

Hi!

My name is Pamela Lopes; I would like to take this time to introduce myself. I have worked with children for over 30 years and in that time, I had a very successful home day care for over 16 years. Then, in 2010, I was hired on with the Peel School Board as a D.E.C.E. It hasn't always been easy. When I was hired, I had to figure out my role, as did many of us. One thing we do need to remember is that changes don't happen over night, it takes time.

Like many other members, I saw the need for change, so I became more involved with the ERFP. When the D.E.C.E Outline of Expectation memo went out in 2013, I jumped at the opportunity to be part of the group to get this started as I feel it's important that everyone has a good understanding of what our job involves and how to perform it effectively. Then, in 2016, I applied to become a Mentor. I wanted to share my learning and to meet with other D.E.C.E'S. I was not sure where this would take me or what to expect, but one thing I can say is I have met some great people and the learning I am taking away from this is amazing. In 2016/17 I also took on the role of Steward for my school. This was new for me; I am learning a great deal and enjoying the challenge. One thing about me is that I am not scared to try new things and I welcome a challenge. I am also very involved in my school community, I have been active with our United Way Committee for the past three years. I work closely with our school's Grade One lead, together I helped plan and implement PD's for the entire school about loose parts and how they could be used in every grade level. In addition for the past four years I've been involved with the new Forest of Reading. I enjoy reading and find it rewarding to meet with students from different grade levels to discuss texts.

For me it's important be involved outside the classroom and building student relationships beyond my role as a D.E.C.E.

About 2 years ago, my teaching partner and I had a vision for our courtyard. We wanted to make an outdoor classroom . So we shared our ideas with our K Team and then with our school. Over the summer,

we worked together and applied for grants. We did get one grant and within the involvement of our community, our vision has started to become reality. As I stated earlier it takes time for things to change but it does happen when there's perseverance.

I was very surprised and honoured at the same time to receive the 2017 Distinction Award .

For me it's very important to be involved in the community and go beyond what is expected of me, because this shows students there's more beyond our classroom. There's no ceiling to learning.

It is also extremely important for me to support others in their roles; which brings to why I am running for the position of DECE Representative. As your representative, I am committed to listen and advocate to issues that arise. There will be challenges but ,also great opportunities to work together as a team.

I would like to conclude with my favourite quote by John Lennon "A dream you dream alone is only a dream. A dream you dream together is reality."