

*(This eulogy was read during the funeral service for Chris Royce in Killaloe, Ontario on November 3, 2019.)*

I'd like to say a few words on behalf of Rosedale Academy.

Rosedale opened its doors in 2014 and Chris was **our very first teacher**, in our very first partner school, Harper International Institute (now called the NE OSSD Centre), in Shenyang, China.

Chris was kind, humble and gracious and he had a **welcoming charm that quickly put people at ease**. He was also quite funny and rather unconventional. Not only because he collected *Magic Cards*, which I later discovered was a sophisticated card-trading game followed by millions of people (who knew!), he had a clever sense of humor and shared it freely.

Chris was smart, positive, dependable and hardworking. It didn't take long to realize just how lucky we were to have him. He played a critical role in the growth of Harper. And, for Rosedale Academy, which was just starting to dream of its own future in international education at the time, he was a **beacon**, a real-life example of the great things that we could do for schools and students around the world.

Over the years, as we grappled with the challenges of supporting a growing number of schools, we would often joke about sending Chris over there to "*take care of things*". Of course, **there was only one Chris** and he was quite busy helping Harper students fulfil their dreams of university.

But along the way, Chris also kept the big picture in mind. He maintained close contact with the Rosedale team in Toronto and provided regular feedback that helped us to better understand and refine our program. He would drop by the office whenever he was in town and helped to deliver our in-office teacher-training programs, by sharing his experience and expertise with teacher candidates through video conference.

Chris was an Ontario Certified Teacher, but this certificate was just a feather in his cap. He was a gifted educator with a natural-born talent to teach. Throw in a **deep understanding of the curriculum**, an **engaging teaching style** that is able to connect with students of all levels and a **dash comedic relief**, and you have a teacher that principals dream about. But Chris had another quality that is also common in many great teachers: **he cared about his students and he went the extra distance to help them succeed**. What's more, as shown by the beautiful book that Shenyang students and staff presented to Chris' family, and the messages that we received from graduates abroad, and by the presence of all the graduates gathered here today, **students cared about Chris**.

Chris was also respected and appreciated by the school staff in Shenyang. His expertise and dedication set a high standard and his ongoing friendship and moral support, despite his busy schedule, was a welcome gift for new teachers who arrived this past September. The same guidance, thoughtful support and companionship was also extended to other teachers who worked there over the years.

Last school year, Chris informed Rosedale that he would like to start planning his transition back to Canada so that he could be closer to his family and start a new chapter of his life with his beloved wife, Queenie. For Rosedale, it was an easy decision to offer Chris a position with the Rosedale central team and we were excited to receive him this coming January. Sadly, Chris left us much, much too soon.

This past September marked Chris' fifth year with Rosedale. As I reflected on this time, I am left with an obvious and unquestionable fact: **Chris made us better people**. As a teacher, as an administrator, as a colleague, as a mentor, as a friend, **he elevated us in some way**.

As a small gesture of our gratitude, Rosedale Academy will establish a scholarship in the name of Chris Royce. Through this scholarship, we will continue to honour and celebrate his spirit of giving and kindness.

On behalf of all of us at Rosedale Academy, I would like to express our deepest sympathies to the family. We are thankful for the **life-long love and support that you provided Chris**. This love and support **rippled on to so many others** and, while our hearts are heavy, we are eternally grateful. Our thought and prayers are with you.