TEN TIPS FOR BEING A GOOD BOARD MEMBER

1. Develop a passion for your school and share it with others. Be a proactive advocate for your school. Master the art of the one minute sound byte which articulates what your organisation is all about.

2. Recognise the difference between oversight and meddling. Concentrate on real issues of importance not on reports about what committees have already done.

3. Value and honour the expertise of the principal and staff by supporting them in their roles. Good board members live and breathe collaboration.

4. Promote a culture that values diverse opinions and explores alternatives before making mission-critical decisions. Challenge assumptions, question conclusions and help to foster an atmosphere where disagreement is ok. But make sure you understand the difference between disagreement and being disagreeable.

5. Welcome change.

6. Take your work seriously but not yourself.

7. Do not confuse voluntarism for amateurism in the nonprofit sector.

8. Do not underestimate the complexity of governance in the nonprofit sector.

9. Encourage the board to work as a team of talented individuals through example.

10. Ensure you understand and can read a financial statement.

Adapted from: Board Matters Newsletter, Vol. 6 No. 3. January, 2007