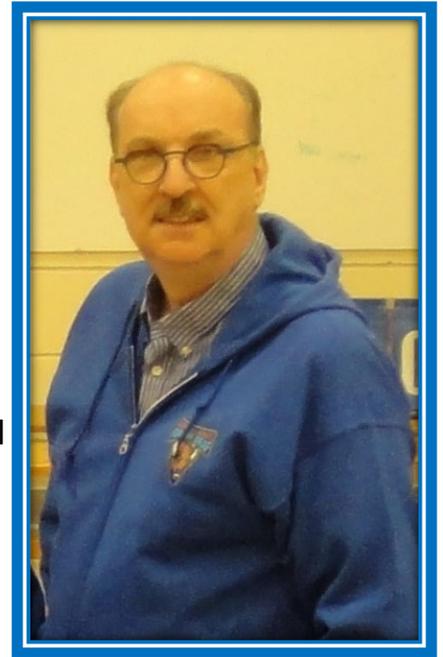




Remembering Len Mitchell

MSD is deeply saddened by the passing of Mr. Len Mitchell. Though he retired from MSD in 2018, he remains a school leader in our hearts. Len worked at MSD for almost 30 years. He began as the first Bilingual-Bicultural officer in the school. This was during an important educational shift in schools for the deaf; deaf culture and sign language were being integrated into all aspects of the school. It was a challenging time for both staff and students to shift their thinking and way of working. Len was



the ideal person for this position as he handled cross-cultural issues with diplomacy and respect for everyone. After the school's foundation was firmly set, he moved into Student Services and supervised the school residence. Again, this was a significant role: maintaining the home-school connection and working with families, ensuring that their children were well-cared for and in the best learning environment.

Len understood the importance of education for students who are Deaf. He is well-known for his advocacy by staff, current and former students, parents and in Deaf communities across Canada. Len was involved in the biannual Youth Canadian Tournament of the Deaf; this event brings together Deaf youth and educators from across Canada together to compete in challenges from drama and art to sporting and STEM events. Len supported students who were often away from home for the first time. He understood the importance of having students meet each other at the national level, learning about other deaf students in other schools, and about other places. This is often the only trip some students ever take and is a significant milestone. Len worked hard collaboratively to secure funding and ensure as many students as possible had the opportunity to attend.

Len also had the opportunity to travel to our sister school the Toyohashi School for the Deaf in Japan. Always a great ambassador, Len helped MSD students to bridge our culture and language with their new friends. Len didn't solely travel for the school. He was a key member of the World Federation of the Deaf. He

travelled the globe as an advocate for the advancement of people who are Deaf. Upon returning to MSD, Len shared his experiences with students and staff. He even took Flat Stanley on a trip to South America! The students gravitated to Len. He gave them a view into the larger world in their language. It was always cute to see this gentle giant talking with our elementary students.

Len was exceptionally kind and had a great sense of humor. He made everyone feel welcome. He was available for people to listen to their stories. If anyone in school needed help, they could rely on him. He was a first-class person. Always in a tie and dress coat he carried himself with pride yet humble demeanor.

One of Len's famous responses to questions was "I'll follow up". We are sure he will continue to follow up on us wherever he may be. While Len was ill, we all hoped he would recover. Unfortunately, life had other plans. Len will be missed by staff, students, parents, and Deaf community members.

The mark he made at MSD is indelible. His legacy continues with the teachers and students he inspired. They will carry the torch in his footsteps to advocate for Deaf children and education.

Len, you will be missed beyond measure.

MSD Staff, students, families, and friends

