



# ANNUAL REPORT

August 1, 2023 – July 31, 2024

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

*do JUSTICE, love KINDNESS,  
walk HUMBL Y*

**Wednesday, November 20, 2024 @ 7:30 pm | Zoom**



**ROCKWAY**  
Mennonite Collegiate

A SMALL SCHOOL FOR A **BIG WORLD**



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Agenda..... 2

Introduction to Rockway..... 3

November 22, 2023 DRAFT Annual Meeting Minutes ..... 4

Finance Committee’s Report..... 7

Financial Summary ..... 8

Investment Committee’s Report ..... 10

Board of Directors and Committees ..... 11

Nominations Committee’s Report..... 12

Board of Directors’ Report..... 13

Summary of Board Actions ..... 14

Principal’s Report ..... 15

Director of Admissions & Recruitment’s Report ..... 18

Director of Advancement’s Report..... 20

Student Council Members ..... 23

## **ROCKWAY MENNONITE COLLEGIATE – MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION**

Members of Rockway Mennonite Collegiate Inc. provide oversight of the decisions and direction of the school and elect the Board of Directors. All are welcome to attend the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and participate. All members are eligible to vote on issues that arise at the AGM.

There are two classes of members of Rockway Mennonite Collegiate Inc.: Church Members and Individual Members.

Mennonite Church Eastern Canada (MCEC), our supporting conference, is a permanent Church Member. Any MCEC, Mennonite Brethren, or Brethren in Christ congregation may apply to become a Member. Each Church Member must appoint a proxy to represent them at the AGM and to vote on their behalf.

All parents of current Mennonite students, all employees and all members of the Board of Directors are Individual Members of Rockway Mennonite Collegiate Inc. and eligible to vote at the AGM.

The following individuals are eligible to apply for membership:

- Any member of an MCEC, Mennonite Brethren, or Brethren in Christ congregation
- Any parent of a current non-Mennonite student
- Any alumnus or alumna
- Any person who has made a receiptable donation to the school in the previous 12 months

All membership applications must be submitted for approval by the Board of Directors prior to the AGM. All individual members must apply each year to renew their membership.



# AGENDA Wednesday, November 20, 2024

1. Welcome ..... Board Chair
2. Opening Prayer ..... Rene Baergen '93
3. Housekeeping
  - a) Sign-in Procedures ..... Board Chair
  - b) Voting Procedures..... Board Chair
  - c) Approval of Draft Agenda for Wednesday, November 20, 2024..... **Decision**
  - d) Approval of Draft AGM Minutes from Thursday, November 22, 2023 ..... **Decision**
4. Business Report
  - a) Finance Committee's Report ..... Tim Hedrick, *Treasurer*  
Steven Reesor Rempel, *Director of Finance & Human Resources*
    - i. Presentation of Audited Financial Statements Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-2024..... **Decision**
    - ii. Appointment of Auditors FY 2024-2025..... **Decision**
    - iii. Presentation of Final Budget FY 2024-2025 ..... Information
  - b) Ontario Nonprofit Corporations Act By-law Amendments .....*Board Chair* **Decision**
  - c) Board Member Nominations ..... *Board Chair* **Decision**
  - d) Recognition of Retiring Board Members ..... *Board Chair, Josh Hill, Principal*
5. Life at Rockway
  - a) Board of Directors' Report ..... *Board Chair*
  - b) Principal's Report ..... Josh Hill
  - c) Student Voice ..... Elek Katona, Stella Halim
  - d) Parent Voice ..... Sheri Wideman, *Director of Admissions & Recruitment*
  - f) Questions/Comments ..... *Board Chair*
6. Do Justice, Love Kindness, Walk Humbly ..... Administrative Team  
(Chris Ainsworth, Josh Hill, Stephanie Oliverio, Steven Reesor Rempel, Sheri Wideman)
7. Closing Prayer ..... *Board Chair*
8. Adjournment ..... *Board Chair*

## WELCOME!

Rockway Mennonite Collegiate was founded in 1945 with an inaugural class of thirty-five students. Today, it is home to over 280 students, grades 7-12, who are the heart of our Rockway community.

### **Mission**

As a Christian educational community within the Anabaptist Mennonite tradition, Rockway Mennonite Collegiate integrates sound academic learning with growth in character and faith, together with a passion for peacemaking and service to God and all creation.

### **Vision**

From a Christian Mennonite faith perspective, and in partnership with families and congregations, we are committed to walking with students to help form and transform their learning, character and faith. Our desire is that students learn, grow in faith and build character practice becoming **responsible, globally-minded, compassionate and reflective** learners. We refer to these as the four pillars:

#### ▪ **RESPONSIBLE**

*Faculty & Staff teach with purpose and passion; students learn to demonstrate academic self-discipline, focus and determination.*

#### ▪ **GLOBALLY-MINDED**

*Faculty & Staff open the world to students, modelling hospitality and love; students learn from the experiences and perspectives of others, alongside seeking opportunities for cross-cultural learning and friendships.*

#### ▪ **COMPASSIONATE**

*Faculty & Staff build safe, nurturing and stimulating classes for learning; students learn to work together and collaborate with others.*

#### ▪ **REFLECTIVE**

*Faculty & Staff model their Christian faith commitment and help students engage and reflect on questions and convictions that matter; students are encouraged to ask questions and seek to align life choices and their faith convictions.*

A SMALL SCHOOL  FOR A **BIG WORLD**

## 1. Welcome

Betty Pries, *Chair* of the Board of Directors, opened the meeting by welcoming all in this virtual meeting platform.

## 2. Opening Prayer

Rene Baergen led the meeting with an opening prayer, speaking about where we have come from, and where we are going as a Mennonite education institution. Thanking all stakeholders who are a part of Rockway.

## 3. Housekeeping

### a. Sign-in Procedures

The procedures were reviewed and it was pointed out that the AGM will be recorded, also about muting microphones, having the proper name included in the personal Zoom box and how to raise a hand to ask a question or make a comment.

### b. Voting Procedures, Zoom Polling

Reactions bar: allows a 'yes' or 'no' for answers. There will also be several polls included. A successful test of the Zoom polling was completed.

### c. Approval of Draft Agenda for November 22, 2023

Motion: To approve the draft agenda for November 22, 2023.

**Moved by Jen Hoffman-Bailey    Seconded by Diane Lichti    Motion: Carried**

### d. Approval of Draft AGM Minutes from Thursday, November 24, 2022

Motion: To approve the AGM Minutes from Thursday, November 24, 2022.

**Moved by Monica Loberto    Seconded by Stephanie Janzen    Motion: Carried**

## 4. Business Report

### a. Finance Committee Report

Tim Hedrick, *Treasurer*, and Steven Reesor Rempel, *Director of Finance and Human Resources*, led us through the Finance Committee Report. Tim explained that the audit was quite 'boring', giving testament to the fact that the Rockway statements are in good order. No accounting adjustments were made by the auditor (this is unusual!). Steven discussed how we were able to decrease our deficit by over \$300,000 through various means: increased enrollment, increase in market value of investments, rental income (evening and weekend), and lower than budgeted expenses. Steven also spoke of the funds we have at Rockway: Scholarship Fund, Tuition Assistance Fund – which we need to foster for sustainability in the future.

#### i. Presentation of Audited Financial Statements Fiscal Year (FY) 2022-2023

Motion: To accept the 2022-2023 Audited Financial Statements.

**Moved by Monica Loberto    Seconded by Jo Scott    Motion: Carried**

#### ii. Appointment of Auditors FY 2023-2024

Motion: To appoint BDO Canada LLP auditors for the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

**Moved by Lori Peebles    Seconded by Jen Hoffman-Bailey    Motion: Carried**

#### iii. Presentation of Final Budget FY 2023-2024

Steven Reesor Rempel presented the final budget for the rest of the school year. Highlights of our budget:

- Increase in enrollment for this year – increase in tuition revenue (based on 307 students) +\$560,000
- Continued number of international students increasing (26 students) + 5 more international students this year from last
- Three classes of Grade 8 (not common at Rockway!) + 8% increase in salaries and benefits
- Additional portables and ongoing facilities improvements (2 new portables added for classroom space)

## b. Board Members and Nominations

Betty Pries outlined the responsibilities and commitment of Board Members, including those renewing their work on the Board for a second term, as well as new Rockway Board Members.

- i. Motion: To approve Duane Heide to serve on the Board for a second three-year term.  
**Moved by Aaron Balzer    Seconded by Liz Klassen    Motion: Carried**
- ii. Motion: To approve Craig Bechtel to serve on the Board for a second three-year term.  
**Moved by Tim Hedrick    Seconded by Rene Baergen    Motion: Carried**
- iii. Motion: To approve Kathy Clemence to serve on the Board for a second three-year term.  
**Moved by Liz Klassen    Seconded by Stacey VanderMeer    Motion: Carried**
- iv. Motion: To approve Lori Peebles to serve on the Board for her first three-year term.  
**Moved by Liz Klassen    Seconded by Aaron Balzer    Motion: Carried**
- v. Motion: To approve Scott Albrecht to serve on the Board for his first three-year term.  
**Moved by Neveen Antoun    Seconded by Lisa Packull    Motion: Carried**

## c. Recognition of Retiring Board Members

Elizabeth Klassen has completed two three-term appointments. She was thanked for all she has done for the Board of Directors (this is her second time serving on the Board). Thank you, Liz, for all of your contributions!

## 5. Life at Rockway

### a. Board of Directors' Report

Betty Pries talked about our world having many conflicts, sorrow and pain. Rockway is a school that is committed to helping our students be kind and generous people in a world in desperate need of all of this. A thank you to our admin team, who bring strong and effective leadership to Rockway. Betty thanked our custodial team, teachers, tech team, families and students for all they do.

### b. Principal's Report

Elaine Ranney thanked everyone for being present. This is a time to reflect on the past year, those who have inspired us. Elaine shared her amazement for the enthusiasm of the students (their passion, talent and support) and community of Rockway. Even during stressful times, the admin team are the most impressive team she has every worked with. There is so much support and involvement from families, co-creating, engaging in dialogue, giving donations and so much more. Elaine summed up the year with this year's chapel theme: *Do Justice. Love Kindness. Walk Humbly*. This is seen at Rockway everyday.

### c. Celebrating our Students

Sara Wahl has been a teacher at Rockway for 20 years. She shared *The Great Cookie Chase* video with everyone at the Annual Meeting. One of the many school-wide videos that has been made over many years under Sara's guidance and the many students who participated and put in so many hours!

### e. Parent Voice

Sheri Wideman, *Director of Admissions and Recruitment*, shared the results of the parent survey from 2023. Some highlights:

- i. Excitement and relief with extracurriculars, music and the musical returning to daily life at Rockway
- ii Teachers and Academics – caring of teachers in and out of the classroom. They work hard and respond to the varying needs of all students.
- iii. Relationships and Community – parents showed appreciation of relationships with peers and with staff (including Chapel program and other activities).

– continued

- iv. Parents were asked, “Why do you send your child(ren) to Rockway?” Responses:
  - Academics, extracurriculars, small class sizes
  - Rockway’s school culture and sense of community
- v. Asked for constructive feedback:
  - Improved communication needed between faculty and parents
  - Cross-grade ‘get to know you’ for students is needed

Sheri ended by sharing various parent quotes that exemplified the benefits of Rockway to families and students.

#### f. **Questions/Comments**

Taylor asked the question, “I noticed that faith wasn’t mentioned in the parent survey. Was this included in the survey as to why families chose Rockway?” Sheri noted that this was on the survey as a rating system – a faith-based education was highly ranked on the survey.

### 6. **LEADing into the Future – Rockway’s Strategic Plan**

(Chris Ainsworth, Josh Hill, Elaine Ranney, Steven Reesor Rempel, Sheri Wideman)

Elaine Ranney, *Principal*, explained that the Strategic Plan “LEADing into the Future” and took us through the various aspects of the hard work that was done with the Strategic Plan:

- a. **Loving Rockway:** Chris Ainsworth, *Director of Advancement*, outlined the events outside of school and the many people who came out regularly to be a part of these important evenings and events. Sheri Wideman, *Director of Admissions & Recruitment*, talked about life inside of the Rockway school day: students who connect with each other as well as international connections with new and past students. Sheri outlined church choir tours, pastor visits, chapels, faith formation and experiencing connections with church congregations.
- b. **Experiencing Rockway:** Josh Hill, *Vice-Principal*, discussed the experiences of partnering with Indigenous peoples. Josh outlined various initiatives that occurred this year (including the *Landed Buggy* Art Exhibit). This year, Rockway will be hosting the Canadian Geographic map of Canada – showing each of the residential schools across Canada, treaties and Indigenous lands. All of this is an important part of what it means to experience Rockway. Elaine recounted the Mennonite Choir visit to Pennsylvania for the mass choir in April. It has been a long time since choir tours have taken place!
- c. **Advancing Rockway:** Steven Reesor Rempel, *Director of Finance & Human Resources*, talked about the facilities. Ron Cornies, *Facilities Manager*, and Steven created a list of over 50 items to accomplish over the summer (with three students hired). This included upgrading fire alarms, upgrades to the grade 7 and 8 science room and many other projects that were completed.
- d. **Discovering Rockway:** Elaine explained that the school library (Library Learning Commons) is the virtual learning hub of the school. There is an expansion of digital resources, reorganization to allow easier access and a new online catalogue. Also, outlined was the THINK, single-use plastic, project: the video was shared. Finally, the Rockway Robotics Program has expanded and is very popular.

### 7. **Closing Prayer**

Betty Pries led a closing prayer.

### 8. **Adjournment**

Motion: To adjourn the meeting

**Moved by Jo Scott    Seconded by Danya Poetker    Motion: Carried**

*Recorded and respectfully submitted by Duane Heide, Board Secretary, on behalf of the Board.*



## FINANCE COMMITTEE'S REPORT

The Finance Committee is entrusted to provide oversight and guidance to the finances of Rockway. We are blessed to work with committed and engaged administration, faculty and staff.

- Rockway finished the 2023-2024 fiscal year with an operating fund surplus of \$32,829 on revenue of \$6,531,534, expenses of (\$6,494,855) and net fund transfers of (\$3,850). The surplus result is slightly better than our budgeted surplus of \$13,333. The impact of lower international student enrollment was offset by strong investment returns, higher rental income and lower than budgeted expenses.
- The Board approved an operating budget for the 2024-2025 fiscal year with a deficit of (\$311,670). The budget includes total revenue of \$6,071,704, total expenses of (\$6,372,159) and net fund transfers of (\$11,215). The decrease in international student enrollment is having a significant impact on Rockway's budget. While there are sufficient funds from recent years to fund this deficit, continued deficits are not sustainable. A budgeted deficit is not taken lightly and planning is underway to return to a balanced budget.
- The Sustainability Fund ended the year with a balance of \$1,801,562. These funds continue to be held in reserve to support emerging opportunities, unanticipated challenges and future innovations of which we have yet to dream.
- The Scholarship Fund is used to support families financially to attend Rockway. We remain committed to providing tuition assistance where needed most, while also setting tuition rates that cover the actual cost of a Rockway education.

Rockway remains financially strong and resourced to continue its mission. While not immune to short-term challenges, there is palpable excitement for the possibilities that lie ahead. The school's financial health is made possible only by the organizational health maintained by our excellent administration, teachers, staff, volunteers and supporters. It is these amazing people that create the Rockway experience we all love and value.

The Finance Committee remains committed to careful stewardship of the school's financial resources as we plan for a vibrant and sustainable future.

*Respectfully submitted by Tim Hedrick, Board Treasurer, on behalf of the Finance Committee.*

# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

		2023-24 Budget	2023-24 Actuals	2024-25 Budget
<b>Operating Fund</b>				
<b>Revenue</b>				
1	Net Tuition	5,536,650	5,529,877	5,232,600
2	Fees, Sales, Investment Income	190,000	329,996	239,000
3	International Student Fees	471,000	386,092	243,400
4	Annual Fund	350,000	206,671	275,000
5	MCEC Grant	70,215	68,461	66,704
6	Other Revenue	25,000	10,437	15,000
7	<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>6,642,865</b>	<b>6,531,534</b>	<b>6,071,704</b>
<b>Expenses</b>				
8	Salaries and Benefits	4,813,500	4,770,092	4,839,500
9	Program	278,200	201,630	220,320
10	International Student Program	446,901	438,631	258,505
11	Administrative	493,500	464,074	462,000
12	Facility	427,500	427,487	412,500
13	Capital	206,481	192,941	179,334
14	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>6,666,082</b>	<b>6,494,855</b>	<b>6,372,159</b>
15	<b>Surplus/(Deficit)-before transfers</b>	<b>(23,217)</b>	<b>36,679</b>	<b>(300,455)</b>
<b>Fund Transfers</b>				
16	Transfer (to)/from Sustainability Fund	0	0	0
17	Transfer (to)/from Facilities Fund	71,550	66,150	53,785
18	Transfer (to)/from Scholarship Fund	(35,000)	(70,000)	(65,000)
19	<b>Total Fund Transfers</b>	<b>36,550</b>	<b>(3,850)</b>	<b>(11,215)</b>
20	<b>Surplus/(Deficit)-after transfers</b>	<b>13,333</b>	<b>32,829</b>	<b>(311,670)</b>
<b>Operating Fund Balance</b>				
21	Opening Balance	304,309	304,311	337,140
22	Surplus/(Deficit)	13,333	32,829	(311,670)
23	Restricted for future use	0	0	0
24	<b>Ending Operating Fund Balance</b>	<b>317,642</b>	<b>337,140</b>	<b>49,704</b>

# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

<b>Scholarship Fund</b>					
25	Opening Balance		706,357	706,357	635,760
26	Investment Earnings		19,500	70,193	38,000
27	Fundraising Revenue		75,000	53,370	50,000
28	Fundraising Revenue - Endowments		0	24,886	23,000
29	Scholarships/Tuition Assistance		(334,700)	(289,046)	(292,700)
30	Surplus/(deficit)		(240,200)	(140,597)	(181,700)
31	Interfund Transfers		35,000	70,000	65,000
32	Restricted for future use/endowed		(492,678)	(605,996)	(517,564)
33	<b>Scholarship Fund Balance</b>		<b>8,479</b>	<b>29,764</b>	<b>1,496</b>
<b>Sustainability Fund</b>					
34	Opening Balance		1,445,493	1,445,493	1,801,565
35	Investment Earnings		40,000	197,834	80,000
36	Fundraising Revenue		0	158,524	0
37	Expenses		0	(286)	0
38	Surplus/(deficit)		40,000	1,801,565	80,000
39	Interfund Transfers		0	0	0
40	<b>Sustainability Fund Balance</b>		<b>1,485,493</b>	<b>1,801,565</b>	<b>1,881,565</b>
<b>Facilities Fund</b>					
41	Opening Balance		502,491	502,491	429,207
42	Investment Earnings		5,000	18,145	8,000
43	Fundraising Revenue		0	15,450	0
44	Expenses		(45,000)	(40,729)	0
45	Surplus/(deficit)		(40,000)	(7,134)	8,000
46	Interfund Transfers		(71,550)	(66,150)	(53,785)
47	Restricted for future use/depreciation		(213,092)	(213,092)	(169,892)
48	<b>Facilities Fund Balance</b>		<b>177,849</b>	<b>216,115</b>	<b>213,530</b>
<b>Total - All Funds</b>					
49	Opening Balance		2,958,650	2,958,650	3,216,120
50	Surplus/(deficit)		(263,417)	257,470	(394,155)
51	Interfund Transfers		0	0	0
52	<b>Total Fund Balance</b>		<b>2,695,233</b>	<b>3,216,120</b>	<b>2,821,965</b>
<b>Total Fundraising</b>					
53	Annual Fund		350,000	206,671	275,000
54	Scholarship Fund		75,000	78,256	73,000
55	Sustainability Fund		0	158,524	0
56	Facilities Fund		0	15,450	0
57	<b>Total Fundraising</b>		<b>425,000</b>	<b>458,901</b>	<b>348,000</b>

# INVESTMENT COMMITTEE'S REPORT

The Investment Committee continues to focus on ensuring Rockway's financial assets are invested to the maximum benefit of the school within acceptable risk parameters. Investments directly under management by Rockway include approximately \$1,800,000 in the Sustainability Fund and \$600,000 in the Scholarship Fund, invested through the RaeLipskie Partnership. Operating bank accounts and short-term investments are held by Kindred Credit Union. (Abundance Canada owns and manages certain funds from which Rockway, as the sole beneficiary, receives an annual grant).

Investment income during the 2023-2024 fiscal year was more than \$400,000, a significant improvement relative to recent years thanks to favourable market conditions. The long-term mandate of the funds and the overall investment plan does not change in response to short-term fluctuations. The Board seeks to balance the reality of short-term volatility with long-term investment return goals.

The Investment Committee provides careful review and oversight of the investment process.

Some specific activities of the Investment Committee this year included:

- Quarterly meetings to review the status and fund performance of Rockway's investment portfolio relative to the performance of appropriate benchmarks.
- Annual review of specific Investment Plans to ensure prudent investment strategies with an appropriate risk profile and equity exposure.
- Periodic review of existing investments and emerging opportunities to ensure alignment with Rockway's priorities, including non-financial considerations such as Environmental, Social and Governance factors.

*Respectfully submitted by Tim Hedrick, Board Treasurer, on behalf of the Investment Committee.*

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## DIRECTORS

- o ALBRECHT, Scott (1 - '26)
- o BAERGEN, Rene '93 (1 - '25)
- o BECHTEL, Craig '08 (2 - '26)
- ^ BRADSHAW, Kevin (2 - '25)
- o CLEMENCE, Kathy '88 (2 - '26)
- \* HEDRICK, Tim (3 - '24)
- o HEIDE, Duane '89 (2 - '26)
- ^ LOBERTO, Monica (2 - '24)
- o PEEBLES, Lori '86 (1 - '26)
- o PRIES, Betty (3 - '24)
- # RANNEY, Elaine, *Principal (ending June '24)*
- # HILL, Josh, *Principal (beginning July '24)*

## ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

- AINSWORTH, Chris – *Director of Advancement*
- HILL, Josh – *Vice-Principal (ending June '24)*  
– *Principal (beginning July '24)*
- OLIVERIO, Stephanie – *Vice-Principal (beginning August '24)*
- RANNEY, Elaine – *Principal (ending June '24)*
- REESOR REMPEL, Steven – *Director of Finance & Human Resources*
- WIDEMAN, Sheri – *Director of Admissions & Recruitment*

## FACULTY REPRESENTATIVE

- BALZER, Aaron (ending April '24)
- SCOTT, Jo (beginning June '24)

# COMMITTEES

## BOARD COMMITTEES

### EXECUTIVE

- o PRIES, Betty, *Chair*
- ^ BRADSHAW, Kevin, *Vice-Chair*
- \* HEDRICK, Tim, *Treasurer*
- o HEIDE, Duane '89, *Secretary*
- # RANNEY, Elaine, *Principal*
- HILL, Josh, *Principal*

### FINANCE

- \* HEDRICK, Tim, *Chair*
- o CLEMENCE, Kathy '88
- ^ LOBERTO, Monica
- # RANNEY, Elaine, *Principal*
- HILL, Josh, *Principal*
- REESOR REMPEL, Steven, *Staff Rep.*
- ROBBINS, Candace, *Faculty Rep.*

### NOMINATING

- o BECHTEL, Craig '08
- o BAERGEN, Rene '93
- # RANNEY, Elaine, *Principal*
- HILL, Josh, *Principal*

## OTHER COMMITTEES

### COMPENSATION

- \* HEDRICK, Tim
- o HEIDE, Duane '89
- REESOR REMPEL, Steven, *Staff Rep.*
- # RANNEY, Elaine, *Principal*
- HILL, Josh, *Principal*

### FUNDRAISING ADVISORY

- o AINSWORTH, Chris, *Chair*
- + GINGRICH BERG, Kristen '00
- HINES, Kristen, *Staff Rep.*
- HOFFMAN-BAILEY, Jen, *Staff Rep.*
- + JEFFREY, Kathryn
- ^ LOBERTO, Monica
- + WEBER, Amanda
- + WINKEL, Danielle

### INVESTMENT

- \* HEDRICK, Tim, *Chair*
- + EBY, Ben '05 (2 - '22)
- ^ LOBERTO, Monica
- REESOR REMPEL, Steven, *Staff Rep.*

### KEY

- o Rockway Mennonite Collegiate Elected Mennonite Member
- ^ Rockway Mennonite Collegiate Elected Non-Mennonite Member
- \* Mennonite Church Eastern Canada Representative Member
- # Rockway Mennonite Collegiate Ex-Officio Non-Voting Member
- Completing another Board Member's Term
- + Advisor/Consultant

1 1<sup>st</sup> Term      2 2<sup>nd</sup> Term      3 3<sup>rd</sup> Term

# NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

## BACKGROUND:

Board members have given many years of service and will not be renewing their terms:

- **Tim Hedrick** is completing his third three-year term. During his time on the Board, Tim chaired the Finance and Investment committees and we profoundly thank him for his stewardship of Rockway's finances.
- **Monica Loberto** is completing her second three-year term and participated on the Finance committee. She has been a caring spirit on the Board and we thank her for being a wonderful Rockway Champion.
- **Betty Pries** is completing her third three-year term. Betty has chaired the Board since 2019. During her time as Board Chair, Betty was wise and thoughtful, consistently taking the time to listen to stakeholders. She has always worked hard on behalf of Rockway staff, faculty, students and families and we will miss her strong leadership on the Board.

*Thank you to these three Board members for their many years of service to the Rockway community!*

## NEW NOMINATIONS:

### Sharon Schwartzentruber '84

*(as there was an open seat on the board, Sharon began her term in April 2024).*

- Rockway alumna – Class of 1984
- Her mother also attended Rockway – Class of 1956
- Received her CGA (Certified General Accountant) designation in 1993
- Worked for almost 30 years as a staff accountant at HFK McRae and Wilson LLP in Kitchener
- Has been the Treasurer at 3 different churches
- Currently working part-time at MCEC as their Accountant
- Currently attends Waterloo Mennonite Brethren Church

### Tara Somerville

- Current Rockway parent with a son in grade 12
- Background in education – worked as a teacher before attending medical school
- Before moving to Kitchener, had a family medical practice in Southampton where she had the opportunity to work with many underserved groups, including patients with substance dependence, the elderly and First Nations
- Loves reading, hiking and other outdoor activities. During her spare time, you can find her in cold places, watching her kids play sports
- Appreciates the Rockway community and looks forward to getting more involved

### Bryant Whyte

- Current Rockway parent with a son in grade 8
- Passionate about helping churches, charities and businesses thrive
- Working at Kindred Credit Union since 2008, currently as a Senior Account Manager, specializing in business development and commercial lending, including nonprofits
- Proud co-owner of Seven Shores Community Café in Waterloo, with his wife, Sarah, and four other families
- Favourite activities include throwing a disc with his kids and singing in KW Glee's Pop Therapy
- Attends Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That **Sharon Schwartzentruber** be approved to continue to serve as a member of the Board of Directors for one three-year term, commencing November 20, 2024.
2. That **Tara Somerville** be approved to serve as a member of the Board of Directors for one three-year term, commencing November 20, 2024.
3. That **Bryant Whyte** be approved to serve as a member of the Board of Directors for one three-year term, commencing November 20, 2024.

We are grateful for the work of all our current Board members. Additionally, we welcome your help in finding new members. If you know of anyone who may be interested in joining the Board, or who may be a good person to consider, please have them email [nominations@rockway.ca](mailto:nominations@rockway.ca). Your support is greatly appreciated.

*Respectfully submitted by Craig Bechtel '08, Chair, on behalf of the Nominations Committee*

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS' REPORT

Dear Rockway Community!

It has been another excellent year at Rockway. In addition to classes, students have participated in plays, music, sports, clubs, field trips, chapels, art installations, silly games and many hallway conversations – activities that, together, make education at Rockway a meaningful experience. Rockway is a gift to our students and their families in so many different ways.

As a Board, we are so grateful for our Staff, Faculty and Administrative Team (including our new Vice-Principal) who ensure that Rockway's students and families are well served; for families and guardians who place their trust in our school; for donors whose gifts allow the school to thrive; for the larger Rockway community for cheering Rockway on; and for our students who make it all worthwhile. Thank you to each of you for your part in helping to nurture and support this special community. As a Board, it is a pleasure to oversee the school on your behalf, the constituency, in concert with the capable leadership of our current Principal, Josh Hill, and other members of the Admin Team.

In June 2024, Rockway bid farewell to our Principal, Elaine Ranney. As a Board, we are so grateful for Elaine's tenure at Rockway. During her tenure, Elaine set an amazing tone at the school; helped to steer Rockway out of COVID; implemented several steps in our Strategic Plan; hired and led a stellar Administrative Team, and planned a new school schedule, all amid regular Principal duties. Elaine brought a grounded, insightful, kind and gracious presence to her role as Rockway's leader. As a Board, we want to thank Elaine for her outstanding leadership as Rockway's Principal.

In Spring, 2024, the Rockway Board appointed Josh Hill, Rockway's former Vice-Principal, as Rockway's new Principal. Josh is a dynamic leader who is quick to laugh, cares deeply about students, loves to engage the people around him and, most importantly perhaps, is passionate about faith-based education at Rockway. Josh is committed to Rockway's mission and has a vision for the many ways Rockway can thrive for years to come. As a Board, we are excited to support Josh in his leadership of the school.

In the coming year, in addition to the regular activities associated with being a Governance Board, Rockway's Board of Directors will be reviewing the school's achievements associated with the most recent Strategic Plan and will be developing a new Strategic Plan to carry the school through the next five years. We look forward to sharing the new plan with you in November 2025.

With this report, I am personally bidding Rockway farewell (at least in a formal way) as I have now completed three terms on the Rockway Board. It has been a privilege to serve the Rockway community in this way. I want to wish the ongoing Board members and the incoming Board Chair, alumna Lori Peebles '86, all the best as they continue to nurture and lead this wonderful school.

With gratitude,



Betty Pries,  
*Board Chair*  
On behalf of the  
Rockway Board



## **SUMMARY OF BOARD ACTIONS** August 1, 2023 – July 31, 2024

The Board of Directors took the following actions and/or passed the following resolutions:

### **September 26, 2023**

- i. To propose an open invitation approach to Board nomination calls.
- ii. To approve the 2023-2024 Final Budget.

### **October 24, 2023**

- i. To approve the 2022-2023 Audited Financial Statements and recommend them to the membership for approval at the AGM.
- ii. To recommend to the membership the approval of Tim Sothern and BDO Canada LLP as auditor for Rockway Mennonite Collegiate Inc. for the fiscal year ending July 31, 2024.
- iii. To approve all parents of Mennonite students, all employees, and all board members as individual members.
- iv. To approve any church members who have applied for membership prior to the AGM (if applicable).

### **December 12, 2023**

- i. To approve the tuition rates and discounts for the 2024-2025 school year.

### **January 30, 2024**

No actions or motions

### **March 26, 2024**

- i To approve the budget for tuition assistance and named scholarships for the 2024-2025 school year.

### **April 30, 2024**

- i. To approve Sharon Schwartzenruber joining the Board of Directors for her first three-year term commencing immediately; recognizing this approval will be confirmed at the AGM in November 2024.

### **June 11, 2024**

- i. To approve the 2024-2025 Preliminary Budget.

*Respectfully submitted by Duane Heide '89, Board Secretary, on behalf of the Rockway Board of Directors.*



I am excited to be writing this report as the new Principal of Rockway. While I was in the role of Vice-Principal during the 2023-2024 school year, I had a front row seat to the many incredible things that took place. It was a year full of highlights! In fact, there are far too many to share in this report, but I hope the list below gives you a sense of the incredible variety and breadth of amazing things that happened at Rockway last year:

- Participated in the KW Oktoberfest parade with our THINK float, encouraging people to consider their use of single-use plastics.
- Ran one of the most successful food drives in Rockway's history to support the work of *House of Friendship*.
- Hosted the Sr. Boys' OFSAA Volleyball Tournament and welcomed the province's best volleyball teams to our school.
- Host site for Canadian Geographic's giant floor map of the Indigenous People's Atlas of Canada.
- Launched a Curling team that went on to win District 8 and advance to CWOSSA.
- For the first time since COVID, produced a Grade 7&8 Play (*Camelot and Camelittle*), and a Grade 9-12 Play (three short plays based on *Sherlock Holmes*).
- Senior Choir attended and participated in the Canadian Association of Mennonite Schools (CAMS) Choral Festival in Winnipeg.
- Ran a "clean up the Grand River" event where students canoed the Grand River and picked up garbage along the shore.
- Students, faculty and admin attended a Climate Action Conference to better understand how we can create a long-term climate action strategy for the school.

This list of events, of course, does not include all of the regular Athletics activities, Music concerts, Art Exhibitions, Chapel speakers, grade retreats, field trips, or Trips Week excursions. Rockway is a busy place full of opportunities for students to discover who they are alongside their peers, while being supported by caring faculty and staff.

As I dig deeper into the 2023-2024 school year in this report, I want to use the expression "*setting the stage*" as an overarching thread to communicate about the excellent work that took place this past year. It is also important to acknowledge that this work, although done in collaboration with faculty, staff and administration, was led and implemented by then Principal, Elaine Ranney. It feels appropriate that we acknowledge the many ways in which Elaine's transition time here was instrumental in *setting the stage* for the future of Rockway. We are grateful for not only her commitment to Rockway, but her strong leadership that helped our school community get to this place.

### **Setting the Stage: New Principal and New Vice-Principal**

As we know, 2023-2024 was the final year for now retired Principal, Elaine Ranney. It was a privilege for the current administration to work alongside Elaine during her time at Rockway. Elaine's final year was particularly important as we worked closely together on my transition to the role of Principal throughout the spring. It is a rare and unique opportunity to get the chance to be mentored by someone with such vast experience in educational leadership. This was an important time of learning, visioning and *setting the stage* for where Rockway is headed.

Elaine took a considerable amount of time, thoughtfully working behind the scenes, to make my transition into the role of Principal as successful as possible.



– continued

# PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

She intentionally took the time to break down leadership decisions, answer questions and debrief actions. Elaine would often remark to me that some of her most important work was investing in my development as a leader. I am deeply grateful for the commitment she made to support my transition into the Principal role.

This past school year was also about recruiting a candidate to replace me for the role of Vice-Principal. That process was co-led by Elaine and myself and is another example of the important work of *setting the stage* for future years at Rockway. As we headed into interviews for this position, we knew that having a strong and consistent leadership team in place for 2024-2025 was crucial to the success of Rockway now and in the years to come. Considerable time and energy was invested in finding the right candidate for the job and we were not disappointed! We have been thrilled to have Stephanie Oliverio join our team in this role and are already seeing the many strengths she brings to Rockway. Suffice it to say, the stage has been set for many years of consistent and dynamic leadership from your Principal and Vice-Principal.

## Setting the Stage: New Timetable

Last year was also a significant year as we were *setting the stage* to implement Rockway's new timetable in September 2024. This type of change takes years and is reflective of an incredibly collaborative effort between faculty, staff and administration. The work in 2023-2024 was about solidifying the structure, working through questions of feasibility, soliciting feedback from stakeholders and developing an implementation plan. In the end, that work *set the stage* for students and families to have greater choice over the number of courses they wished to take, as well as better work-life integration for faculty. Although we expect there to be some bumps along the way, we are currently experiencing many positive benefits directly related to the work done last year on the new timetable.

## Setting the Stage: Finishing out the Strategic Plan

The current Strategic Plan, *LEADing into the future*, will come to an end in 2025. During the 2023-2024 school year, the Board approved a much more focused revision of *LEADing into the future*, allowing us to zero in on the remaining key objectives. I want to highlight three Strategic Objectives that we worked on last year which illustrate how we are *setting the stage* for moving us forward this school year and beyond:

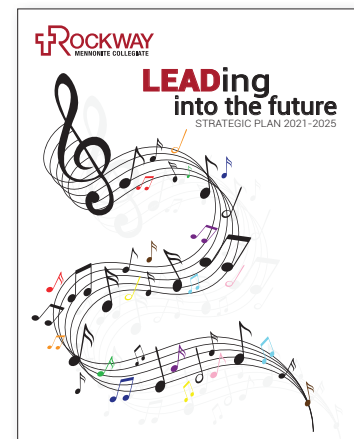
### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

#### i. Discovering Rockway – Environmental Stewardship

- Steven Reesor Rempel, *Director of Finance and Human Resources*, took the lead on working with CED CO-OP to imagine a massive solar installation on Rockway's roof. This project directly addresses one of our strategic objectives and was vital in *setting the stage* for the work that was started this fall.

#### ii. Experiencing Rockway – Maintain Strong School Identity and Culture

- In order to continue to live into Rockway's Mennonite culture and identity, Sheri Wideman, *Director of Admissions*, and I planned a listening tour of every Mennonite Church Eastern Canada (MCEC) church in Waterloo Region. These conversations were centered around building a strong partnership between Rockway and the local MCEC churches. Now, into this year, these conversations are *setting the stage* for on-going collaboration with our local church partners that will continue to ground Rockway in our Anabaptist roots.



- As Vice-Principal last year, I spent considerable time co-creating a unique program with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) called **Youth Leading Change: Community Peacebuilding Certificate Program**. The registration launch for this program resulted in over 30 students in grades 11 and 12 signing up to learn more about how to lead change in their communities by putting the focus on peacebuilding. The collaborative work done with MCC last year in designing the program set *the stage* for the launch of an innovative program this year that is helping us to maintain our strong school identity and culture.



### iii. Advancing Rockway – Develop & Maintain Master Plans for Facilities

- Building on the accessibility audit that was done in 2023-2024, we took some tangible steps forward for implementation. Specifically, we engaged Walter Fedy to help us reimagine some key facility areas identified as particularly problematic. This work is *setting the stage* for further consultation and planning towards some significant facility upgrades planned in the near future.

Ask any drama production team about the effort it takes in *setting the stage* for a major production and you will hear about the countless hours of hard work, incredible attention to detail, as well as the importance of having strong vision and a deep commitment to implementation. They will also tell you that audiences seldom have any insight into the work that goes into *setting the stage*.

As we live into the reality of this year, work towards a new Strategic Plan, and cast a bold vision for the exciting future of Rockway, it is important to look back on the stage setting that took place in 2023-2024 which allows Rockway to move forward in living out its mission, vision and values. I am deeply grateful for the work of our incredible faculty, staff and administration who worked tirelessly last year, *setting the stage* for Rockway's future. I hope that this report helps you pull back the curtain to see some of the important work that often goes unnoticed.

I couldn't be more excited about the future as we take time to look back and reflect on the past.

Josh Hill, Principal



TOP: Grade 9–12 cast of *Sherlock Holmes*



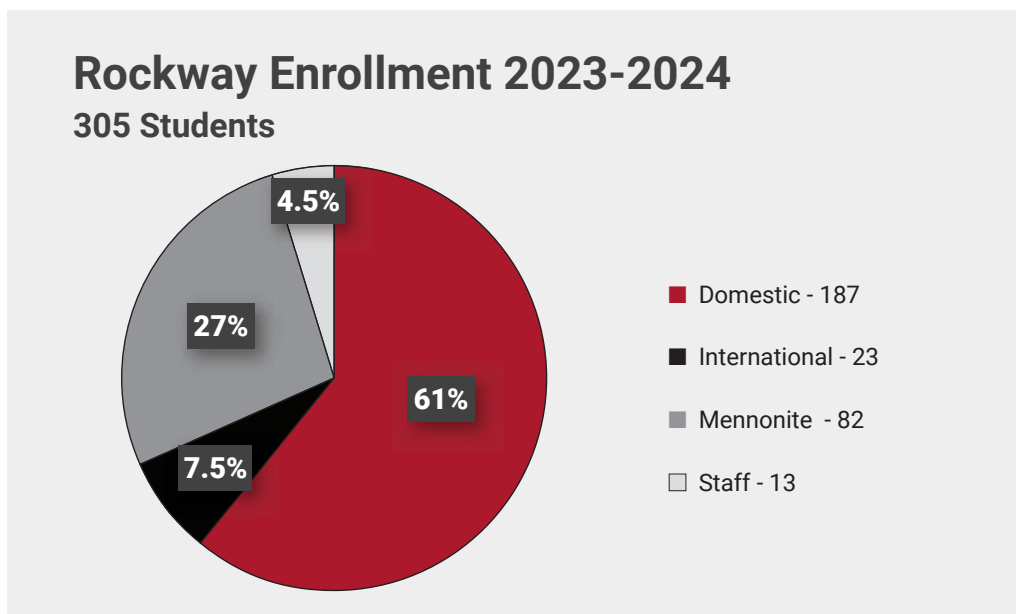
LEFT: Grade 7&8 cast of *Camelot & Camelittle*

# DIRECTOR OF ADMISSIONS & RECRUITMENT'S REPORT

The 2023-2024 school year was a wonderfully busy and eventful year. Rockway is known for its wide array of extracurricular activities, trips and learning opportunities that extend beyond the classroom and that was definitely on full display.

We saw our enrollment numbers increase to over 300 students which was an exciting way to start the year. Although this was only a small increase of students from the previous year, it represented a stability of enrollment at numbers that were higher than they have been for over a decade which was very encouraging. Two of our international students were only enrolled for one semester, and we had 2 new students enroll midyear which meant we ended the year with 305 students.

The break down of the enrollment demographics was as follows:



## RECRUITMENT

Family School Tours started early in the fall and we had our first application for the 2024-2025 school year submitted by mid-September. However, the recruitment season started in earnest in November with our *Discover Rockway* Open House which was a very successful event, as we welcomed nearly 50 families into the building. Guests were able to discover the Rockway that was right for them by exploring our campus and connecting with teachers, Board Members as well as our parent and student ambassadors. As part of their discovery time, prospective students and their families had the opportunity to experiment with our sound and lighting system, make a snack in Family Studies and test drive *Ring of Fire*, our Rockway robot! Prospective students followed up their experience with a shadow visit that allowed them a true insider's perspective on the Rockway community and culture.

We also held a smaller Grade 7-12 Information Night in April which was very well attended. Many families chose to take part in a guided tour of our campus during the evening and signed their child up for a follow up shadow visit. In the months following this event, families continued to inquire about Rockway and sign up for tours and shadow visits, right up until the end of the school year, while tours continued to be scheduled right through the summer.

# DIRECTOR OF ADMISSIONS & RECRUITMENT'S REPORT

## TUITION ASSISTANCE

Rockway's Tuition Assistance and Scholarship programs continue to be a very important support for many of our families by helping make the Rockway experience more accessible. During the 2023-2024 school year, we were able to support 55 families with just under \$300,000 in tuition assistance and scholarships. We are very grateful to our generous donors whose continued support for these initiatives help make Rockway a reality for so many families.

## INTERNATIONAL RECRUITMENT

In September 2023, David Lobe, Rockway Class of 1996 and former International Recruiter, and I travelled to Hong Kong where we met with current and prospective families as well as with our agents.

The highlight of this trip was our first-ever Hong Kong Rockway Family Reception where we hosted over 20 people from 11 Rockway families, past and present. There were also two alumni in attendance and one prospective family. The families seemed to enjoy the opportunity to meet other parents and, as such, was a great example of Rockway community-building and a manifestation of our tagline 'A Small School for a Big World' (see photo below). It is my intention to make this an annual event which will include more alumni, as well as a portion of the evening specifically dedicated to prospective families.



David Lobe '96, Sheri Wideman and Rockway parent and alumna, Wendy Kwong '90

I want to thank David for his support and guidance on this trip and for his continued guidance in the area of International Recruitment.

This past spring I travelled to Hong Kong again, as well as Japan and South Korea. In Japan, I made an important new connection with Kumon International High School which is the alma mater of one of our former international students. It is my hope that we will see some students from Kumon choose to spend a year abroad at Rockway in the near future.



I also met with one of our new international students and her family. This student started in September 2024 and is our first international Mennonite student, which is very exciting.

While in South Korea, I connected with Bock Ki Kim, Mennonite Church Canada (MCC) Witness Worker, who acted as my travel guide. We visited MCC Northeast Asia offices where we

connected with SeongHan Kim, MCC Representative for Northeast Asia. I learned about Anabaptism in South Korea and talked with them about Rockway and what our program has to offer international students, particularly those who come from an Anabaptist background.

*Respectfully submitted by Sheri Wideman, Director of Admissions & Recruitment*

## DIRECTOR OF ADVANCEMENT'S REPORT (Fundraising & Alumni Relations)

When I look back and reflect on the past year and all that was accomplished, it is hard to put into words just how grateful I am to this community for all their support and how proud I am to work alongside such an amazing team.

We are incredibly grateful for the \$458,901 funds raised this past fiscal year. Those funds were allocated as follows:

- \$206,671 to our Annual Fund
- \$158,524 to our Sustainability Fund
- \$78,256 to our Scholarship Fund
- \$15,450 to our Facility Fund

We saw growth in a number of key areas including event attendance, money raised from appeals and event fundraising. The support we received this past year was truly overwhelming. We hosted a number of events intended to bring our community together to create meaningful moments between families, friends and Rockway's faculty and staff. By continuing to help foster these memories, we are hopefully building on an already strong foundation that will lead to an increase in the number of donors and supporters.



Our first Advancement event of the year, **Family Breakfast**, was for our current students and their families (including grandparents) and helped kick off the month of October. We experienced a 26% growth in attendance compared to the 2022-2023 school year. Over 340 students, families, faculty and staff came together to enjoy an early morning breakfast, joyful conversation and community building. This is an important event on our calendar because it gives our students a chance to share a little of the Rockway experience with their families while getting to know other families within our community.

**Connections Homecoming Night** enjoyed similar growth in both attendance and money raised. The momentum from last year helped propel attendance to an all-time high. Thanks to the overwhelming show of support from our community, we were able to serve food to over 500 people and, in the process, raised over \$10,000 towards Trips Week. This is reflective of a 30% increase in attendance compared to the previous year.

Our **Fall Appeal** was very successful. In fact, it was the most successful appeal we have had for the past 10 years. Thanks to the support of the Rockway community, we raised over \$83,000 compared to \$63,000 in 2022. Not only did the amount raised go up, but the number of donors contributing to the appeal went up as well.

Hosting the **Senior Boys' OFSAA Volleyball** tournament added to an already busy fall but it was an experience I am truly grateful to have been a part of. This was a massive undertaking. What normally takes two years to plan was put together in less than five months. It is thanks to the incredible team, led by Josh Hill, that we were able to accomplish this so effectively. The tournament welcomed teams from across the province to Rockway and allowed us to showcase our school to a broader community. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive and was a great way to cap the impressive career of our long-time Athletics Director, Ray Boehm '84.



## DIRECTOR OF ADVANCEMENT'S REPORT (Fundraising & Alumni Relations)



On Thursday, February, 15 we celebrated **Founders' Day** by inviting alumni and other members of the Rockway community to join our students for a special morning Chapel. Rockway Alumnus and Co-Artistic Director of the Toronto Concert Orchestra, Marcus Scholtes '02, was our guest speaker.

Marcus (*pictured left*), shared stories from his time at Rockway, the impact Rockway had on his life and performed a series of violin and piano numbers that ended with a standing ovation. It was a terrific way to celebrate our 79<sup>th</sup> anniversary and for our Chapel guests (alumni, former faculty and staff and current parents) to experience a day-to-day moment in the lives of our students.

Our **Founders' Day Soup Supper Fundraiser** was the only example of an event where our attendance dropped compared to the previous year.

Unfortunately, a snow storm descended on

Waterloo Region the afternoon of our Soup Supper, impacting our attendance (it fell from over 225 people to less than 175) which ultimately led to a drop in the amount of money raised.

Those who braved the weather had their choice of six delicious soups! (*three of the six, pictured right*)

Our **Spring Appeal** focused on our three retirees, Deb Baxter Heeney, Ray Boehm and Karen Scott Booth. The focus of the appeal was to raise money for the three departments they were such a big part of for so many years: Student Services, Athletics and Visual Arts. Thanks to the support of our community, we raised over \$21,000 compared to \$16,580 in 2022.



Weather was unfortunately a factor in another one of our events. The **29<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Classic** suffered through heavy rain the morning of the tournament, forcing us to cancel a number of our pre-game contests. Thankfully, when it came time to tee-off, the rain stopped and we were able to complete our round. For the second year in a row, more than 80 golfers participated in the tournament, raising over \$26,000 for the Student Tuition Assistance Fund.

The 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our Annual Golf Classic is set for May 26, 2025 and I am hoping to set an all-time high with the number of golfers we have participating and the amount of money we raise.

Calling golfers of all ages and abilities: Help make our 30<sup>th</sup> Golf Classic the largest yet!

– continued

## DIRECTOR OF ADVANCEMENT'S REPORT (Fundraising & Alumni Relations)



The Rockway community came together in June for the **Retirement Celebration** of Karen Scott Booth, Ray Boehm and Deb Baxter Heeney (*pictured left*). It was a lovely afternoon honouring the tremendous contributions that Karen, Ray and Deb each made to Rockway throughout their careers and highlighted the importance of creating time and space for our former faculty and staff. It became abundantly clear, when I watched them interact with former colleagues, students and members of our community, what kind of a connection they have with people.

Our former and retired faculty and staff are an important part of our history and more time needs to be dedicated to finding ways to bring them back to Rockway, more often. Moving forward, I will be adding a Former Faculty and Staff Breakfast to our calendar in the Spring and exploring different ways of bringing this important group together.

Our final event of the year was our annual appreciation event, the **Family Picnic & Outdoor Movie Night**.

Over 300 people were in attendance and it was the perfect end to another sensational year at Rockway. This event is our chance to say thank you to our community for all of their support before our students and faculty take some much-needed time off. It also offers a nice opportunity to invite potential students and their families to a fun-filled Rockway event.



There was a lot of excitement for the free BBQ, ice cream, drinks and popcorn at our Family Picnic and Outdoor Movie Night!

In addition to building donor relationships, planning community-building events where our students, alumni, families, friends, faculty and staff can gather will continue to be a focus of the Advancement Office. These are meaningful moments that not only emphasize the importance of a strong community, but hopefully help to make Rockway feel like home to many... because it is.

*Respectfully submitted by Chris Ainsworth, Director of Advancement*



# STUDENT COUNCIL MEMBERS

## Executive

Co-Presidents *Felix Isert Bender and Dominik Gedja*  
Secretary *Dave Dubey*  
Treasurer *Kate Slater*

## Cabinet

*Levi Bender*  
*Alexa Erickson*  
*Ramtha Lensung*  
*Samantha Loberto*  
*Matthew Martin*  
*Eden Suderman*  
*Leah Unrau*  
*Rachel Weber*





#LifeatRockway



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[www.rockway.ca](http://www.rockway.ca)



**do JUSTICE, love KINDNESS, walk HUMBLLY**

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