

**INAUGURAL MEETING OF THE BOARD**  
**December 5, 2006**

**OLIVER CARROLL**  
**CHAIR OF THE BOARD**  
**2006-2007**

**SPEAKING NOTES**

- First let me say that I believe **we are all here** for our students and for our communities.
- We're here to do the very best we can do to improve the educational prospects of every child who enters our system.
- We're here to provide the best support and facilities we can to those in our system.
- We here to sell the merits of our system to the broader society we live in.
- We're here to ensure that the Board's priorities are addressed.
- In the next two weeks we will need to determine our budget for the current year. Consultations begin tomorrow night and will also be held Saturday and next Monday.
- Over the next six months this Board will be faced with decisions which will determine our finances and our facilities for the foreseeable future.
- At the same time we will be selecting legal counsel who will support us through what promise to be interesting times
- We will be undertaking a review of our finances like it has never been done before. This will build on the work of the team that has just reported on our budget.
- We will look at our role as advocates for ourselves and for Catholic education

- When we took office the Catholic municipal (voter) support level was close to 400,000 down from 600,000 - 9 years ago. It could easily have fallen to 350,000 over our term if we had done nothing – Instead today we are on track to exceed 500,000 (half a million) during this term.
- No other Board has approached these levels of improvement. We will also work with Government to address some of the issues that are part of this problem.
- Our schools are good, our staff is good. Our function is to ensure that these are supported.
- Our students are some of the best in the Province. We must provide them with every opportunity.
- We have some of the most disadvantaged students in the Province. We must provide them with every support.
- To do all of this requires a strategic sense of our potential, the contacts and relationships to make it happen and the confidence to believe that we are better off turning our attention to the society we live in rather than just the system we are part of.
- We need to be able to engage all our stakeholders in meaningful discussions about our future.
- We need to ensure that the Minister of Education, the Treasurer, the Premier and other members of the Government hear our voice.
- We need to build on the work of the last three years in improving our relationships with the Archdiocese, the media, other levels of Government, the private sector and other School Boards.
- An external orientation is critical to our success and our security. It is the broader society that supports us. We need to build stronger relationships with it.
- 70% of those eligible to vote do not have school age children – they can't be forgotten for 4 years
- Our society must see the value of a Catholic system or when they are asked to decide on its merits they may know nothing of it and vote accordingly

- In the coming Provincial election support for faith based and private schools will again move onto the political agenda
- There are already discussions occurring between other faiths and the rest of the publicly funded education system that suggest some sort of umbrella relationship be developed – what will this mean for us?
- What should we be doing to ensure all those of the Catholic faith feel welcome in our schools or as part of our Board?
- The OSSTF proposes a confederated education system. One Board with different groups represented by Trustees elected according to their student numbers. Is this what will come of these discussions? Would it mean the beginning of the end of our separate system?
- The coming year may well determine what this Board and other Catholic Boards will look like for years to come. We must move quickly to ensure our concerns are addressed.
- This Board and our senior staff will meet, early in the New Year, to discuss the issues we face, the goals we need to set and the means to do so.
- Our faith supports and leads us. Our students have unlimited potential. I believe this Board has the confidence to address these issues.

Thank you