



**Nomination of Howard Goodman
for the
Dr. Harry Paikin Award of Merit**

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April 2015

Nomination of Howard Goodman for the Dr. Harry Paikin Award of Merit

Information Summary

Howard Goodman dedicated more than a decade to public service ensuring that Trustees have a strong voice in how our public schools serve the needs of the children and citizens of each local community. He represented Ward 8, Eglinton-Lawrence, on the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) from 2003 through 2014. During his 10 years as TDSB's representative on the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) Executive Committee, though he advocated for TDSB's needs, he was never parochial and he strongly supported the needs of all public boards throughout Ontario.

Howard's presence was felt at both Executive and Board of Directors meetings, as he posed thought-provoking questions, suggested new ways of dealing with challenges facing OPSBA's member Boards, and provided clear distillations of complex issues. His business background equipped him to understand financial statements, systems to ensure fiscal control, numbers, and marketing. His willingness to explain difficult material and to provide candid insights established his strong reputation with the press and helped focus much needed media attention on the education issues of the day. He served as a mentor and support for Trustees from all of OPSBA's regions, and as a trusted advisor to OPSBA staff.

In his three terms as a TDSB Trustee, Howard served his 60,000 constituents tirelessly, helping students, parents, staff and community members address problems that they faced while providing them with his unvarnished opinion regardless of the political cost. In return for his candor and assistance, he was honoured with clear majorities in all of his elections.

Howard was central to several critically important TDSB and OPSBA initiatives that had impact across the province, and will resonate for the coming years.

Trustee Accomplishments at the Board Level through TDSB

- Initiated and championed TDSB's "Return to Learn" Concussion Policy, attracting the support of leaders in the field. His work made us the leading board in this area in the province and helped shape provincial policy. His efforts attracted considerable media attention and resulted in much greater public awareness of this risk to the mental well-being and academic achievement of thousands of students each year ultimately helping understand how to help students with concussions recover faster and better
- Identified to staff (through the TDSB's Learning Technologies Strategic Planning Committee) that the Board was passing up as much as \$500K per year in Summer e-Learning fees due to arbitrary and nonsensical budgeting rules that forced the TDSB to turn away students, and that TDSB registration systems didn't allow us to accept students from other Boards (both of these have been corrected by staff and the Board now collects fees that help close the gap in the Operating Budget)
- Identified to staff the advantages of on-line French Immersion registration, and championed the introduction of these systems (on-line Con Ed credit registration is in the works, and on-line secondary optional attendance systems are next)
- Identified and championed with staff the introduction of First Nations, Métis and Inuit content to English and art credit courses, leading to an increase in revenue of approximately \$8M when implementation in all schools is complete (TCDSB was been getting about \$3M/year for the past several years)
- Identified the inequity of Reg444/98 in forcing TDSB to sell properties to other boards at well below market value and initiated a motion calling on staff to remove from surplus declaration of below-market sales. Resulted in the Ministry "clarifying" Reg444/98 so that coterminous boards must pay full market rates for any school that has been vacant for more than a year
- Championed, and convinced staff to ask a couple of hundred "life experience" questions in the Student Census (initial Board motion was to collect only 6 pieces of data – all on demographics). This has generated data that has caused millions of additional dollars of public and private money to flow through the Toronto Foundation for Student Success to students in high Learning Opportunity Index schools for food, hearing tests, eye tests, hearing aids, and glasses to students who need this
- Championed the strategy of severing parts of larger school sites in order to preserve a dense network of schools for future generations

Trustee Accomplishments at the Provincial Level through OPSBA

- Brought forward the issue of the effective use of, and dangers associated with, computer technology to promote student learning. This resulted in the seminal “What if...” document, which along with subsequent OPSBA efforts, have played a significant role in influencing Ministry thinking on how to alter established teaching methods to integrate new learning technologies
- Played a key role in the 2008 collective agreement negotiations by having OPSBA’s team resist intense pressure, including from the Minister, to agree to unacceptable terms that would have led to hundreds of millions of dollars in unfunded costs to Boards. Though this angered ETFO and other unions, in the end it strengthened OPSBA’s reputation within the Ministry as a reliable and important partner. It is likely that this action led the Province to ignore the trend throughout Canada by entrenching in law a strong School Board role in all future collective agreement negotiations. Throughout his time at OPSBA Howard remained active in PLRN and other labour relations discussions
- Brought to the public’s attention two “bad-for-student” provisions of Bill 115: extension of seniority hiring to Occasional Teachers and the restrictions on the ability of Boards to set standardized pupil assessments. This effort led to the removal of these provisions from Bill 115, but could not prevent the Ministry from including them by PPM and Regulation. He was the first person to raise Regulation 274 with the press and tirelessly rallied opposition from parents, teachers, and students. He worked through OPSBA to create a coalition of opposition (OCSTA, CODE, Deans of Education, etc.) and provided information and encouragement to Trustees across the province so that 29 of 31 OPSBA boards passed motions calling for the repeal of Reg274
- Joined with a handful of other OPSBA Directors to form a core group of Trustees who opposed terms of Bill 177 that would have imposed by legislation a strict Carver model of governance on boards, and successfully lobbied the Ministry to include (over Ministry staff objections) a School Board’s duty to ensure that staff actions resulted in the effective implementation of Board policies preserving a meaningful role for Trustees
- Conceived of the idea of having “Education Day” debates during elections, and promoted it at OPSBA until it was accepted. Last election, roughly 60 debates, led by Trustees, took place across the province on key education issues. These debates helped bolster the position of Trustees as the elected representatives defending the well-being of students and public schools and raised MPPs awareness of education issues.
- Serving as OPSBA’s representative on the Board of Curriculum Services Canada (CSC), and helping the organization transform itself from a validator of textbooks into an organization capable of delivering a broad range of educational services to Boards, the Ministry, and others

Selection of TDSB Committees he has chaired:

- Administration Finance and Accountability
- Human Resources and Professional Development
- Operations and Facilities Management
- Governance
- Learning Technologies Strategy Planning
- Audit Committee

Selection of TDSB Committees on which he has served:

- Trustee Co-Chair at the French as a Second Language Advisory Committee
- Caring and Safe Schools Committee
- Student Census Development Committee
- Negotiations Committee

Selection of Boards on which he has served:

- Toronto Foundation For Student Success
- Toronto Lands Corporation
- Curriculum Services Canada Board

Supporting Nominators:

- **Shelley Laskin** - Trustee Ward 11, Toronto District School Board (letter)
- **Gerri Gershon** - Trustee Ward 13, Toronto District School Board
- **Jerry Chadwick** - Trustee Ward 22, Toronto District School Board

- **Adam Goldenberg** - Co-Founder of Teach for Canada
- **Amy Coupal** - CEO of Curriculum Services Canada and My Class Needs Foundation
- **Catherine Fife** - MPP, Kitchener-Waterloo (letter)
- **David Crombie** - Private Citizen
- **Dr. Stuart Shanker** - Distinguished Research Professor of Philosophy, Psychology and Education and York University
- **Dr. John Polanyi** - Nobel Prize Winner and Companion of the Order of Canada; Professor, Department of Chemistry, University of Toronto
- **Dr. Charles Tater** - Professor of Neurosurgery, University of Toronto, Toronto Western Hospital, University Health Network, Krembil Neuroscience Centre; Senior Scientist – Toronto Western Research Institute (letter)
- **Elizabeth Moyer** - Former Trustee Ward 18, Toronto District School Board
- **Gen-Ling Chang** - Former Associate Director, Toronto District School Board (letter)
- **Joel Hertz** - JD, Retired Former Trustee and Vice-Chair-YRDSB (letter)
- **John P. Bell** - Shibley Righton, LLP (letter)
- **Kourosh Houshmand** - Former Student Trustee for the Toronto District School Board and Vice-President of the Ontario Student Trustees' Association (letter)
- **Mary Cruden** - President Canadian Parents for French Ontario (letter)
- **Mona Rozenblum** - Parent, Ward 8, TDSB (letter)



Shelley Laskin • Trustee Ward 11 • St. Paul's

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April 8, 2015

Awards Coordinator, Ontario Public School Boards' Association
439 University Avenue, 18th Floor
Toronto, Ontario M5G 1Y8
Fax: (416) 340-7571

Re: Nomination of Howard Goodman for the Dr. Harry Paikin Award of Merit

Dear Award Coordinator:

It gives me great pleasure to nominate Howard Goodman for the Ontario Public School Board's Dr Harry Paikin Award of Merit with so many others. I can think of no other candidate more deserving of recognition for his outstanding service as a public school trustee, for not only making a difference for students and their families in his community, but for the city and the province he represented.

His accomplishments and contributions to public policy are many as detailed in his nomination package – but most importantly, Howard embodied the public school trustee through his passion and belief in students' success and the role of school boards in supporting students in not only their academics, but also in their health and wellness.

According to the Education Act, "A trustee's role is to maintain a focus on student achievement and well-being and to participate in making decisions that benefit the entire board district while representing the interests of his or her constituents. Trustees must also communicate the views and decisions of the board back to their constituents." That was Howard.

His leadership both behind the scenes and at the board table is sorely missed. I am proud to have worked alongside Howard – and know I have learned much from his commitment to fair and equitable process, social justice, data-based and strategic decision-making and never, ever giving up your values and beliefs that all children, provided the right resources and supports can learn.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Shelley Laskin', with a long, sweeping flourish extending upwards and to the right.

Shelley Laskin
Trustee, Ward 11 St Paul's
shelley.laskin@tdsb.on.ca



Catherine Fife
MPP Kitchener-Waterloo

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Dr. Harry Paikin Award of Merit Committee
Ontario Public School Boards' Association
439 University Avenue, Suite 1850
Toronto, Ontario M5G 1Y8

April 8, 2015

To the Dr. Harry Paikin Award Committee,

As Member of Provincial Parliament for Kitchener-Waterloo and as a past-President of the Ontario Public School Boards Association I am writing to support Howard Goodman's nomination for the Dr. Harry Paikin Award of Merit.

For more than a decade Mr. Goodman served on the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) representing Ward 8, Eglinton-Lawrence. In this role he initiated the TDSB's "Return to Learn" Concussion Policy, bringing much-needed public attention to the needs of children and youth with concussions as they return to school. He also worked with staff to champion the application of a First Nations, Inuit and Métis lens to English and art credit courses.

Throughout his time as a trustee he served as the TDSB's representative to the OPSBA Executive Committee, where he made his presence felt through his willingness to tackle and explain difficult material, provide insight to the press, and act as a mentor to trustees from all OPSBA's boards. His efforts included work influencing the Ministry's thinking on how to establish teaching methods to integrate new learning technologies.

Mr. Goodman was a strong support for boards across all regions of Ontario and worked on a number of important initiatives with both the TDSB and OPSA. I wholeheartedly support his nomination for the Dr. Harry Paikin Award of Merit.

Sincerely,

Catherine Fife, MPP
Kitchener-Waterloo



April 9, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

RE: Mr. Howard Goodman

I have known Mr. Howard Goodman in his capacity as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Toronto District School Board. We interacted on many occasions over the past 4 years or so with respect to the involvement of Toronto District School Board schools in concussion education and management. Howard was a strong advocate for safety among the children and youth in the Toronto District School Board with respect to proper management of concussions. I found his support very helpful in furthering the cause of safety in the schools.

Indeed, in March, 2015, the Toronto District School Board ultimately adopted a new plan of management of concussions. It is certain that Howard Goodman played an important role in this new policy aimed at improving the safety of TDSB students.

In my view, he is a highly suitable candidate for the Ontario Public School Board's Harry Paikin Award of Merit for his years of public service to students and families in Toronto.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charles Tator".

Charles H. Tator, CM, MD, PhD, FRCSC
Professor of Neurosurgery, University of Toronto,
Toronto Western Hospital, University Health Network
Krembil Neuroscience Centre
Senior Scientist – Toronto Western Research Institute

Charles H. Tator, CM, MD, PhD, FRCSC, FACS
PROFESSOR OF NEUROSURGERY, DIVISION OF NEUROSURGERY,
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO AND TORONTO WESTERN HOSPITAL
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Letter in Support of Nomination of Trustee Howard Goodman for the Dr. Harry Paikin Award of Merit

I worked with and know Trustee Howard Goodman as Associate Director, as Executive Superintendent of Teaching and Learning K-12, and as Superintendent of Education responsible for a Family of Schools.

Trustee Howard Goodman balances representation and advocacy for the needs of the schools in his Ward with the needs of Toronto District School Board as a system of schools. While he has always been responsive to his constituents in his Ward, he maintains a system perspective in his decision-making and representation, guided by what is best for students in the system. This is best illustrated in the complex task of school consolidations as part of TDSB capital strategy. Another example is his vision and support for the way French as a Second Language (FSL) programs are delivered across the board and province.

Undoubtedly Trustee Howard Goodman has spear-headed system changes and initiatives locally and provincially, as described in the nomination form. But, how he interacts and relates to others on a daily basis is an equally significant hallmark of an effective trustee. Trustee Howard Goodman, not only has positive relationships with parents, educators, support staff, Principals, Vice-Principals and Senior Leaders, but he contributes to enabling and building relationships among all as fundamental to collaboration and problem-solving of concerns and issues, and as a key quality of the culture of effective schools. As such when he needs to express a different perspective or opinion or communicate complex decisions that are contrary to that of community members, parents and/or staff, he does so with integrity and honesty. This in turn contributes to growing a wide network of public confidence in our schools and staff.

His deep understanding of the role and responsibilities of a trustee and that of staff is evident. As a Superintendent of Education working with him, I have always experienced thoughtfulness, his capacity to assess situations from multiple perspectives, and support for the actions for which I am responsible. It has been a joy to discuss and debate education matters, trends and curriculum with Trustee Howard Goodman, who is well-read and has a brilliant mind. It is not uncommon that when I walk away from a conversation with him, I have either learned something new, saw things from a different perspective or changed the questions that I should be asking or should consider. Trustee Howard Goodman has certainly been a positive influencer especially in decision-making that impacts students, in particular those that face challenging circumstances.

Trustee Howard Goodman champions equity of opportunities and outcomes for all students. For example, he has dedicated immeasurable effort on re-inventing Sir Sanford Fleming, which has been stigmatized over the years as a school, by engaging in transformative work with staff, Professor John Polanyi and Rotman School of Management. As a result Sir Sanford Fleming is re-branded as John Polanyi and currently its enrollment has doubled because of the introduction of high quality programs. Two additional examples are, in collaboration with staff, Trustee Howard Goodman initiated a Year-round Alternative School at Bathurst Heights and tirelessly advocated support for Yorkdale Adult School

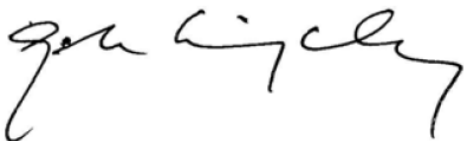
as pathways to providing second and third opportunities to students 18 years and older as well as adult learners, in particular new Canadians who need to re-train themselves to secure employment in Toronto.

As a mathematician, Trustee Howard Goodman is also known in his Ward as a leader who thinks outside the box and questions “received knowledge” as means to improve mathematics learning for students. He delights in exploring with staff disruptive innovation such as introducing coding or chess to Grades 1 and 2 students to engage curious young minds in algorithm thinking. Knowing the increasing importance of 21st century learning, as a trustee member on the 1:1 Technology Committee, he has certainly contributed to my thinking and decisions as Executive Superintendent K-12 Teaching and Learning with respect to how learning happens where technology is part of the eco-system of students’ lived experiences.

Although Trustee Goodman is no doubt a strong advocate for high quality, relevant and current programs, he is first and foremost a trustee who has a passion to learn, who is inspired to collaborate with others and, who is always an advocate for changing the trajectory of success for all students, especially those who face challenging circumstances.

It is without reservations that I recommend Trustee Howard Goodman to be the recipient of the esteemed award – Dr. Harry Paikin Award of Merit.

Respectfully submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gen-Ling Chang". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Gen" and last name "Chang" clearly distinguishable.

Gen-Ling Chang
Former Associate Director, Toronto district School Board
Email: genling.chang@icloud.com
Mobile: 416-400-8276

April 7, 2015

Joel Hertz, JD-Retired
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Thornhill, Ontario
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joel.hertze034@rogers.com

April 7th, 2015

OPSBA Awards Selection Committee

RE: Outstanding Trustee of the Year

It gives me great pleasure to nominate Howard Goodman, late of TDSB, for Outstanding Trustee in Ontario.

Howard has worked tirelessly for Public Education in Ontario for more than 11 years, both at the level of his Board and at OPSBA.

He has always had the interests of Students uppermost in his mind and fought hard for them, both in Toronto and throughout the Province.

Howard did not shy away from educational topic, no matter how controversial. He was an advocate in the true sense and did not expect any reward for doing what was right.

Howard served on many Committees at TDSB, as well as being the Toronto representative at OPSBA for many years, as VP Enrolment.

Howard was willing to challenge authority, be it the Minister of Education, the Premier, or the Director of TDSB. Howard paid the ultimate price for this, by being charged with what I consider to be, in my professional opinion, outrageous charges.

In my opinion, no Trustee in Ontario had the depth of knowledge that Howard had, as well as the ability to express his views. Further, he managed to do this with a magnificent sense of humour.

As I say, no one is more deserving of this Award and I hardily recommend the Committee to consider his name very seriously for this most prestigious Award.

Yours very truly,

Joel Hertz, JD. Retired
Former Trustee and Vice-Chair-YRDSB



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Please reply to the TORONTO OFFICE

April 10, 2015

BY EMAIL

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: Howard Goodman

I write this letter in support of the nomination of Howard Goodman for the Dr. Harry Paiken Award of Merit.

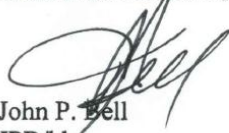
I have known Howard for over ten years. As legal counsel to the Toronto District School Board, I have seen firsthand the tireless efforts he has made as a trustee. I have not encountered a trustee who worked harder, with more dedication and empathy than Howard.

I have read the material submitted in support of nomination. I fully endorse and adopt its contents.

Howard gets what being a trustee is all about; striving to achieve the education that is in the best interests of the students of Toronto and in fact all students in Ontario. I cannot think of a more worthy recipient of this most prestigious Award.

Yours truly

SHIBLEY RIGHTON LLP


John P. Bell
JPB/kb

April 8, 2015

*Howard Goodman Nomination
Dr. Harry Paikin Award of Merit*

To whom it may concern,

I whole-heartedly nominate Howard Goodman for the *Dr. Harry Paikin Award of Merit*. As a former Student Trustee for the Toronto District School Board, I've had the utmost privilege to work with and learn from Howard Goodman.

The first day that I entered the TDSB board room, Trustee Goodman was one of the first people I met. Overwhelmed by the scale and size of the job I had been tasked to fulfill, Trustee Goodman approached me with an incredibly welcoming talk. Only two hours into our initial conversation (an average time-frame with Howard), we were talking about everything from aviation to Shakespeare to quantum physics. This for me, represents Trustee Howard Goodman in a nutshell. He takes the time to talk to and learn from anyone; we had never met, I was 17 at the time and he was the person that took my thoughts and values more seriously than almost anyone else at the board.

My experience with Trustee Goodman is only a small sample of his contributions to public education at large, but most importantly, towards students. I can unequivocally say that if there was anyone at the TDSB that listened to and worked for the betterment of education through a *relevant* understanding of students, it was Howard. Be it his efforts during the Bill 115 disputes or even his incredible support of the financial literacy initiatives undertaken by myself and my Student Trustee colleague on behalf of the Supercouncil (Student Senate). Not only a brilliant mind in education, Howard also understood as good as anyone, the issues that affect and benefit students the most.

In his role as a TDSB Trustee, Howard was an invaluable asset to public education. He continues to be an agent for bettering Ontario's education system through his infectious work and sheer passion for students. Simply put, Howard Goodman was a Trustee for all the right reasons and has made the lives of Ontario students that much better-- his efforts are not only deserving of this recognition but also deserving of students' deep appreciation. I am elated to be nominating a true mentor and someone I admire in public education, Howard Goodman.

Sincerely,



Kourosh Houshmand
*Former, Student Trustee for the Toronto District School Board
Vice-President of the Ontario Student Trustees' Association*

Mary Cruden
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Toronto, ON M6S 2W9
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April 8, 2015

Re: Nomination of Howard Goodman for Dr. Harry Paikin Merit Award

Attn: OPSBA Awards Committee

Howard Goodman was an outstanding trustee at the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) where he demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to meaningful parent engagement at the system level.

I was an active parent volunteer at the TDSB from 2001-2008, served as the parent co-chair of the French as a Second Language Advisory Committee (FSLAC) from 2007-2008. The FSLAC is a parent driven advisory committee to the Board that was created by the Board in 2005. I continue to be involved in that committee as a non-voting community member and as a liaison with Canadian Parents for French, the national organization that promotes and supports opportunities for young people to learn French.

Trustee Goodman's interest in French as a Second Language programs developed from a series of challenges in his ward as demand increased for French immersion. He does not have a passion for French but he is passionate about good process and inclusive decision making. He saw the FSLAC as way to bring together parents, staff and trustees in meetings where the issues could be examined on a system level, where points of view could be shared and where mutually acceptable policy and procedure solutions could be developed. He coached FSLAC parent members on being less angry at the system and more constructive in approaching it. He encouraged parents to ask decision makers better questions to provoke deeper thinking on any given issue and to trust the system enough to present divergent views on issues. He worked tirelessly behind the scenes to make staff more open to parent input.

Trustee Goodman's commitment to the use of plain language and honest consultation processes were evident at many meetings with the parents of the FSLAC between 2005 and 2015 and greatly informed a very important TDSB policy, P078 on Community Engagement (<http://www2.tdsb.on.ca/ppf/uploads/files/live/97/1789.pdf>). This policy clarifies one of the biggest issues parents face in engagement at schools, in their wards and at the Board which is: are we at this meeting to be told what's going to happen or are we at this meeting to roll up our sleeves and work together with staff and trustees? One of the major achievements in Trustee Goodman's investment in parent engagement in decision making at the system level was the first ever co-construction of a TDSB policy by parents, staff and trustees - Policy 080 on French Second Language Programs (<http://www2.tdsb.on.ca/ppf/uploads/files/live/91/1798.pdf>). That policy sailed through the consultation and approval process because it was built on the foundation of meaningful parent engagement that Trustee Goodman fostered at the FSLAC.

I am honoured to support the nomination of Howard Goodman for the Dr. Harry Paikin Award of Merit.

Sincerely,



Mary Cruden

April 7, 2015

To the members of the Harry Paikin Award of Merit nomination committee:

My name is Mona Rozenblum and I am writing today in support of awarding Howard Goodman the Harry Paikin Award of Merit. I am sure you have many such letters to read as you make your choice and I have no title that tells you how to weigh my words or put my opinion into the proper context. As a result, I hope you will allow me to tell you a little about my experience with schools, trustees and school boards so that you will understand that I am basing my recommendation on 20 years of constant interaction with a multitude of Trustees at a number of levels. I have known the good, the bad and the ugly. I know what I say when I tell you Howard is one of very best that ever was and that ever will be.

I have been an active TDSB and Ward 8 parent for the past 20 years. During that time I have been a member of the TDSB Parent Involvement Advisory Committee, TDSB Safe and Caring Schools Committee, my ward council, many parent councils and a number of city-wide, parent groups including Let's Make Waves and the Parent Coalition for Safe Schools. I have attended countless board meetings, committee meetings, community meetings, ward meetings, conferences, consultations and, I must confess, protests and rallies.

I first met Howard when we both served on Kathleen Wynne's Ward council in the early 2000's. I know that his commitment to education and to the children of Toronto began years before he ever put himself forward as a Trustee candidate. He has always been active in his children's school, in Ward 8 and in the larger parent-education community. I tell you this not to show that his heart is in the right place, although it most definitely is, but to explain that he was already immersed in the issues and challenges facing students and schools, before he was elected to TDSB. He did not run to improve his own life or standing. He ran to make a difference in the lives of our students and I believe it is time to recognize his efforts.

When he became a Trustee, Howard brought to the job his work experience in business, personnel management and technology as well as his personal experience as a parent, a council chair and a parent advocate. He wore all these hats stacked up one on top of the other and managed to bring it all to bear in each challenge he faced and with each person he helped. He worked tirelessly, week after week, year after year. Often devoting 60 or more hours each week and on weekends to his Trustee duties.

I will let others speak to his actions in the boardroom and on the larger provincial stage. I want to tell you about the work he did for the parents and students he served. You will notice that I did not say "for the parents and students of his Ward"; because Howard recognized that he was not just a Trustee for his Ward. He was a Trustee for the whole city of Toronto and parents came to him from all four quadrants for help and advice.

Howard spent hours on the phone with individual parents whose children were in crisis or who had recently immigrated or who were championing a cause or who were struggling with a teacher or a principal and who needed advice and support.

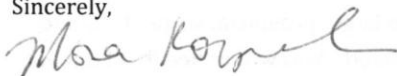
He held regular Ward meetings to keep parents up to date on the business of the Board, on new initiatives, on subjects of particular interest and to seek parental input to inform his decisions at the Boardroom table. He also wrote lengthy and informative newsletters including everything from a schedule of upcoming events, good news stories and even the latest research on learning or brain development. He encouraged parents to reach out by any means to share their ideas and concerns.

In addition to the Ward meetings which were open to the public, he created what he called the Council/Counsel of Chairs which was a small group made up of the council chairs from each of the Ward 8 schools as well as the Ward representatives from the Parent Involvement Advisory Committee and the French as a Second Language Advisory Committee. This group met informally several times each year to share concerns and build ties between schools. It allowed the more experienced chairs to mentor newcomers, it fostered a greater understanding between schools and resulted in many joint projects and initiatives, it built community ties and created a network of contacts amongst the schools' executive councils that were encouraged to communicate and to work independently of the Trustee. It gave parents the information, the resources and the skills to advocate for their own communities and for the Ward as a whole.

In all these venues, Howard always shared his best insights and understandings on the issues even when he knew what he had to say would not be popular, even when it would have been easy to stay silent or to make promises he knew he would not be able to keep. I was forever astonished at his willingness to help those on the other side of an issue in order to make sure they were able to put forward the best argument against him. I was always impressed that threats and insults did not move him, while he was always open to the possibility that a solid argument or a new fact would change his stance.

I have heard Howard say a thousand times that a Trustee is the only person who is mandated to look out for the best interests of students. It is a duty he has carried out effectively and with admirable skill, great kindness, complete accountability and amazing success. He and his family have made great personal sacrifices for Ontario's education system and its students. This award would be a wonderful way to thank him for his years of service.

Sincerely,



Mona Rozenblum