

Board investigates Mayfield VP dressing in black face

By Bill Rea

What was apparently part of a Halloween celebration has turned into an embarrassment for a vice-principal at Mayfield Secondary School.

Published reports indicate the vice-principal applied black make-up to his face to dress up as Mr. T. The move created controversy in the school and for the Peel District School Board.

"I would like to apologize on behalf of the Peel District School Board and senior administration for the hurt caused by this incident," Director of Education Tony Pontes said in a statement issued by the board Tuesday. "Our board does not condone or tolerate actions of this type."

"Our school board has a long and unwavering commitment to equity and inclusion," he added. "However, this incident is a reminder to us that our good work around equity and inclusion is never done and that we must continue to educate ourselves, our staff and students around racism, discrimination and stereotyping."

"I think it's unfortunate," commented Trustee Stan Cameron. "I do wish the Vice-Principal had chosen another Halloween costume, other than the one he chose."

"It's a very engaging and creative arts school," he added, pointing out both students and staff really get into the spirit of occasions like Halloween.

As well, Pontes issued a letter yesterday (Wednesday) to the students, parents and staff of the school, again apologizing for any offence that might have been caused.

"The vice-principal deeply regrets his conduct and now has a clear understanding of the impact of his conduct," Pontes wrote. "This behaviour does not reflect the values of the Peel District School Board and appropriate measures have been taken as a result of the investigation, which is now concluded."