Applause! is the monthly recognition of significant achievements and contributions by staff, students and community partners at a York Region District School Board Public Board Meeting.

Recognition of achievements is based on alignment with the organizational goals outlined by the Trustees’ Multi-Year Plan in combination with the criteria set out in Staff Awards and Student Awards policies.

Local School Receives Premier’s Award for Accepting Schools

Black River Public School was one of 10 schools across the province recognized for creating safe and accepting learning environments. The Premier’s Awards for Accepting Schools celebrate school teams that have shown leadership and innovation in creating safe, inclusive and accepting schools.

Black River P.S. received the award for their work to address the needs of their school population by setting high standards for character and inclusivity and creating safe spaces in the school. This includes:

- Infusing the BEAR Spirit (Be Excellent and Respectful) throughout the school through assemblies, spirit days, and events and fundraisers that support the local community.
- Encouraging acceptance, setting high expectations and providing opportunities for all students to succeed and get involved in school activities.
- Providing “the Zone” space where students can find a quiet spot to concentrate or calm down, solve problems, have conversations and participate in activities that promote well-being.
- Teaching students strategies for self-regulation.

Black River Public School is the fifth school in York Region District School Board to receive the Premier’s Award for Safe and Accepting Schools in the last four years.

First Book

In an effort to provide new reading materials to all students, First Book created a publishers’ clearinghouse which donates large quantities of free books to thousands of schools and programs serving communities in greatest need.

Community Resource Facilitators from the Inclusive School and Community Services Department reached out to First Book Canada in 2011. The first few years of that relationship saw approximately 5,000 books a year ending up in the hands of students in school communities with the highest needs. By 2014, the number had grown to over 10,000 books a year with several YRDSB schools participating in unique whole class reading programs.

By 2015, several YRDSB departments, First Book Canada, and their Bank of Montreal (BMO) and Compugen partners, developed a Chromebook Pilot Project that saw 120 new Chromebooks donated to the families of students in Grades 5-6 at Sutton Public School and Black River Public School. For the past three years First Book Canada donations have provided all of Building Blocks for Kindergarten students with their very own new books.

As of this past school year, over 100,000 books have made their way into the hands of students.