



RSEC 2010 MESSAGE FROM THE ESTA PRESIDENT

May 27, 2010

Dear Educators,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the latest installment of the Rural School Educational Conference (RSEC). The theme of RSEC 2010 is “Partnering for Student Success” and it is aptly titled.

The significance of “Partnering” is an important reminder that we all need to work TOGETHER. During three intensive days in September you will meet teachers, administrators, teacher-aides, secretaries, commissioners, consultant, and bus drivers that work in the vast territory of the Eastern Shores School Board. We will all have travelled far and many will have made personal sacrifices to take advantage of this rare opportunity when every one of our eighteen schools and six adult education centres are represented at this important event. Even though I have the opportunity to meet teachers once per year at our Annual General Meetings, geography prevents all of ESSB employees from uniting except in small groups. RSEC is, indeed, one of a kind and without a doubt important in solidifying our partnership.

The second part of the theme, “Student Success,” is a reminder of what we’re all about: the student. In his book Outliers by Malcolm Gladwell, the author examines the stories of success. Gladwell discusses the best, the brightest, the most famous and the most successful people and asks the question: what makes high-achievers different? He explains the secrets of software billionaires, what it takes to be a great soccer player, why Asians are good at math, and what made the Beatles the greatest rock band. His conclusion is that we pay too little attention to where these “outliers” are from: that is, their culture, their family, their generation, and the idiosyncratic experiences of their upbringing. In summary, Gladwell surmises that it’s not the seed, it’s the soil that’s important. Considering the vast territory and the many communities that make up our school board, it is worth remembering that WE are major contributors to the environment of our student’s success.

I would like to acknowledge the efforts of the Steering Committee for organizing this conference. Thank you to ESSB for providing the funding necessary to make this conference possible. We are grateful to all the presenters, especially those who have travelled so far to join us in Eastern Quebec. And thank you to all of you who are participating in this event.

I look forward to meeting with you during RSEC 2010 and wish you a rewarding conference!

Sincerely,

Ray Venables, ESTA President