

In Support of Long Lake Public School

- My history at Long Lake Public School
 - o My family has lived in the Long Lake Community since 1974. I grew up in this community and had to move away for University and work. In 2002 after moving back to Sudbury my wife and I bought a lot in the Long Lake Community and in 2005 built a home. A large part of this decision was to be in the community that I grew up in and that our children would be able to attend Long Lake Public School.
 - o My brother and I attended Long Lake Public School in the 1980's from kindergarten to grade 6.
 - o My sister attended Long Lake Public School from kindergarten to grade 6 in the 1990's.
 - o Mrs Kokko started teaching at Long Lake Public School when I was in the older grades and is one example of the many dedicated teachers that have worked at Long Lake over the years. She taught my sister when she was in kindergarten and is currently teaching my oldest daughter and in two years my youngest daughter will be attending Long Lake as well.
 - o I have fond memories of the teachers that taught me and helped to develop a strong family culture within the school.
- Long Lake School
 - o When I attended there was only a portable that was mainly used to store equipment. The school now has improved the gym and playground equipment through investments by the board in the school's infrastructure.
 - o The library always had a large selection of books available for us to borrow and I remember the book mobile that came to the school on a regular basis to provide additional resources. Our daughter Heli really enjoys bringing home new books from the school library for us to read with her at home.
 - o The many outdoor facilities in close proximity soccer field, baseball field, playground equipment, outdoor hockey rink, sliding hill and outdoor basket ball court more than made up for not having a full sized gymnasium. We utilized our imagination and creativity to create many of our own games because of the variety of outdoor environments available.
 - o The proximity to nature through the green belt adjacent to and behind the school allows for cross country skiing, snowshoeing, sliding and many nature hikes. Exposure to nature is rare in today's society and Heli speaks often of the fun that she has playing and learning outside. In the past the Long Lake Loppet was a regular occurrence for many years with schools coming from across the board to ski at Long Lake. This nature experience is very unique to Long Lake Public School within the Rainbow School Board. The other schooling options available for our children in the South End cannot offer this same experience.
 - o The small class sizes and combined classes created strong friendships and built my self confidence as I prepared for the senior grades and high school. There were fewer students to be leaders in teams and activities and we were exposed to more

opportunities to develop these leadership skills in a greater diversity of situations. Often everyone had to participate in order to make a project a success. This promoted, among students, a sense of belonging, of pride in their community, their school, and themselves. The Long Lake School has always had a family atmosphere where you know everyone in the school personally, both students and staff.

- As students, my brother, sister and I don't remember any bullying experiences at the school. The small size and family atmosphere of the school made it so everyone played together because in many cases you needed the younger kids to participate to get better numbers.
- I remember grade 5 – 6 students being our reading buddies when I was in grade 1 this experience helped me gain confidence in reading and further build the family feeling within the school. When I was in the older grades I got to be a reading buddy and help younger students learn to read which was a rewarding experience.
- The value of the split grades were that the younger students become fully aware of what was expected of them in the next grade because they could see and hear older students working on advanced lessons.
- The school has a strong parental involvement and this is an essential part of helping to build a closer community and allow families to get to know each other in the area. There have been many open houses and events at the school such as the "Meet the Teachers Corn Roast" in September. These sorts of activities are only possible because of the small size of the school.
- There has been a lot of new homes being constructed in the Long Lake area which will mean a higher population in the area and an increasing enrolment for the school.
- The bus rides for all students would be greatly extended if Long Lake school was closed. This will put undue stress on the youngest students as they start school.
- My brother, sister and I feel that the move from Long Lake to Algonquin prepared us better for our eventual move from Algonquin to LoEllen Park. Many of our peers that had only attended Algonquin were more stressed about the change and needed time to adjust to the new environment in high school. Since we had already experienced this change from Long Lake with our friends we were sure that our move to high school would be successful.
- In closing I'd like to ask that the future of Long Lake Public School be determined by more than just financial reasons but based on the quality of the overall educational experience that the students receive strengthening their character and allowing them to achieve their full potential.