogued with staff. In the spirit of “planning with the end in mind”, the team identified

what they saw at Alexandra as the “end” that they would hope to achieve in their elementary schools. On Wednesday evening, the Lakehead team met with Bluewater leaders to learn more about administrator professional learning communities, the Association of Bluewater Administrators (ABA), Bluewater Standards of

Practice and how the School Effectiveness Framework is being used to support student learning. On Thursday morning, the team visited Hepworth Central Public School and Peninsula Shores District School.

Awards of Excellence - Bluewater District School Board

Bluewater Foundations for Learning outlines our commitment to a standard of excellence in fostering the academic, physical, social and emotional development of all our students. At the May 2008 Board Meeting the outstanding contributions made by community members to our education system were recognized through our Awards of Excellence Program.



While it is impossible to honour all of those special people who contribute to the betterment of education in Bluewater, this program is designed to recognize the extraordinary efforts and contribution of one individual from each family of schools. These individuals have been nominated by others within the family of schools including teachers, administrators, parents, guardians, students, support staff and/or community. By virtue of the process there is distinction in merely being nominated for this important award.

The nominations made particular reference to how the recipients model the 10 Bluewater Character Attributes. Character Development is a shared responsibility of individuals, schools, homes and communities. Our award recipients take this responsibility to heart!

The winners of the 2008 awards were as follows:

- Bruce Peninsula District School Family/ Peninsula Shores District School Family of Schools - Ruth Hellyer
- Chesley District High School Family of Schools - Suzanne Koesler
- Georgian Bay Secondary School Family of Schools - Debbie Comish
- Grey Highlands Secondary School Family of Schools - Ron Pegg
- John Diefenbaker Secondary School Family of Schools - Amy Traverse
- Kincardine District Secondary School Family of Schools - Sandy Hill
- O.S.C.V.I. Family of Schools - Heather Pettigrew
- Saugeen District Secondary School Family of Schools - Gary Dale
- Walkerton District Secondary School Family of Schools - Bobbi-Jo Moran
- West Hill Secondary School Family of Schools - Emma Shaw
- Bluewater District School Board - Colleen Purdon



Pat Cavan and Dr. Helen Bochar



Lakehead team with Hepworth principal Paul Robinson

BLUEWATER CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT



Caring



Commitment



Dependability



Trust

Character Development is a shared responsibility of individuals, schools, homes and communities.

"The future depends on what we do in the present."



Honesty



Teamwork



Integrity



Self-Discipline



Responsibility



Respect

Character for a Lifetime



Bluewater District School Board
Bruce and Grey Counties, Ontario, Canada
www.bwdsb.on.ca