



TRUSTEES' REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

SEPTEMBER 2025

ON FIRE WITH THE SPIRIT

Welcome Back

This summary provides an overview of the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board's Regular Board Meeting Agenda for September 22, 2025. It also incorporates key themes and goals from the Board's 2024-2027 Strategic Plan, "On Fire with the Spirit: Awaken! Illuminate! Rejoice!".

Catholic Faith Formation

The Board is dedicated to its mission of nurturing leaders rooted in faith and committed to fostering Catholic communities in its schools. This aligns with the strategic goal of providing ongoing catechesis and faith formation for both staff and students.

- **Ongoing Faith Formation for Staff:** The agenda highlights a new faith formation initiative in partnership with the University of Notre Dame's McGrath Institute for Church Life. This program, "The Catholic Faith: Understanding the Creed and the Catechism," is integrated into Leadership Learning Communities (LLCs) for principals, coordinators, and managers. The first session on September 16 focused on the Creed. The course will continue through March with units on Creation, Jesus Christ, Salvation, the Church and Sacraments, and The Last Things. Monday morning prayer at the Catholic Education Centre now includes learning about a saint and aligning prayer intentions with the Diocesan calendar.
- **Faith in Schools:** Schools are holding liturgies, Masses, and open houses to welcome students, staff, and families back for the new school year, with every school scheduled to host an opening Mass or liturgy in September. St. Michael CSS held grade-specific assemblies that began with prayer and had an opening school Mass September 23 at St. Joseph's Parish. The Grade 12 retreat for students from across the Board took place at Hidden Acres Camp on September 26, focusing on "A Legacy We Leave". St. Michael CSS also has an early morning Mass for staff on September 30 for the feast of St. Michael and offers a weekly Bible study. St. Anne's CSS held its opening Mass on September 11 and its Grade 9 retreat on September 12.
- **Service and Community:** The Strategic Plan emphasizes expanding service learning opportunities and promoting Christian service and volunteerism, especially with Catholic service groups. A new full-time Indigenous Education System Support Teacher will be working with schools, students, and families to support student achievement and

well-being. Powley Day was recognized on September 19, and activities for Truth and Reconciliation Week from September 22-30 were provided.

Student Achievement

The Board's Strategic Plan aims to elevate student achievement to "world-class levels" with specific goals for EQAO assessments, graduation rates, and student attendance.

- **Literacy:** The Literacy team is actively supporting new teachers and is planning to support the early reading screening process, which will use a new digital platform this year. A new literacy assessment resource and professional learning opportunity for Grades 7-10 teachers was held in Huron and Perth Counties. The Strategic Plan outlines a Multi-Tiered System of Support for Literacy (K-8) to improve foundational reading skills. Goals include 80% of students achieving at or above benchmark on the reading screening assessment by the end of Grade 3, and a 5-10% improvement in EQAO reading and writing scores.
- **Mathematics:** The Math team has begun the year with a system-wide tour to promote "Number Talks" and introduced new combined grade lessons for the Math Scope and Sequence. They are also providing guidance to new and new-to-division teachers. The Strategic Plan outlines a goal of a 10% improvement in student achievement on provincial mathematics assessments in Grades 3, 6, and 9.
- **Attendance:** The Board's Strategic Plan aims for a 20% improvement in student attendance and an average daily student attendance of 95%. To support this, a new initiative, "Igniting the Spirit of Attendance," was launched, providing Grade 1 families with a package of resources and tips from the Ontario Association for Counselling and Attendance Services. The Strategic Plan also outlines a multi-tiered attendance support program.

Student Success & Operations

The Board is focused on providing rich learning opportunities and maintaining sound operational practices.

- **Specialized Programs & Pathways:** In line with the Strategic Plan's focus on experiential learning, secondary schools are offering various programs. These include the Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) programs, with students participating in training for First Aid/CPR, Working at Heights, and Elevated Work Platforms. Students also attended the Canadian Outdoor Farm Show and are participating in dual credit electrical courses with Conestoga College and other courses with Lambton College.
- **Nutritional Services:** The Nutritional Management Services Limited (NMS) provides food services at the two secondary schools, St. Anne's Catholic Secondary School and St. Michael Catholic Secondary School. NMS provided a cafeteria enhancement fund contribution of \$9,840.79 for the period of January 1 to June 30, 2025. New initiatives

introduced during the last school year included "Meals Around the World," with fish and chips and tacos being the most popular meals.

- **Enrolment Update:** The 2025-26 enrolment as of September 19 were 3,376.0 for elementary and 1,268.0 ADE for secondary pupils. Final numbers are expected to change up to the official count date of October 31, 2025.
- **Policy Updates:** Several policies were reviewed at the August 25, 2025 meeting and are now recommended for approval.
 - **School Generated Funds:** The revised policy was available for vetting and no changes were recommended.
 - **Fraud Prevention and Management:** This policy was also available for vetting with no changes recommended for approval.
 - **Advocacy:** The wording in the policy statement was changed from "The Board will support..." to "The Board supports...".
 - **Smoking and Vaping:** The revised policy removes the "first offence" distinction, allowing administrators to treat any occurrence as an offence. It also expands violations to include possession of products, whether or not they are lit, under the authority of the School Code of Conduct.

Upcoming Meetings and Events

- September 30: OCSTA Regional meeting in Guelph
- October 14: Trustee, Executive Leaders Retreat
- October 20: Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) meeting
- October 27: Regular Board meeting
- October 30: Bishop Fabbro's 75th Celebration in Windsor

To review the full version of the latest Board Meeting agenda and minutes check out our [Board Agendas and Minutes](#) webpage on our Board website. Any questions, please contact the Director's Office by emailing directorsoffice@huronperthcatholic.ca.