

# “Realizing our Capacity”

CHRIST-CENTRED ENVIRONMENT ~ CATHOLIC  
FAITH ~ GOSPEL VALUES

*Growing as  
a Whole Person*



Huron-Perth Catholic  
District School Board

*Delivering  
Excellent Service*

Strategy in Action  
2010-2013



The Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board has been providing quality Catholic education to students for 150 years. Our rich Catholic history and proud accomplishments have been guided by a simple principle -- "*students come first*". In the last three years, our Board has completed a thorough **Strategic Plan** titled **Pathways to the Future**. Its strategy focused on specific outcomes for learners within the context of Catholic values, as articulated by our Board Mission Statement:

We are a Catholic School Board. We serve our students, working with the home, parish and school community to:

- Nurture a Christ-centred environment
- Provide student-focused learning opportunities
- Support the growth of the whole person

With your input we strategized, organized and planned the implementation of a process that reflects our current sense of optimism and hope.

We celebrated the "**Evidence of our Growth**" over the past number of years in the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board. Stakeholders reviewed our success and lauded the accomplishments evident in classrooms across our system. They also responded to a survey that asked these questions:

1. What are our strengths?
2. Where can we improve?
3. What would it look like if the best thing happened?

The three questions generated responses that evolved into the following themes:

1. Mission and Vision
2. Student Achievement
3. Catholic Culture
4. Professional Learning

Additionally, we reviewed our practices and communication, asking school teams for feedback on what support and learning would ensure student success. Responses from staff, parents, students and community members across the system have confirmed that there is optimism and excitement in the journey that lies before us.

A synopsis of feedback can be viewed in the document ***Realizing Our Capacity - the Past, Present and the Future***.

As we embark upon "***Realizing our Capacity***" 2010-2013 and Beyond, I invite you to reflect on the gift of Catholic education today, tomorrow and into the future. Our schools excel not only in academic achievement, but also in their ability to share the teachings of Christ and the gospel values that inspire us to see each child as a precious gift -- and a sacred responsibility.

Our Mission as a Catholic school system is reflected in our daily actions and practices; our call to serve others and help ***celebrate faith and learning***.

**Huron-Perth Catholic Schools are:**

**PLACES OF EQUITY, INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY**, where effective leadership encourages and promotes a collaborative, multi-dimensional approach to equity and inclusive education. As a Catholic community, we must ensure that students, parents, unions, service organizations and other community partners feel welcome, valued and appreciated.

**PLACES OF RESPECT AND JUSTICE** where all are encouraged to speak and act with fairness and respect towards people of all faiths and dispositions.

**PLACES OF HOPE** for every one of our students. Catholic teachings and beliefs call our young people to move towards a hope-filled future. We invite them to be people of hope and to reach out to members of their local community and beyond.

**PLACES OF CELEBRATION**. We celebrate our rich history, the beauty and sacredness of those within our school community and the love of God. The human heart loves to celebrate, and we have much to celebrate in our schools.

**PLACES OF QUALITY LEARNING AND TEACHING**. It is our goal that each child be a well-rounded individual, who achieves the Catholic Graduate Expectations through their K-12 journey. We honour the wisdom of teachers and create authentic opportunities to be lifelong learners in the Huron-Perth Community.

With the continued support of our staff, parishes, parents, teachers and trustees, we promise our students every opportunity to embrace a future full of hope as we help them find their vocations and to live their lives in accordance with Gospel values.

*“Oh, Lord – give us faith for this leap to the future.”  
~ Come and discern the difference in Huron-Perth Catholic Schools ~*

I would like to express my appreciation to the hundreds of staff, parents, students and community partners who have contributed to the strategic development of Huron-Perth. It will be a living plan for 2010 and into the future.

There is no finer investment for a society than to give its children the gift of an exceptional Catholic education.

God Bless,

*Martha Dutrizac*

Director of Education



## **Realizing Our Capacity - the Past, Present and the Future**

### **Background**

The Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board's Strategic Priorities 2007-2010 focused our work for, and on behalf, of our students for the past three years. As a system we have much to celebrate! Director of Education Martha Dutrizac visited every school staff during March and April 2010 to share and celebrate those successes and invite feedback through a web survey.

With these three questions:

1. What are our strengths?
2. Where can we improve?
3. What does it look like if the best thing happened?

The key findings and emergent/recurring themes are found in this report.

### **Key Findings**

The following findings have been organized into themes based on survey summary

#### **Emerging and Recurring Themes: What are our strengths?**

##### **1. System Mission and Vision**

- Decisions are rooted from Catholic values
- Our Mission Statement clearly directs these decisions
- Supportive leadership and caring staff promote Catholic social teachings and inclusionary practices
- As a system, we speak consistently and emphatically about our high expectations for all students
- We speak about what we value with regards to specific goals and mandates in Literacy and Numeracy
- Staying knowledgeable and current about teaching strategies, including innovation, helps us to do this

##### **2. Student Achievement**

- Staff genuinely want the best for our students – spiritually, emotionally, physically and academically
- Staff fosters a love of our Catholic faith,
- Staff provides a place where faith can be “planted”, examined, nurtured, celebrated and shared
- Staff provides opportunities for the Ontario Catholic Graduate Expectations to be lived out in our students

- Staffs work as a team and build relationships with each other and with our home, parish and community
- We extend educational opportunities to ensure success for all students, e.g., co-op, OYAP and support at-risk students and those with academic and other challenges

### 3. Catholic Culture and Professional Learning

- There is a sense of community, within our Catholic schools and across the board, and that we all exist as partners
- We celebrate and value our faith, worship, Faith Day and community outreach
- We respond willingly to family tragedy, social justice issues and those marginalized in our community and beyond because we are called in our vocations

### 4. Professional Learning

- Catholic Professional Learning Communities provide job-embedded time to focus on school wide improvement and improved student achievement
- Resources, such as personnel, Ministry print resources and computer technology, help teachers delve more deeply into high-yield instructional practices that support the learning of all students

## Emerging and Recurring Themes: Where Can We Improve?

### 1. System Mission and Vision

- We must narrowly and precisely define our focus: balanced literacy and effective cross-curricular literacy strategies, including mathematical literacy, in all subjects, all grades and all classrooms

### 2. Student Achievement

- We must go even deeper with teacher-collaboration focused on improved student achievement, including assessment, data decision making and capacity building
- We must improve our recognition of students' unique learning needs by a greater presence of the arts in our programming, and greater use of technologies to assist learning for all students
- Teacher collaboration needs to include more grade/subject meetings, teacher-modelling, model classrooms, classroom visits and out of system school visits

### 3. Catholic Culture

- We must give greater acknowledgement of, and commitment to, working together in partnership: principals, teachers, support staff, parents, and parishes within our Catholic learning community
- We need to find ways to demonstrate our respect for and dependence on each-other even more: **we are all in this for our kids**

### 4. Professional Learning

- We must maintain the focus on improved student learning by maintaining full teacher involvement in school improvement planning
- We must continue to find ways to celebrate and learn from those who are reaching more students through innovative ways
- We must courageously and respectfully question activities that are not about learning

Emerging and Recurring Themes: What does it look like if the best thing happened?

**1. System Mission and Vision**

- *All people* within our board and within our home and school partnerships will commit to building relationships that promote open and transparent communication, widespread participation, a prevalent sense of teamwork, and respect for diversity of opinion
- Focus on this purpose that will lead to our coming together more single-mindedly for the greater good with unity of purpose
  
- *All teachers* and principals will embrace the opportunity of change, see the Christ-like dignity of each and every student
- Work for all students, continually improving their own learning
- Strive for sustained improvement in student achievement through professional learning that provides multiple opportunities for collaboration, reflection, and refinement of teaching strategies
  
- *All students* will succeed by being nurtured and loved, and grow in their relationship with Jesus and our church
- All students will be provided with learning opportunities that are challenging, engaging, and differentiated according to their learning needs
- They will develop a strong, positive sense of themselves as learners
- They will graduate prepared to succeed in their post-secondary destination and prepared to be responsible, loving Christian adults in our community
  
- *All of our schools* will be acknowledged as first-class within our local community and within our province, not just because they are Catholic but also because of our academic, technical, artistic, and athletic accomplishments
- *All students and staff* will contribute to this goal - individuals and groups will be celebrated and recognized for modeling their positive contributions to this goal

**BOARD MISSION STATEMENT**

We are a Catholic School Board. We serve our students, working with the home, parish and school community to:

- *Nurture a Christ-centred environment;*
- *Provide student-focused learning opportunities;*
- *Support the growth of the whole person.*

# STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION & IMPLEMENTATION

## Realizing our Capacity 2010 - 2013

Re-affirm the Vision/Mission of the HPCDSB as the “reason” for all of our actions:

- Strategic Leadership Team begins the development of a strategy for service excellence and education for the whole person
- Director highlights many accomplishments with staff, parents and community stakeholders through “Evidence of our Growth - 2007-2010”
- Stakeholders respond to survey on “our strengths, our areas for improvement and what would it look like if the “best thing happened” in Huron-Perth
- Report to Board in May 2010
- Present Plan process and above information



Themes emerge in accordance with the strategy:

- Focus groups give feedback to literacy review and establish best practices
- Parent survey highlights our communication strategy as a Catholic Board
- School teams meet to give feedback and input on what matters most in improving student achievement
- Student Forum highlights “student voice” and what it means to be a Catholic student leader
- Two themes emerge within the context of our Board Mission Statement
  1. Growing as a Whole Person
  2. Delivering Excellent Service



A core strategy is developed to support each theme: a) Core Literacy Strategy, and b) Core Operational Strategy

- Cross functional teams lead the implementation with a whole-team approach
- Messaging is developed to support a sustainable approach to student learning
- Documents are posted on website
- Staff are supported and celebrated in their ownership and learning
- Strategic Direction is approved by Board at October meeting
- “Realizing our Capacity” is the sole focus of the system efforts
- Staff is supported in their role as “life long learners” to ensure success for every student
- Celebrate our success along the way

# Vision

A Vision sets the horizon for an organization -- a future direction upon which stakeholders can focus their eyes and energies in order to serve others in a unified way. A horizon moves constantly as one moves towards it and likewise, our Board operates in an ever-changing environment. We must work diligently to understand the changes that emerge in our organization as we move towards our Vision.

The following Vision has been established for the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board:

*Faith and Learning... Celebrating the Journey*

The key components of the Vision encompass these points:

- **Faith** reflects a key foundation of the Board, which is the expression of Catholic faith and life in all that they undertake. “Faith” also speaks to our confidence and the notion of having faith in what we do, the people we serve and the communities to which we belong.
- **Learning** represents our mandate to facilitate and support the learning process through educational opportunities and experiences that serve all our stakeholders.
- **Celebrating the Journey** reflects the notion that the Board is a collective of people who work and celebrate the experiences and opportunities that emerge from learning infused with Catholic values and teachings. All of our stakeholders are on individual journeys in understanding and developing their faith, learning about and using their gifts, and working together to benefit our community and society.

*The Catholic school is distinguishable from public or secular schools because there is a fundamental difference in the intentional learning environment Catholic schools seek to create. That unique learning environment which is both the genius and the hallmark of a Catholic school is Christian community - a place and space where the echoes and presence of God are everywhere.*

*~ Msgr. Dennis J. Murphy  
“New Times, New Leaders in Catholic Education”*

# Mission

A Mission Statement describes the essence and fundamentals of an organization. It offers an understanding of what the organization is about and sharpens its focus. In Huron-Perth, every strategic and operational decision the Board undertakes is consistent with and supportive of its Mission Statement.

The following Mission Statement has been developed for the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board:

**We are a Catholic School Board. We serve our students, working with the home, parish and school community to:**

- **Nurture a Christ-centred environment;**
- **Provide student-focused learning opportunities;**
- **Support the growth of the whole person.**

- **We are a Catholic School Board** because we are founded on Catholic beliefs and teachings. We practice the Catholic faith daily and respect, honour and celebrate the sacraments, traditions, teachings and expectations of the Catholic faith.
- **We Serve** our students and stakeholders. This defines our role as a Board, and the nature of our relationships.
- **Our Students** are those we are here to serve.
- **Working with the Home, Parish and School Community** comes from our drive to be an extension of the family, parish and school community, working together to create a unique learning environment where Gospel values and Catholic beliefs provide important continuity. The school community involves a wide range of relationships with service agencies, such as the Children's Aid Society, local businesses, the media, community organizations and other individuals and groups who collectively live and help define the communities in which our schools operate.

- **Nurture a Christ-centred Environment.** One of the key outcomes of the Board is the establishment, nurturing and visibility of Christ-centred teaching and working environments. These clearly demonstrate the Catholic values of the Board, providing students, teachers, parents, staff and others with the opportunity and resources to understand, develop and practice their Catholic faith.
- **Provide Student-Focused Learning Opportunities.** A key outcome of the Board is to create Christ-centred environments that provide a range of student-focused learning opportunities. The inclusion of all students is supported by a diverse range of learning strategies that meet the needs of each individual.
- **Support the Growth of the Whole Person.** By working actively to provide faith, learning and life experiences, we respond to the needs of each student as a whole person. Education is the development of the whole person. It gives students the ability to understand, develop and effectively use their gifts, skills, capacities and faith for the betterment of all that they do throughout their lives.

## Our Board Logo



Here is a modern, contemplative image recalling the rural roots of Huron-Perth. The designer passed along his thoughts:

- ❖ there is a sense of both strength and light in the treatment of the cross
- ❖ the rolling waves/hills/fields/pages of a book support the base of the cross
- ❖ blue was added to the palette for Huron waves
- ❖ green represents the rich farmland that is abundant in our two counties

# Principles and Values

Principles and Values have three applications within our Strategic Plan. They provide:

- An opportunity to define and describe key components of the Mission Statement
- A description of how key relationships between the Board and its stakeholders are to evolve and develop
- Identification of the key accountabilities of the Board

The following Principles and Values have been identified for the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board:

We Believe In...

- The sacredness and dignity of each individual and their right to be treated with fairness, integrity and compassion
- The richness and permanency of our Christ-centred learning environments, which give witness to our Catholic faith, provide living examples and promote social justice
- The inclusion of all learners and stakeholders within our programs, services and operations
- Personalized and purposeful learning that provides opportunities to nurture each individual's gifts, self worth, potential and independence through the provision of relevant learning experiences that are founded on core values, achievable goals and objectives, and a celebration of the joy of learning
- A Catholic and faith based culture that is caring, recognizes the contributions and achievements of its members, supports innovation and creativity and constantly strives to enhance the learning opportunities and experiences provided through leadership development, continuous improvement and stakeholder dialogue
- The importance of working collaboratively with all of our stakeholders in achieving the most effective learning opportunities and outcomes for our learners
- The importance of the home, parish and school community relationship as the basis to support Catholic education for our learners
- The provision of learning environments that are safe, welcoming, accessible, support the curriculum, and which are reflective of and valued by the communities served
- Stewardship of the traditions and resources that we are provided, and in being responsible for our actions and decisions
- Decision-making that allows open input and dialogue, involving a diversity of stakeholder opinions which is transparent and equitable
- Equity and inclusive practices that value and support all who work and study at the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board and seek to create an environment in which they can aspire to excellence
- A distinctive Catholic curriculum based on the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations that permeates all areas of the teaching, learning and "our way of being"

# CATHOLIC GRADUATE EXPECTATIONS

*"I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life" Jn. 14:6*



## A Discerning Believer

...is formed in the Catholic Faith community and celebrates the signs and sacred mystery of God's presence through word, sacrament, prayer, forgiveness, reflection and moral living.



## An Effective Communicator

...speaks, writes and listens honestly and sensitively, responding critically in light of Gospel values.



## A Reflective Thinker

...solves problems and makes responsible decisions with an informed moral conscience for the common good.



## A Life Long Learner

...develops and demonstrates their God-given potential.



## A Collaborative Contributor

...finds meaning, dignity and vocation in work which respects the rights of all and contributes to the common good.



## A Caring Family Member

...attends to family, school, parish, and the wider community.



## A Responsible Citizen

...gives witness to Catholic social teaching by promoting peace, justice and the sacredness of human life.





## Strategy in Action - “Realizing our Capacity”

Our message must be clear, consistent and focused on relationships with students, staff parents and parish. Communication is about building relationships. It is through collaborative dialogue on the “Strategy in Action” that our work gains shared meaning across the system.

> Relationships with Staff > Relationships with Students > Relationships with Parents > Relationships with Parishes and Community Partners

### 1. **Board Mission Statement → gives direction and purpose to our work**

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- Nurture a Christ-centred environment;
- Provide student-focused learning opportunities;
- Support the growth of the whole person.

### 2. **Realizing Our Capacity → reflects our Mission in Huron-Perth Catholic DSB**

We will **Realize Our Capacity** through concentrated and precise focus on the **Core Strategy** in both themes- Growing as a Whole Person and Service Excellence.

#### **Growing as A Whole Person**

Core Strategy-Our Core Literacy Strategy, including Mathematical Literacy, demonstrates in text and visual form, how all of our work has a singular focus on increasing all students’ achievement.

#### **Service Excellence**

Core Strategy-Our operational services leverage all resources to support student success. Policies are translated into efficient cross functional processes, designed to collaboratively achieve needed qualitative and quantitative outcomes.

### 3. **Our Strategy → the work and focus to “Realize our Capacity”**

Our Strategy is grounded in “cause and affect”...if we develop and support our structure, culture and skills, if we remain focused on specific actions and leverage our resources to do this, we will achieve our outcomes.

Our success is dependent on working with Cross Functional Teams, relationship building and collaboration to meet our Student Outcomes through these Key Enablers and Core Processes.

- > **Key Enablers** - To excel in the Core Process, we determine what key strengths we need to have in structure and systems, culture and skill
- > **Core Processes** - To achieve our Student Outcomes and our School Service Outcomes, we determine the main processes at which we must excel across the Board

### 4. **Our Celebration → our persistent and strategic hard work as a Catholic community to achieve our outcomes for all students.**