Board Meeting Reflection

I had never seen a board council meeting but seeing my first one in for a board in Toronto was a bit shocking. I know what our board room looks like and I was surprised how much more like a political meeting it was. I thought it would be more like what I am used in a school. I am not sure why because it is very political but I was surprised at everything about it. I also was surprised as to how much of the meeting was just giving people information and short presentations on the material. Updates and handouts to me are not why you bring people together. I think that is a waste of time. It was also done in a very old school manner. People were talking to the group while reading their notes and handouts were given out. Many people seemed to be disengaged or reading the handouts and I wonder how much of the oral information they were taking it. Also many of the presenters didn’t seem very polished in what they were talking about. I know that this is very much how political meetings are run but as an educator I also know that this is a lot of quick information to take in, in a very boring format.

For the part of the second half of the meeting there were rulings on multiple motions. Again I was surprised at the almost lack of interest taken by most of the council. It seemed like there were less voting than I thought would and many motions seemed to go by with some trustees barely even noticing. They keep saying people’s names for feedback and many times it seemed to bring them back into the conversation from what they were reading. The speaking areas from each chairs area seems poor, many of them were hard to hear, most read and stared straight from their notes and overall most seemed too political and not passionate enough about the issues in their ridings.

Overall I know that this reflection seems quite negative and is on the logistics of the meeting. Maybe it is a negative place or maybe I was just caught quite off guard by what I would see. I know that many important decisions were made in the room that night that affect many communities, schools, teachers and students but I was surprised in the low energy manner in which they seem to happen.