



REPORT TO THE HURON-PERTH CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

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BOARD HIGHLIGHTS FOR JUNE

Public Session

BACKGROUND

Many activities take place every month throughout the district to ensure that our students have rich, inclusive learning opportunities that support their learning and fulfill the goals of the Strategic Plan. The Board Highlights list many of the activities that take place in the month prior to the board meeting, with contributions from Superintendents of Education, Learning Coordinators, the Mental Health Lead, and Managers of activities that take place under their leadership.

DEVELOPMENTS

The spiritual theme we have chosen to anchor the 2023-24 school year in is “Go Forth!” and it builds upon the Gospel story of the Road to Emmaus which has been guiding our district over the past three years. The Holy Spirit continues to guide our district and lovingly supports us as we cycle through states of encounter, accompaniment and transformation. As we continue throughout the month of June and bring our school year for students and many staff to a close, we are grateful for the many opportunities we have enjoyed to grow and learn together, “going forth” with God’s grace. As our students prepare for the summer break ahead, we go forward with incredible enthusiasm and joy, ever grateful for the many gifts of our students, families, staff members, parishes, and communities as we enjoy this final few weeks together. We are on a journey of discipleship. We are people of hope and we delight in the many signs of God’s love and joy in our schools and facilities.

CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Graduation and End of Year Celebrations

Our elementary schools are planning their Grade 8 Graduation liturgies and celebrations which will occur over the last two weeks of June. Our secondary schools hosted Graduation Proms once again this year and the students were thrilled to participate in this highly anticipated evening with family, friends and staff. The St. Michael CSS Prom was held at the school on June 7 and the St Anne’s CSS Prom was also held at the school on Friday, June 7. Our secondary school commencement ceremonies are fast approaching as well. The St. Anne’s CSS and St. Michael CSS Graduations will be held at the schools on Thursday, June 27. We will have a small graduation celebration for adult learners at Blessed Carlo Acutis Continuing Education School as well this spring.

Secondary Retreat Days

Both St. Anne's CSS and St. Michael CSS held retreats for students over the past two months that focused on developing a better sense of who God is calling each student to be. These were led by the Secondary Chaplains and select staff members, in partnership with the Families of Parishes.

An Evening of Synodality with Linda Staudt

On June 10, staff from across the district along with members of the deanery, had the opportunity to listen to Linda Staudt's reflections from her experience as 1 of 7 voting lay people for the Synod in Rome. Her story of her experience of the Holy Spirit was very inspiring to all those who attended and we look forward to learning more from Linda after the second Synod session at the Vatican this October.

Faith Ambassadors Retreat

On June 18, the faith ambassadors and chaplains from all of our schools will gather together at St. Vincent de Paul Parish to "fill their faith buckets" with a day that includes the Ignatian Examen, Christian Meditation, and various forms of prayer. Time will also be spent reviewing the newly created Faith Ambassadors handbook and collaborating with each other on resources to support faith development in our schools. The highlight for this day will be coming together for the celebration of the Mass with newly ordained Huron-Perth Catholic DSB graduate Fr. Matt Sawyer.

Elementary Sports Council - System Track and Field

On June 4, the Elementary Sports Council hosted a district-wide Track and Field meet. Athletes represented their schools exceptionally well with regard to their skill, athleticism and their sportsmanship. Coaches from every school not only trained their athletes, but also helped to ensure that the field events ran smoothly. Sports Council teachers and principals worked behind the scenes to ensure an organized, safe and fun day for many students across the district.

LEADERSHIP

Leaders' Learning Council (LLC)

Our school and system leaders gathered in Dublin on June 11 at the CEC to participate in several activities focusing on Catholic Faith leadership and Indigenous Education. Knowledge Carrier Christin Dennis shared with the group his story as a '60s Scoop survivor and how working together we can provide a positive future based on reconciliation for all. There was a review of various Indigenous Education activities that were offered this year, resources that are available to staff and ways to arrange for learning opportunities in the future. Through this learning, members of the LLC gained a better understanding of what it means to be a treaty people and discuss concrete next steps towards reconciliation. This is the final LLC in a series which focuses on areas of our board's Equity Action Plan.

The Religion and Family Life Coordinator led a session that focused on faith formation within our schools, reviewing the newly developed Faith Ambassador's Handbook and how collaboration with the school's Faith Ambassador and local pastoral team will help support our joint goals of ensuring our students and staff are well-formed in our Catholic Faith.

Learning coordinators shared the results of the 22-23 School Climate Survey with principals and provided them with a slideshow to share results with their staff on the last PD day in June.

Supporting the Development of Additional Qualification Guidelines

The Religion and Family Life Learning Coordinator collaborated with Catholic Leaders across the province and the Ontario College of Teachers to develop Additional Qualification course guidelines for a new AQ course titled "Teaching in the Catholic School System". This course is geared toward teachers who want to enhance their knowledge of the Catholic Education System or teachers who have trained outside of the Province of Ontario and are lacking the background of our Catholic School System. The course will focus on what the teacher needs to know, do, and consider regarding the publicly funded Catholic education system in Ontario.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Elementary Educational Assistants PD

On the June 7 PD Day, our Elementary EAs gathered at St. Anne's CSS for the day where a variety of topics were explored through a breakout session format led by members of the System Special Education Team, Literacy & Multilingual Learning (MLL) Team, and Math Team. Participants were able to sign up for sessions of interest to them. Session topics included - Fun with Phonics, Working with our MLL Students, Do The Math! Tier 2 Intervention, Introduction to Augmentative & Alternative Communication (AAC), Beyond the Basics of Augmentative & Alternative Communication (ACC), Safe Intervention & Incident Reporting, and Using Sensory Circuits to Meet Behavioural and Skill Building Goals.

Special Education Resource Teacher Meeting

On June 14, Elementary and Secondary SERTs gathered for a full day SERT Meeting at the Catholic Education Centre. SERT Meetings are a chance to share updates related to policy and procedure, explore best practices and PD related to supporting students with Special Education, hear from community partners, and network and learn from one another. On June 14, we welcomed Martin Smit from LD@School who shared important information and resources to support students with Learning Disabilities.

DIGITAL TOOLS TO SUPPORT LEARNING

1:1 Chromebook Sustainability

To ensure the continuity of the 1:1 initiative for HPCDSB students, library technicians and teacher librarians dedicated time this month to prepare for the upcoming summer refresh work conducted by Stronghold Services. Throughout the summer, the chromebooks will undergo maintenance and updates. Devices will be allocated to each school according to student population, ensuring they are ready for the start of the next school year as a result of the diligent summer refresh efforts.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Mathematics

June was another productive and proactive month for the Math Team. The Math Facilitators and Math Coordinator worked on developing detailed and prescriptive Number strand lessons and number talks based on our new scope and sequence for K-8. They also worked collaboratively with the Math Team from St. Clair Catholic DSB. The Math Lead and Math Coordinator continued to meet with the Ministry for the provincial Math Achievement Action Plan, completing the final report. The entire Math Team continued to work on our new Strategic Plan draft. On June 7, the Math Team provided professional learning for elementary Educational Assistants

related to supporting students with our Tier 2 intervention program, Do The Math. This is an intervention program that we are using and finding success with for students in our elementary school classrooms. It reinforces Tier 1 instruction by focusing on numerical reasoning skills (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, and fractions) by developing conceptual understanding using models, manipulatives, and games.

Secondary Mathematics

Students in Grade 9 Math this semester participated in their EQAO assessment this month at both secondary schools. Teachers have been preparing their students all semester for this online assessment. Results will be released in the fall.

Literacy

On June 7 the Literacy team provided professional learning for elementary Educational Assistants. This learning was focused on supporting students with foundational skills using games. This practical session was created with K-8 students in mind and aligns with Tier 1 classroom instruction. The Literacy team also worked diligently on updating resources and lessons found in the Primary and Junior Literacy Warehouses.

Secondary Literacy

Secondary school Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) results have recently been released to the schools and Board. Administrators and teachers are examining the results for students, with a focus on understanding where some of the challenges lie for students who were not successful. While the success rates are very good overall, we note a slight decline in the overall average as compared to last year. We will continue to emphasize the importance of literacy across the curriculum in all grades and programs as we work to implement the new Language curriculum in elementary and in Grade 9 classrooms.

Multilingual Learners (MLL)

Throughout June, Mary Katherine Simmons and Katherine Miller, our current MLL System Support teachers, travelled once again to every school to support educators as they complete some ongoing assessments with all of our multilingual learners. These support teachers have created profiles for all of our MLL students to provide schools with up-to-date information and strategies for each student as they move to the next grade level. Our support teachers have also worked one-on-one with many newcomers, using digital products, to provide them with the tools they need to learn English alongside the curriculum.

Indigenous Education

We are very pleased with the reception that the Aspen Ojibway Spirit Horses has received within our schools. Knowledge Carrier Christin Dennis and the Patch family, who are the horse caretakers, have remarked at how much they have enjoyed this experience with our students and staff. The horses will finish their visits on June 20 and it has been an excellent experience for all.



The students from St. Patrick's, Dublin and St. Columban had the opportunity to participate in the interactive Visions of Turtle Island presentation on June 6. This program provides the opportunity to learn about Indigenous music, dance and traditions in the atmosphere of a pow-wow. The students and staff thoroughly enjoyed this learning opportunity.

The Kindergarten to Grade 10 classes had the opportunity to hear from two-time Governor General award-winning author David A Robertson on June 13. These one-hour sessions allowed students to learn about the writing process and learn more about the Indigenous learnings that are a part of David's stories. All elementary school libraries have received 8 of Mr. Robertson's books this school year and classes have been encouraged to read his award-winning works throughout the year.

The Indigenous Education team consisting of Superintendent Boreham, Learning Coordinator Caroline Thus, Special Assignment teacher Mary Fischer and members of the Indigenous Education Council (IEC) attended a one-day gathering for members of the IEC from across the southwestern Ontario region at Aamjiwnaang First Nation near Sarnia. The day was all about sharing best practices and working together to improve Indigenous education in our boards.

Secondary PD Day

On Friday June 7, our secondary school staff gathered at St. Michael Catholic Secondary for a professional development day exploring artificial intelligence's (AI) role in education and the ways in which teachers plan through the lens of our Catholic faith, using the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations as a key resource for this day's conversations. The morning session on AI facilitated a thoughtful discussion among educational assistants, teachers, chaplains, and administrators. Participants delved into recent AI advancements, examining how they might influence instructional approaches and assessment methods. While acknowledging potential benefits and opportunities, educators also explored concerns over AI's impacts. There was a review of the Board's policy on AI. The engaging dialogue left attendees better equipped to navigate this emerging technological frontier as conversations continue within the board and among students and families.

In the afternoon, the focus shifted to discussions in each department about how the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations and Catholic Social Teachings are embedded and threaded throughout each subject area. Staff members gathered within departments to work on activities and share strategies specific to their curriculum areas. This was exciting dialogue with many examples of cross-curricular ideas shared too. The timing of this particular professional development topic aligns well with our strategic priority regarding faith formation.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING PROGRAMS IN SECONDARY

Women in Skilled Trades Pathway Event

HPCDSB was proud to host a Women in Skilled Trades Pathway Event on Saturday, June 1. Young women from Grades 7 to 12 had the opportunity to explore 14 different skilled trades. Additionally, they were provided guidance on pathways to careers from professionals in the field including the roles of police officer, firefighter, emergency medical services (EMS), civil engineer, agricultural professional, architect, and pilot. The event brought together over 60 young women from across Huron and Perth counties. We were excited to have over 30 mentors from various fields eager to showcase the diverse pathways available. The event was held at St. Michael CSS in Stratford from 8:30 AM to 2:30 PM. In addition to the community volunteers who led sessions, there were several HPCDSB secondary teachers and system leaders there to ensure a smooth, successful day for all participants.

SHSM and Experiential Learning Activities and Excursions

- **Business/Entrepreneurship Trip** - Conestoga Entrepreneurship Collective for students at both secondary schools: St. Anne's CSS attended on June 3 and St. Michael CSS on June 10. The Collective prepared 3 workshops focused on strategies to prepare and lead sales pitching and entrepreneurship ventures. This will benefit students across various SHSM sectors.
- **St. Anne's SHSM/Experiential Learning** - On June 6, students were treated to a Hairstyling Cultural Presentation and Demonstration that was facilitated through our Board's connection to Leroy Hibbert and the LUSO community centre. The school welcomed hairstylist Hazel Taylor to St. Anne's for a talk and demonstration. This presentation was intended to deepen students' understanding of working with diverse clients.
- **Grade 10 Period 2 SHSM Presentations** - Throughout June, the Experiential Learning/SHSM Teacher at St Michael CSS conducted presentations for Grade 10 students. These sessions aimed to inform students about registering for the Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) program in Grade 11. Ms. Dunn provided insights into various SHSM components including Dual Credit options, cooperative education opportunities, certifications and more.
- **Working At Heights Training** - On June 25, there will be mandatory Working At Heights training for construction summer co-op students. This training is essential for ensuring the safety and compliance of students participating in construction-related co-op placements.

Dual Credit Masonry Program

The Dual Credit Masonry Program continues on Tuesdays and Fridays for students from both secondary schools, running from June 4 to 14. Students engage with the curriculum provided by Conestoga College at the St. Michael CSS site. 15 students are taking part. Students will receive a high school and Conestoga College masonry credit.

Level 1 Electrical Program

The Level 1 Electrical Program will proceed on Tuesdays and Fridays. This program is attended by students from both Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board and Avon Maitland District School Board. It offers Level 1 Electrical training, delivered by Fanshawe College and hosted at St. Michael's School.

Dual Credit Update

Students are completing several dual credit courses in June, as follows:

- Conestoga College (total of 7 dual credits earned) including the dual credit Brick and Stone course, and Criminology and Criminal Justice.
- Lambton College (total of 10 dual credits earned) including Styling and Cutting Techniques, Make-up Applications, Chainsaw and Arboriculture Techniques, Introduction to Residential Electrical, Criminology, Human Interactions, and Baking Techniques.

OYAP Level 1 Update Several students will complete their OYAP Level 1 Programs in June, including the following:

- Truck and Coach: 1 student at Fanshawe
- Welding: 1 student at Lambton
- Electrical: 3 students at Fanshawe (delivered at St. Michael CSS)

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

School Mental Health Ontario (SMH-ON) Spring Provincial Leadership Conference:

Our Mental Health Lead and the Superintendent Responsible for Mental Health attended the SMH-ON Provincial Leadership Conference in Toronto, Ontario, on June 5-6, 2024. This conference provided invaluable opportunities to:

- Hear Directly from Students: Attendees gained insights from students about their experiences with our mental health initiatives, helping to shape future efforts.
- Learn About New Resources: SMH-ON introduced new resources that will be available in the next school year, enhancing our mental health programs.
- Network and Collaborate: The conference facilitated networking and brainstorming with professionals across the province, fostering the exchange of innovative school mental health strategies and implementation ideas.

This event emphasizes our commitment to improving student mental health through continuous learning and collaboration with students and experts in the fields of education and mental health leadership.

Summer Programming:

This year, the Ministry of Education has provided funding to support the continuation of mental health services for students. With this funding the MHW Team will be offering direct mental health support through virtual care delivery for interested students. Utilizing an evidence-based mental health therapy in a group setting will support participants in social skills, enhancing this awareness and developing a skillset to manage anxious feelings will increase student engagement in learning and promote their academic success.

The Mental Health Lead will be working collaboratively with community agencies such as the Huron Perth Centre, Huron Perth Children's Aid Society and Rural Response for Healthy children throughout the summer months as we consider systematic approaches to support the mental health and well-being for students throughout our district. The Mental Health Team will also be working on program development to support the mental health service delivery throughout the 2024-2025 school year.

MAINTENANCE AND HEALTH AND SAFETY

Health and Safety

The Joint Health and Safety Committee met on June 5, 2024. Items discussed included the following:

- Annual Health and Safety Week - results and feedback
- Annual and monthly inspections
- Incident reporting
- First Aid kits
- Ontario Regulation 170/03 Annual Drinking Water Reports (St. Columban, St. Patrick's, Dublin and St. Patrick's, Kinkora)
- Annual lead sampling
- 2024-25 meeting dates

The meeting minutes are posted on the Google Administrative site.

Annual Water Sampling - Ontario Regulation 243/07

As per Ontario Regulation 243/07, annual water sampling for lead will occur in all schools the week of June 10, 2024. Sampling will be conducted by custodial staff.

Custodian Appreciation Lunch

On June 7, 2024, all custodians were invited to attend an appreciation day at St. Patrick's School, Dublin. The agenda included Resilience Training, lead sampling refresher training and fire extinguisher training followed by a luncheon. The day was an opportunity for the Board to say thank you to the custodians for the vital role they play in our schools.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board receives the Board Highlights for June for information.
