

BOARD MEETING

HIGHLIGHTS

December 2018



Hamilton-Wentworth
Catholic District School Board
Believing, Achieving, Serving

Trustees begin new term of office

Calling the encounter with Jesus Christ the longed for promise of Catholic education, Bishop Crosby, at a mass on December 4 to celebrate the Inauguration of the new Board, encouraged trustees “to make schools places where that promise or that encounter can be experienced by the students and staff and families. It’s the highest ideal.” In later business, trustees were administered the Declaration of Office and the Oath of Allegiance. Patrick Daly (Trustee, Ward 7) was re-elected as Chairperson and John Valvasori (Trustee, Ward 8 & 14) as Vice-Chairperson of the Board. Joseph Baiardo (Trustee, Ward 6) was elected Chair of the new Student Achievement and Well-Being Committee while Mary Nardini (Trustee, Ward 9) will head up the re-structured Religion, Family Life and Faith Formation Committee. Trustees also approved [Permanent, Standing and Statutory Committee membership](#) for the upcoming year. The Inaugural Meeting marks the beginning of a new 4-year term of office for the Board of Trustees.

Inaugural Board Meeting signals a time of “new beginning and new hope”

Calling it a time of new beginnings, re-elected Chairperson Patrick Daly, in his December 4 [Inaugural Address](#), likened the first meeting of the new Board to the season of Advent – a time “of expectant hope and our coming together as one of New Beginning.” In the spirit of new beginnings, Daly proposed four priority areas which will require attention over the next term of office: Catholic identity; financial stewardship; staff well-being; and Catholic Christian community. More than ever, it is vital for Catholic schools to “live and promote their distinct Catholic identity,” said Daly, citing the promise of Catholic education to enable all students to realize their fullness of humanity. This will require allocating additional resources to some students and schools. He also stressed the importance of religious education and faith formation, proposing a review to ensure that the board is providing the necessary resources and strategies to support these fundamental programs. In the area of stewardship, Daly recommended a review of secondary school boundaries, and expansion of French Immersion locations. The third priority area – staff well-being– is not only a requirement, but is essential to the nurturing and strengthening of Catholic Christian community, added Daly. “I close praying that our decisions over the next four contribute to each and every person in our system.”

Trustee Carolyn Cornale thanked for service

Carolyn Cornale has stepped down as Trustee for Wards 12, 13, 14 & 15. At the Special Board Meeting of November 20 – Cornale’s last official board function – Chairperson Patrick Daly honoured her 34 years of “friendship and service.” Noting that she may well be the only trustee in history in whose jurisdiction every single school was either newly built, replaced or retrofitted, Daly said Cornale “was second to none in meeting the needs of students.” He also praised her extensive committee work and presence at board and school events. “Carolyn, you will be sorely missed,” he added. “Your legacy will rest in the facilities that you were such a big part of, but more importantly in the quality of truly Catholic education that exists in our system.”

Trustees voice concerns over cannabis regulation

In new business, trustees expressed concern over amendments to the *Cannabis Act, 2017*, *Cannabis Licence Act, 2018*. The amendments were introduced for first reading in the Ontario Legislature on September 27 as *Bill 36: Cannabis Statute Law Amendment Act, 2018*. Their primary concern is the distance buffer between private cannabis stores/dispensaries and schools which has been reduced from 450m – recommended by the previous government – to 150m under Bill 36. Citing research that shows the effects of cannabis use on brain development, the Board of Trustees approved a motion for Chairperson Patrick Daly to write a [letter to Hamilton Mayor Fred Eisenberger](#) voicing the board's objection to the amendments and requesting a distance buffer of at least 1.5 km.

P.A. Day focuses on fundamentals of math

Educators in all grades participated in a full-day professional activity session on October 22 on the Ministry's newly released teacher guide "[Focusing on the Fundamentals of Mathematics](#)" and [parent guide](#) to support at-home learning of math concepts. The documents were developed by the Ministry of Education in response to declining provincial EQAO math scores. The in-service included an in-depth review of the teacher guide as well as break-out sessions on how staff, in all roles, can support the development of fundamental math skills in students. Schools will continue to provide opportunities for staff to revisit number concepts and cross-curricular connections throughout the year with support from Math Special Assignment Teachers (MSATs).

Math Special Assignment Teachers support math in the classroom

A report on Math Special Assignment Teachers (MSATs), presented to trustees on Nov. 20, outlined some of the activities facilitated by the MSATs to support teachers and students in the learning of mathematics. At present, there are seven elementary MSATS and an elementary numeracy consultant that provide math support at 28 elementary schools. A secondary MSAT provides support to teachers and students at all secondary schools, with increased support provided to four. MSATs were implemented in 2015-2016 following a Math Task Force report which recommended increased job-embedded professional learning for teachers.

Summer Learning Program minimizes learning loss

A Ministry-funded Summer Learning Program (SLP) to promote student achievement and minimize "summer learning loss" was offered at three locations this past summer: St. Marguerite d'Youville CES, St. Martin of Tours CES, and St. Michael CES. The program, for students K to Grade 5, runs for a period of three weeks, and focuses on literacy and numeracy skills development and skills retention. Students are tested at the start and end of the program. Data from the past five years show a reduction in students' summer learning loss. A total of 155 students participated in the program in 2018.

Secondary Diversity Conference builds communities where "Each Belongs"

Members of secondary school diversity teams, along with students from Wilma's Place attended a Secondary Diversity Conference on November 13 in which they were empowered to be "social changemakers." Facilitated by the Harmony Movement, activities focused on themes of diversity and identity; stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination; race and racism; media awareness; and advocacy. The conference concluded with school action planning in which teams identified actions that need to be taken to ensure that all students feel included at their schools, and protected from verbal and physical marginalization and harassment.

Faith Day invites staff “to live as joyful disciples”

A Faith Day for elementary and secondary school staff on December 7 was rooted in the Ontario Catholic Bishops’ pastoral letter for Catholic Education, “[Renewing the Promise](#).” The half-day session included a liturgy, readings from the pastoral letter, personal reflection, journaling and small group sharing. Activities were designed to encourage staff “to live as joyful disciples” – a key message in “Renewing the Promise” and this year’s Catholic Education Week theme.

Schools remember the victims of Holodomor

HWCDSEB schools held a morning prayer service on November 28 to commemorate Holodomor Memorial Day, held each year on the 4th Friday in November. Holodomor – meaning “murder by starvation” – refers to the famine of 1932-1933 in which nearly 10 million people starved to death as a result of the deliberate policies of the Soviet regime of Joseph Stalin. As a lead up to Holodomor Memorial Day, the board’s seven secondary schools were visited by the Holodomor Mobile Classroom, a state-of-the-art, interactive mobile learning space where students learned about the Holodomor, how history shapes the world, and the importance of tolerance, human rights, multiculturalism and the rule of law.

Revised school board estimates presented to Board

The Board of Trustees, on December 18, approved a Revised Estimates Operating Budget of \$363,621,559 and a Revised Estimates Capital Budget of \$23,611,938 for 2018/2019. School board are required to file revised school board estimates on an annual basis with the Ministry of Education. The revised estimates reflect in-year amendments to education funding, changes in overall enrolment, and decreases in EPO (Education Program Other) funding and operating expenses, and construction delays. An in-year operating surplus of \$534,057 is being forecast.

Student & Staff Awards & Recognition

Congratulations to the following students and staff on their recent accomplishments:

- Ellia Ielasi, a Grade 5 student at St. Francis Xavier CES, Ava Abbott, a Grade 5 student at St. Thomas the Apostle CES and Nathan Penson, a Grade 5 student at Our Lady of Mount Carmel CES, who won 1st, 2nd and 3rd prize respectively in the Hamilton Police Service’s Graffiti Prevention Poster Contest.
- Leah Flood, a Grade 8 student at St. Marguerite d’Youville CES, who received two gold medals, two silver medals and one bronze medal at the 2018 Karate Championships in Dublin, Ireland.
- HWCDSEB graduates Emily Bird (Bishop Tonnos CSS), Juliana Giannini (Cardinal Newman CSS), Emerson Suarez (Cathedral HS), Evine Abbasy and Alexandra Kurcharska (St. Jean de Brébeuf CSS), and Francesco DiFronzo (St. Thomas More CSS) who were recognized with a Father Patrick Fogarty Award for good scholarship, school and community involvement, and character.
- Noah Drzewicki (St. Ann CES, Hamilton), Tsion Mesfin (St. Luke CES), Massimo Paletta (Immaculate Heart of Mary CES) and Emily Stevens (Cardinal Newman CSS) who received Youth Community Awards at the 2018 Annual Week of the Child and Youth Awards Luncheon on November 18.
- Michael Kalampalikis (St. Joachim CES) and Lexie Moss (St. Augustine CES) who received HWCDSEB Athletic Excellence Awards at the 18th Annual Breakfast of Champions on December 3.

- Danila Aref, a Special Education Resource Teacher, who received an Agency Award at the Annual Week of the Child & Youth Awards Luncheon for her advocacy of students with special needs.
- Nancy Castura, a teacher at St. Mary CSS; Teresa Susi, Assistant Custodian Trainer at the Thomas Mahony Building; Jenny Frappa, Principal at St. Marguerite d'Youville CES, and retired Director of Education Jerry Ponikvar, who were awarded the HWCDSB's 2018 Award for Distinguished Service to Catholic Education on November 27.
- Corpus Christi Catholic Elementary School, which was presented with a Michael Carty Award by the Catholic Education Foundation of Ontario at the annual Father Fogarty Awards Dinner on October 28.
- Cathedral High School's NYAWEH (Native Youth Advancement with Education Hamilton) Program which received a YMCA Youth Peace Medal on November 28 for its promotion of tolerance and social justice.