

Home is not a place; it's a feeling.

September 2017

Dear Peel District School Board Families:

Growing up in Mississauga in the 1970s, not once did I think I would ever have the opportunity to lead the school board I was so fortunate to be a part of as a student. Fast forward a few years (okay, maybe more than a few years) and I'm thrilled to return home to an organization dedicated to making a real difference in the lives of children and their families—the Peel District School Board.

I started my role as Peel's director of education on July 17, 2017, and already I've been inspired by the many initiatives and supports in place to positively impact student achievement and well-being. None of what I've experienced so far is surprising. For years, I've watched the Peel board from the sidelines. I've long admired this board's courage, innovation and focus on students. This is an outstanding school system—a place where children learn and grow, supported by exceptional educators, support staff, and each of you.

We have so many reasons to celebrate the Peel smile, a smile that is rich in diversity and worthy of being celebrated. We remain committed to our board goal of achieving inclusion for all through continued progress on equity. This requires us to examine how we have done things in the past and to work to design a path that includes all voices in the creation of system-wide initiatives. We will do this together.

During the upcoming school year, we will consult, listen and take your input and suggestions to heart. Quite simply, because your voices matter.

Our Plan for Student Success continues to be Peel's strategic plan, focusing our collective efforts to further student success. Aligned with the Ministry of Education's goals, as well as our vision and values, the goals and projects in the plan interconnect to help us achieve our board mission to inspire success, confidence and hope in each student. To learn more, visit <http://pdsb.me/Plan4StudentSuccess>.

As a child, the most important lesson I learned from my parents was to stay true to who I am and to always care for others no matter the role I hold. I look forward to working alongside trustees, the senior leadership team, administrators, staff, parents, students and community members to nurture a safe and caring climate, to set high expectations for achievement and to build mutual respect. I am excited for this opportunity to lead with honesty, transparency and trust.

All of us need something to look forward to and dreams to chase. I am so very thankful my dreams brought me here...to Peel...home. Have a wonderful school year!

Peter Joshua, Director of Education