

Peel boy Joshua, Peter

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EDUCATION

Peel board's new education director coming home

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Mississauga native Peter Joshua will be next education director for the Peel District School Board.

The 53-year-old will start July 17. He replaces Tony Pontes, who retires Aug. 31.

The board made the announcement Wednesday, May 24.

Joshua will be leaving his current role as executive superintendent of leadership and learning at the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board.

He started his career as a high school teacher in the Hamilton board 27 years ago. Throughout that time, he served as vice-principal and then principal in 2003 before moving to superintendency for about nine years.

It's been nearly three decades with Hamilton, but he's thrilled return to the Peel board, where he started kindergarten at Thorn Lodge Public School. He graduated from Erindale Secondary School.

"It was certainly a wonderful opportunity to come back home," he said. "I've always admired the progressive nature of the Peel board. It's a very diverse board in many respects."

While working with the Ontario Public

Supervisory Officials' Association, he said, "I've certainly had my eye on all the great things the Peel board does."

Though the Hamilton board is about one-third the size of the Peel board and its 150,000 students, Joshua feels they are not that different.

"There's certainly some similarities in that very diverse population of students - in a number of respects, culturally, socio-economically," he said. "We have that nice balance of communities, some that are very rural; some that are urban, so that's something that I knew I could see transferring some of what I've experienced in Hamilton in Peel."

It won't happen overnight, but Joshua said he is committed to put the time in to get to know staff, the schools and communities within the Peel board.

According to a Peel board release about the director-designate, chair Janet McDougald spoke highly of Joshua and his leadership abilities.

"We are confident that he will bring his inspired and collaborative leadership style to Peel, and strongly believe he will provide the stability our system deserves," she said in the release.

The release notes that Joshua's four-year contract is for \$249,312 a year.

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