

Board of Trustees Report to the Senate Highlights from the December 2025 Meeting

Agenda: www.queensu.ca/governanceportal (select December 12, 2025 on the calendar)

The Chair welcomed attendees to the final meeting of 2025. He acknowledged with regret the passing of D. Rickerd, former Trustee, Vice-Chair of the Board, and recipient of an honorary degree in 1985.

On the recommendation of the Governance and Nominating Committee, the Board approved:

- [Amendments to the Board of Trustees By-laws](#)

Chancellor's Remarks

Verbal Report

The Chancellor noted that November 29 marked the [one-year memorial of Chancellor Emeritus Murray Sinclair](#). She reflected on the joyous celebration of his life and expressed that the celebration will continue on January 14, 2026 with the [Inaugural Chancellor Emeritus Murray Sinclair Commemorative Lecture](#) at Grant Hall. She commended the Principal's Office for the excellent work done organizing the event and encouraged everyone to attend.

The Chancellor also acknowledged December 15 as the 10th anniversary of the official release of the six-volume Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. She recalled a survivor's plea to the Prime Minister not to let the report become "just a piece of paper" and expressed concern that only 14 of the 94 Calls to Action have been completed to date. She encouraged everyone to reflect on this important milestone and their role in reconciliation.

Principal's Remarks

Verbal Report

The Principal referenced a recent report by Higher Education Strategy Associates, [The State of Postsecondary Education in Canada 2025](#), highlighting concerns about the current state of postsecondary education in Canada, particularly due to challenges in public funding. The report notes a significant decline over the past 15 years in government support for higher education. The Principal acknowledged the report's points and drew attention to the broader risks facing institutions internationally, including challenges observed in the United States.

He noted that these issues are not unique to North America, referencing discussions at the recent [Anniversary of the Magna Charta Universitatum conference](#) in London, UK where similar concerns were raised. He also observed indications of a gradual rebuilding of public trust in higher education in Canada.

The Principal noted that despite ongoing challenges highlighted earlier in the year, including a loss of civility on campus, budgetary pressures, and geopolitical uncertainties, the University has shown resilience and progress. The fall term has been productive, marked by a high degree of vitality and constructive work. The institution has made significant strides in financial recovery, positioning itself as a leader in responsible stewardship among its peers, both provincially and nationally.

He also spoke to the Bicentennial Vision and noted a high degree of integrity, civility, and constructive behaviour throughout the consultation process which began in January. The Bicentennial Vision, if approved, will build upon recent successes and prepare Queen's to rethink fundamental aspects of the University's operational model in academic life. The Principal conveyed satisfaction with the work accomplished to date while recognizing that important discussions remain and expressed pride in the University's direction.

Student Reports

Rector

Rector N. Boytchuk-Hale opened her remarks with a focus on gratitude during the season of giving. She shared personal highlights from the semester, including the 9th [Annual Indigenous Research Day](#), the creation of welcoming spaces like the Yellow House that support student well-being and joy, the [Rector Bursary](#), and the student leaders who actively support their peers. She emphasized the University's strong and uncommon commitment to student voices and shared governance, which she had the privilege to share recently at the Anniversary of the Magna Charta Universitatum conference. As Queen's approaches its bicentennial year, the Rector noted ongoing efforts to strengthen this important dimension of governance.

She reflected on the collaborative efforts across campus to ensure Queen's remains a place where students are seen, supported, and empowered to succeed. She shared student feedback about the need for more physical study spaces to accommodate a growing campus population and expressed hope that this will be taken into consideration. Concluding, the Rector reflected on the responsibility to think seven generations ahead and expressed gratitude to the Trustees for their ongoing dedication and service to the University.

Alma Mater Society (AMS)

AMS President J. Amer reported on the significant pressures facing students, including academic demands, rising costs, and concerns about safety. She noted an increase in demand for study spaces and essential supports, reflecting heightened stress and vulnerability among the student body. She highlighted a recent hateful street video filmed off campus that contributed to fear and diminished trust within the community, stressing the need to consider how these incidents impact campus safety. While hateful incidents cannot always be prevented, she emphasized the importance of ensuring students feel supported and safe as central to Queen's student life.

J. Amer urged the University to prioritize the student experience in all decision-making, particularly in protecting the quality of teaching and frontline services. She emphasized the need to treat campus safety and belonging as core priorities, with clear and predictable reporting, and encouraged continued efforts to enhance governance through transparent dialogue and meaningful engagement with students and student allies.

Society of Graduate and Professional Students (SGPS)

SGPS President D. Tullah reflected on the importance of deliberate progress and preserving student hope amid growing financial and administrative pressures. He noted that many students face challenges such as housing and food insecurity and rely on the SGPS for support and guidance. He expressed concern about Bill 33, particularly its potential impact on ancillary fees, which fund essential student services like the SGPS and AMS. He stressed the importance of transparency and the trusted role student governments play in supporting the University community.

D. Tullah asked the University to view the SGPS as a vital and adaptable partner, emphasizing that honesty, courage, and cooperation will be key to strengthening Queen's.

Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled Board of Trustees meeting is March 6-7, 2025.