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Presented to: The Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board
Date: Monday, September 28, 2026
Submitted by: Karen Tigani, Chief Executive Officer

BOARD HIGHLIGHTS FOR SEPTEMBER

Public Session

BACKGROUND

Many activities take place every month throughout the district to ensure that our students have rich, faith-filled, 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 the Superintendents, Learning Coordinators, the Mental Health Lead, the OYAP Project Lead, and Corporate Managers of activities that take place under their leadership.

DEVELOPMENTS

The spiritual theme anchoring our Strategic Plan, “On Fire With The Spirit: Awaken! Illuminate! Rejoice!”, continues to guide our journey as a Catholic learning community. This year, we enter the final movement of our three-year theme with a particular focus on the call to Rejoice. Inspired by the Holy Spirit and enlivened by the Pentecost story, we begin this new school year filled with faith, hope, love and joy, giving thanks for the many gifts present within our students, staff, families, parishes and communities. September is a time of new beginnings, renewed energy, and joyful possibility across all Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board schools and at the Catholic Education Centre. Our schools have once again come alive as students and staff reconnect, relationships are renewed, classrooms return to learning, and communities gather in faith. There is a wonderful sense of enthusiasm and commitment as we look ahead to the learning, growth, faith formation, and joy-filled opportunities that await us. As we rejoice in the gift of Catholic education and journey together through the 2026–2027 school year, we are delighted to share some of the activities, learning, and celebrations that marked an exciting first month across our district.

CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Back-to-School Celebrations

Our schools have held liturgies, school Masses, and open houses to welcome students, staff, and families back for the new school year. These events are a great opportunity to build community and include various activities such as meeting staff, liturgical celebrations, and book fairs. Every school hosts an opening Mass or liturgy in September. Our staff continues to find meaningful ways to incorporate faith throughout the school day and to foster faith-filled leadership among students and staff. As our vision states, we model “faith and learning...celebrating the journey”

Catholic Education Kit for the First Week of School

The Ontario Catholic School Trustees Association (OCSTA) Catholic Education Kit for the First Week of School was shared with school principals. This kit includes morning announcements, daily prayers, and links to activities that support the theme of being “Artisans of Peace” throughout this school year. Religion and Family Life Learning Coordinator, Caroline Thuss, is a member of the OCSTA Catholic Education Week committee and serves as a local resource to teachers, educators and principals as they weave this theme into their lessons, prayers and activities throughout the year, mindfully aligning it with our board theme “On Fire with the Spirit: Rejoice”.

LEADERSHIP

Principal and Vice-Principal Kick-Off Retreat Days

On August 20 and 21, Huron-Perth Catholic DSB principals and vice-principals gathered for 2 back to back days at the Catholic Education Centre led by the Superintendents. These days were designed to prepare school leaders spiritually, instructionally, and operationally for the 2026–2027 school year. Grounded in the Board’s spiritual theme, On Fire with the Spirit – Rejoice, the retreat days invited school administrators to consider how Catholic leaders create the conditions for their schools to truly come alive through faith, learning, relationships, hope, and joy. The gathering began and ended in prayer, with CEO Karen Tigani welcoming administrators under the message “Rejoice & Be Glad!”

The first day emphasized shared leadership, Catholic identity, and operational readiness. School leaders participated in a School Boards’ Co-operative Inc. (SBCI) session focused on roles, responsibilities, risk mitigation, and health and safety for supervisors, followed by important start-up updates from Transportation, Information Technology, Facilities, Health and Safety, Finance and Procurement, and Business Services. These sessions helped ensure administrators entered the school year with clear expectations around areas such as technology and privacy, school budgets and generated funds, facilities and safety requirements, transportation, and other operational responsibilities. The afternoon shifted from operations to vocation through the “Rejoice Walk – What Makes a School Come Alive?”, a spiritual reflection walk and whole-group dialogue centred on what joy-filled Catholic schools should *look like, sound like, and feel like*.

Day Two moved intentionally into instructional leadership and implementation. Principals and vice-principals examined leadership in both numeracy and literacy, with a particular focus on starting strong and maximizing the impact of the opening weeks of the school year. Leaders considered how classroom presence, learning cycles, data, collaborative professional learning, student thinking, and purposeful feedback can strengthen teaching and learning. Time was also dedicated to preparing administrators to animate the opening Professional Development Days, challenging them not simply to deliver materials, but to welcome staff back with energy, faith, purpose, and the spirit of Rejoicing.

The retreat days concluded by moving from reflection to action. Administrators considered key policy and communication priorities, including the new Student and Family Support Office, emergency and lockdown procedures, system communication, attendance, and other elementary and secondary priorities. Each leader was challenged to identify a concrete leadership move for the year ahead and consider how it would be visible in practice from the very beginning of the school year. Together, the two days reflected a simple yet important leadership progression: **Rejoice** → **Lead** → **Animate** → **Act**—equipping our principals and vice-principals to return to their communities ready to lead Catholic schools where students and staff can learn, belong, flourish, and rejoice.

Safe Schools Leadership and Readiness: Virtual Leaders Learning Council (LLC)

On September 15, principals and vice-principals gathered virtually for a focused Safe Schools Leadership Meeting, continuing the system leadership work launched at the August Kick-Off Retreat. The session reinforced that creating safe, welcoming and inclusive Catholic schools is both a shared responsibility and an essential condition for student learning and well-being. Administrators reviewed key requirements and September priorities related to emergency preparedness, the Police-School Board Protocol, lockdown and hold-and-secure procedures, bullying prevention and intervention, progressive discipline, violent incident reporting, and staff responsibilities. The work was grounded in the Board's Student Behaviour, Discipline and Safety Policy and corresponding procedures, alongside Ministry direction, including PPM 144: Bullying Prevention and Intervention and PPM 145: Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour. The emphasis was on ensuring that provincial direction and Board policy translate into clear, consistent practices in every school.

Administrators also reviewed their immediate responsibilities for the opening of the school year, including updating school emergency response structures, reviewing procedures with staff, completing required drills, ensuring school Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plans are current and accessible, and reinforcing reporting and progressive discipline responsibilities. The discussion emphasized that safe-schools leadership is not simply about responding to incidents; it requires prevention, preparedness, consistent application of policy, and a supportive approach to student behaviour that promotes positive school climates. The Board's policy specifically frames discipline as both corrective and supportive, incorporating learning opportunities that reinforce positive behaviour. Principals and vice-principals will come back together in person on September 29 to continue the work that began at the Kick-Off Retreat, with a summary of that professional learning to be provided in the October Board Highlights.

Catholic Curriculum Corporation (CCC)

Our board is an active participant in the CCC, with many members of our Learning Coordination Team and Superintendent McDade serving on the Board of Representatives. They also contribute to the When Faith Meets Pedagogy (WFMP) Conference Planning Committee and the four individual Catholic Curriculum Councils (Elementary, Secondary, Faith, and Information Communication Technology - ICT).

In September, our team members attended the first of several WFMP conference planning meetings. As the co-host board for this conference over the next two years, we will be taking on an even greater leadership role in planning this conference, including planning and leading the liturgies and Mass, music ministry and workshop selection committee. We will be sending a delegation to this conference and presenting several workshops.

The Individual Councils are set to hold their first meetings in early October. The CCC's primary goals are to create, develop, and share resources that support and advance Catholic Education in Ontario. It serves as a vital network of Catholic leaders and educators, ensuring access to high-quality Catholic resources and support.

Indigenous Education

Across the district, schools marked Powley Day on September 19th with a range of engaging activities. Observed annually, Powley Day commemorates the landmark Supreme Court of Canada decision that affirmed Métis rights.

Learning continued through Truth and Reconciliation Week (Sept. 22–30), where students and staff participated in a variety of meaningful events. Highlights included an inspiring art session with Moses Lunham of Kettle and Stony Point First Nation, an elementary literacy activity, and virtual workshops hosted by the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation and the K - 12 Ministry of Education guidance and resource document, Observing the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

Off to a great start, students in two of our Perth elementary schools are thoroughly enjoying an enriching new lacrosse workshop. This is led by Indigenous Advisor and Grad Coach Josh Pagan. Junior and Intermediate classes are exploring the rich history and cultural significance of the game while learning hands-on skills to play the sport. Josh will continue to visit the remaining Perth Elementary Schools in the coming months.

A small group of educators and staff recently participated in an enriching professional learning series event hosted by King's College, further deepening our partnership with this post-secondary Catholic education institution. The session featured acclaimed author Tanya Talaga, who guided participants through Canadian history through an Indigenous lens—drawing from her work to examine how we arrived at this moment and what is needed to move toward a more equitable future. The evening began with a shared meal and networking, followed by the presentation and a collaborative debrief.

Elementary Sports Council

The Elementary Sports Council has successfully resumed its events for the new school year, kicking off with the first tournaments of the year: junior and senior soccer across both Huron and Perth counties.

Elementary Professional Development Day

On September 3, elementary staff participated in a full-day Professional Development event beginning with a whole-staff prayer service. Following the opening, office administrators, educational assistants, library technicians, and custodians spent the morning on various school-start preparations, while elementary educators engaged in targeted breakout sessions covering new curricula, curriculum continua, family life resources, intermediate subject areas, and meeting diverse learning needs. Before lunch, teachers transitioned to curriculum software training, focusing on EDWIN (Grades 1–8) and MathUP (Kindergarten). The afternoon concluded with mandatory, board-wide Health & Safety and Keeping Students Safe training for all staff.

Secondary Professional Development Day - Assessment and Evaluation Changes

On September 3, secondary teachers from both secondary schools participated in a learning session with Learning Coordinator D'Hondt about the new changes to Growing Success (Assessment, Evaluation, Reporting policy of the Ministry of Education) which were instituted by

the Ministry of Education and take effect this September. This included changes to course weightings, attendance & participation marks, mandatory final examinations, and the new financial literacy graduation requirement.

Teachers collaborated with their departmental colleagues to implement these changes to their course plans for the upcoming school year.

New Teacher Induction Program

Guided by the Learning Coordination Team, September marked a purposeful launch for our New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP) designed to uplift and support new teachers joining our Catholic learning community. To ensure a grounded and faith-filled start, the team initiated the year with a welcoming communication and hosted an engaging orientation session introducing new staff to board culture, spiritual priorities, and essential classroom practices in instruction and assessment. Furthering our commitment to job-embedded professional learning, new elementary teachers were provided with dedicated release time to meet directly with literacy and math coaches, establishing foundational instructional routines, navigating curriculum expectations, and building early classroom momentum to support student achievement from day one.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Mathematics

Guided by Learning Coordinator Christine Dale and Math Facilitators Hailey Cook and Brittany Wilson, September initiatives were anchored in our Strategic Plan, “On Fire with the Spirit” (centred on this year’s theme, Rejoice), and the core Mathematics Achievement Action Plan priorities (Knowing the Math, Knowing the Curriculum, and Knowing the Learner). The Math Team focused September on delivering foundational resources to support student achievement and classroom routines across the board. Key updates to the [Huron-Perth Catholic Math Scope & Sequence](#) included launching new Kindergarten curriculum lessons, Grades 1–8 programming integrated with Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) for the first two weeks, and practical guidance for combined-grade classrooms. To foster students’ mathematical reasoning and recall skills, the team continued to support daily K–9 Number Talks and Cumulative Review retrieval routines, while equipping educators for a successful start to the school year through updated September Checklists and expanded resources in the Math Depot. Additionally, dedicated support was provided for new educators and those transitioning to new divisions, offering funded release time for 1-on-1 coaching with a math facilitator to build robust classroom routines, navigate curriculum expectations, and ensure a strong start to the school year. At the system leadership level, the Board Math Lead Superintendent McDade and Learning Coordinator Christine Dale represented Huron-Perth Catholic at provincial-wide, Ministry-led strategic planning sessions to align local initiatives with broader provincial achievement targets.

Literacy

The Literacy team welcomed Teresa Oud as Learning Coordinator and Sandra Irwin as Literacy Resource Teacher this month as both stepped into their new roles this year. The team aligned their goals with the Board’s strategic plan, establishing shared priorities and consistent messaging to guide their support across the system. On September 3rd, the team led a professional development session focused on the new 2026 Ontario Kindergarten Curriculum. Participants deepened their understanding of the four strands, with particular attention to key literacy expectations and effective instructional practices, while building on learning introduced in prior sessions.

The team has been actively supporting new and new-to-division teachers as they establish their literacy blocks, providing guidance on using assessment data to inform instruction and connecting educators with evidence-based resources. To support teachers at the start of the year, the team created and shared September Checklists for each division, highlighting key assessment tools, resources available in the [Primary](#) and [Junior/Intermediate](#) Literacy Warehouses, and considerations for using student data to guide instruction. Additionally, the team is preparing to support all Kindergarten to Grade 2 teachers with Beginning-of-Year literacy screening using Acadience Learning Online, marking the second year of using this digital platform to provide accessible data to inform instruction and intervention.

In addition, Learning Coordinators Paul D'Hondt, Jessica Langan, and Teresa Oud collaborated to offer professional learning focused on secondary literacy intervention within the Learning Strategies (GLE) courses. The September 18 session brought together teachers from St. Michael and St. Anne's Catholic Secondary Schools, with school Special Education Resource Teachers (SERTs) and administrators also invited to participate. The session highlighted *Corrective Reading* along with additional resources, including Edwin and ONlit's *Learning Through Literacy*, to support responsive instruction, monitor student progress, and determine appropriate next steps.

French as a Second Language

We are pleased to welcome Alexandra Hartsell as our new System Support Teacher for French. This month, Alexandra has been connecting and working alongside new and new-to-division Core French teachers across the Board, supporting them as they begin the year. She has been sharing resources, providing guidance on assessment and evaluation, and offering responsive support to help educators navigate the unique aspects of the itinerant teaching role.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Empower Training

On September 18 and 21, teachers who are new to teaching the Empower Reading Program attended a two-day training session. The Empower Reading program is a tier 3 reading intervention program offered in all of our elementary schools.

Lexia

1000 Lexia Core5 Reading licenses were purchased for students across the system for the 2026-27 school year. Lexia Core5 Reading supports educators in providing differentiated literacy instruction for students of all abilities in grades pre-K–5. The board purchased Lexia licenses for current Empower students, Empower graduates, as well as all Grade 1 students. Licenses were also purchased for other students who schools identified as benefiting from this intervention. Lexia and PowerUp licenses were purchased for students in secondary school where requested as well.

Special Education System-Wide PD Day

On September 2, 2026, K-12 educators, administrators, and system staff across the district gathered for a dedicated Professional Development Day titled “Belonging by Design: The Student-Centred IEP”. The day focused on transforming Individual Education Plans (IEPs) into empowering, living pedagogical tools that foster true student belonging.

Key Takeaways & Session Overview

- **Keynote & Workshop:** Dr. Jacqueline Specht from Western University delivered an inspiring keynote, "The Heart & Head of Inclusion," focusing on grounding classroom practices in strength-based, rights-based approaches. She followed with a workshop "The Hands of the IEP" designed to strip away educational jargon and build actionable strategies for everyday teaching.
- **Collaborative Afternoon Working Session:** Facilitated by school principals with Catholic Education Centre (CEC) support, school teams spent the afternoon reviewing foundational board and provincial IEP guidelines.
- **Putting Practice into Action:** Educators collaborated on class profiles, applied the morning's learning using the Clevr platform, and began drafting student-centered IEPs aligned with district standards.
- **Reflective Practice:** The day concluded with school-based reflections centered on eliminating deficit-focused language, ensuring IEPs remain active instructional guides, and building collective support among school staff.

Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (NVCi) Training - September 4

On September 4, Educational Assistants (EAs) and Designated Early Childhood Educators (DECEs) from across the district gathered for a full-day Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (NVCi) training session. Hosted across three sites including St. Joseph's in Clinton, St. Michael CSS, and the Catholic Education Centre, staff engaged in both initial certification and refresher courses tailored to their prior training. This comprehensive professional learning reinforced proactive strategies, de-escalation techniques, and safety protocols, equipping our frontline support teams with the skills and confidence to foster safe, nurturing, and inclusive environments for all students as the new school year begins.

DIGITAL TOOLS TO SUPPORT LEARNING

Edwin

Following the Ministry of Education's recent investment to modernize classroom resources across Ontario, expanded access to Edwin was provided to all Grades 1–12 teachers starting in September 2026. While the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board previously funded access specifically for Grades 6–8, this provincial initiative broadens interactive, curriculum-aligned tools board-wide. Edwin serves as the core resource for Science, Social Studies, History, and Geography. For other subject areas, board-supported foundational programs remain primary: *Growing in Faith*, *Growing in Christ* and *Blessed & Beloved* remain the Board's foundational core resources for Religion and Family Life. Kindergarten to Grade 2 classrooms continue implementing *UFLI Foundations* for Language, while *MathUP*, *Knowledgehook*, and the Board's *Scope and Sequence* lessons remain the primary instructional resources for Mathematics. To ensure smooth implementation, members of the Learning Coordination team finalized system workflows in late August, and all teachers engaged in dedicated training during the September 3 Professional Development Day.

Artificial Intelligence

As we enter the 2026–2027 school year, the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board (HPCDSB) is proactively shaping the future of digital learning by integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) into secondary education while prioritizing academic integrity and digital citizenship. This year, Google AI tools, including Gemini and Notebook, are being made available to students in Grades 9–12 to foster modern research, critical thinking, and learning skills. To ensure balanced

oversight, teachers will have access to the *Revision History* tool, allowing educators to analyze document edit trails, time spent drafting, and copy-paste activity to verify authentic student work. Complementing these tools, HPCDSB is developing dedicated student instructional modules to explicitly teach the ethical, effective, and responsible use of AI. Laying the groundwork for this launch, Superintendent Sean McDade, Learning Coordinators Paul D'Hondt and Jenna Meyers, and secondary administrative teams completed three days of intensive professional learning prior to the school year, focusing on pedagogical AI integration, academic integrity standards, and leadership strategies to support students and staff in this evolving digital landscape.

Chromebook Program

The Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board's 1:1 Chromebook Initiative continues to support learning across all elementary and secondary schools, ensuring every student has reliable access to digital learning tools. At the start of the 2026–2027 academic year, all Grade 9 students and newly registered secondary students were deployed a Chromebook following the completion of the Assumption of Responsibility Agreement, adhering to Information and Communications Technology Policy 3.2.1.

Learning Management Systems

HPCDSB remains committed to blended learning by equipping all classrooms with robust Learning Management Systems (LMS), such as Google Classroom and D2L (Brightspace). These platforms complement traditional classroom instruction, offering an integrated, flexible environment that enriches student engagement and supports differentiated learning across all grade levels.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING PROGRAMS IN SECONDARY

Experiential Learning: Skilled Trades, Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM), Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP) & Dual Credit

September marks the beginning of another active year of Skilled Trades, Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM), Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP), Cooperative Education and Dual Credit opportunities at St. Anne's Catholic Secondary School and St. Michael Catholic Secondary School. Throughout September, students at both secondary schools are being introduced to pathway opportunities, industry certifications, apprenticeship programs, college experiences, and experiential learning opportunities that connect classroom learning with post-secondary education and careers.

SHSM Program Recruitment

Classroom visits, information sessions, and registration opportunities are taking place throughout September for Grade 11 and 12 students interested in joining SHSM programs at both secondary schools. Shared SHSM sectors between both schools include Agriculture, Arts & Culture, Business, Construction, Health & Wellness, Non-Profit, and Sport. Additionally, St. Anne's CSS (SACSS) offers Education & Child Care, while St. Michael CSS (SMCSS) offers Environment and Transportation. These programs provide students with opportunities to earn industry-recognized certifications, gain sector-specific experience, and explore pathways to apprenticeship, college, university, and employment.

SHSM Certifications and Safety Training

Students across both secondary schools are participating in a variety of certifications and safety training opportunities during September. Shared training offered across both schools includes First Aid/CPR, Working at Heights, Elevated Work Platform, WHMIS, Basic Health and Safety,

Infection Control, Lockout/Tagout, and Confined Space. Additional specialized training offered exclusively at St. Michael CSS includes Allergy Awareness, Diabetes Training, and Concussion Management. Specific September training dates include:

- **SACSS** : First Aid/CPR (15–16), Working at Heights (21–22), Elevated Work Platform (23).
- **SMCSS**: First Aid/CPR (11 & 14), Working at Heights (16), Elevated Work Platform (21, pending final cost confirmation).

Agriculture Experiential Learning

September 15 -17, students in SHSM Agriculture and Health & Wellness programs at both secondary schools are being provided with opportunities to experience large-scale agricultural events and connect classroom learning with industry. SACSS and SMCSS students are both being considered for participation in Canada's Outdoor Farm Show in Woodstock and the International Plowing Match & Rural Expo in Walkerton September 22–26, 2026.

OYAP and Level 1 Apprenticeship Opportunities

Information sessions and student recruitment for OYAP Level 1 opportunities continue throughout September at both secondary schools to provide a direct pathway toward apprenticeship and skilled trades careers. At SACSS, 10 candidates are currently exploring Level 1 opportunities in Millwright, Automotive Service Technician, Electrical, Plumbing, and Truck and Coach, with interview preparation beginning in September for Conestoga College programs. At SMCSS, three students are participating in Level 1 Welding through Technical Training Group (TTG), scheduled to begin September 18.

MCT4C Trades Mathematics

Both secondary schools are offering opportunities connected to MCT4C Trades Mathematics through Ministry-supported programming. Ministry funding supports a dedicated section of MCT4C at St. Anne's CSS for the 2026–27 school year, connecting concepts like trigonometry, geometric measurement, and unit conversions to practical applications, alongside planned partnerships with local Huron County electrical and construction employers. Trades Mathematics is also being offered at St. Michael CSS through Ministry funding to help students apply mathematics to technology and skilled trades.

Duke of Edinburgh's International Award

Exclusively at St. Anne's CSS, students will be introduced during September SHSM sector meetings to the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award. This initiative provides an internationally recognized credential that aligns with the SHSM model through skills development, physical recreation, voluntary service, goal setting, personal development, and an adventurous journey.

SkillPlan Skilled Trades Resources

St. Anne's CSS plans to incorporate SkillPlan's free skilled trades resources to help students develop mathematics, problem-solving, and communication skills required for trade pathways. SACSS is also collaborating with Mathematics teachers to connect these resources directly with the MCT4C curriculum.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Rejoicing Together: A Positive Start to Student Attendance

Throughout September, we rejoiced in the fresh start of a new school year as students across the board returned with energy, hope, and a renewed commitment to positive attendance. The month began with strong collaboration among caregivers, administrators, and school teams, who worked together to create welcoming, supportive environments that encouraged every student to re-engage confidently from day one.

Over the past few weeks, the attendance counsellor actively supported schools by monitoring overall attendance patterns, connecting with families, and offering early, proactive outreach when emerging concerns appeared. This consistent presence helped strengthen positive attendance habits, reinforce routines, and celebrate the many students who demonstrated steady engagement and a joyful return to learning.

World Suicide Prevention Day – September 10

The Mental Health and Wellness Team (MHWT) shared a World Suicide Prevention Day Resource to support awareness, connection, and care in our schools. This resource is designed to equip staff with practical strategies for preventing and responding to suicidality, information about risk and protective factors, and Huron-Perth Mental Health & Community Resources. A companion caregiver resource was also shared to help caregivers increase their understanding of risk factors, warning signs, and how they can support their child.

School Service Advisory Council (SSAC) Symposium: Supporting Student Mental Health

HPCDSB was pleased to participate in the annual School Service Advisory Committee (SSAC) Symposium alongside the Avon Maitland District School Board and community partners from across Huron-Perth. The symposium brought together professionals providing services within school settings to strengthen relationships, share best practices, and enhance coordinated supports for children, youth, and families.

Participants engaged in collaborative learning focused on tiered approaches to student mental health and well-being, while deepening their understanding of key community frameworks, including the Huron Perth Mental Health & Suicide Crisis Response Protocol and the Huron Perth Child & Youth Sexual Violence Support Guide (Erin's Law). The event reinforced the importance of strong partnerships and an integrated approach to supporting students with increasingly complex needs.

Caregiver Workshop: Parenting with Confidence

As part of our ongoing commitment to student mental health and well-being, Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board was pleased to partner with Avon Maitland District School Board once again offer Parenting With Confidence for caregivers across Huron-Perth. Facilitated by child psychologist Dr. Jennifer McTaggart, the session provided practical, evidence-informed strategies to help caregivers better understand and respond to their child's emotional needs.

Caregivers explored ways to strengthen connection, support emotional regulation, and navigate parenting challenges with confidence. The workshop reflected HPCDSB's belief that supporting the adults in children's lives is an important part of promoting positive mental health and well-being. By creating opportunities for families to learn from leading experts, the Board continues to strengthen partnerships with caregivers and support student success both at home and at school.

OASBSWL Symposium Promotes Provincial Collaboration

Our Mental Health Lead is participating in the OASBSWL Symposium occurring September 21-23. She will be joining school board social work leaders from across Ontario for professional learning, networking, and collaboration. The symposium provided an opportunity to share leading practices, engage in ministry planning discussions, and strengthen collective efforts to support student mental health and well-being across the province. Participation in provincial learning opportunities such as this reflects our commitment to continuous improvement and evidence-informed practices that support positive outcomes for students and families

FACILITIES AND HEALTH AND SAFETY

Joint Health and Safety Committee

The Joint Health and Safety Committee met on September 16th. Topics discussed included the following:

- Election of new Worker/Co-Chair Election
- eBase Reporting
- Health and Safety School Rep Training
- JHSC Terms of Reference Update
- Monthly and Annual Inspections
- Geographical Breakdown Review
- Incident Reporting
- Annual Review of Policies

Health & Safety Representatives from each site attended an annual H&S Representative Training session on September 16th. This training took place at the Catholic Education Centre (CEC) immediately following the main Joint Health & Safety Committee meeting.

This session is designed to introduce key compliance processes, provide hands-on system training, hold an open Q&A, and give representatives the opportunity to meet our Health & Safety Officer alongside members of the Joint Health & Safety Committee.

Topics Covered:

- Role Expectations: Guidance for H&S Representatives
- Inspection Best Practices: Standardized H&S checklists and inspection protocols
- Bulletin Board Compliance: Mandatory posting requirements for site H&S boards
- eBase System Training: How to submit site inspection reports
- Open Discussion: Q&A session

FINANCE & PROCUREMENT

2025/26 Fiscal Year-End

The finance department is focused on the 2025/26 fiscal year-end currently underway. Financial data is being finalized for the year in order to complete year-end reconciliations and reviews. The interim audit work has been completed with BDO, our external auditors, and the year-end audit field work will commence in October.

Classroom Supplies Fund

The procurement department has supported the implementation of the newly established Classroom Supplies Fund by setting up and administering dedicated accounts for Elementary Classroom Teachers

on the new Staples portal. This new initiative from the Ministry provides each classroom with a \$750 allocation for teachers to directly acquire resources for their classroom.

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Supporting Safe Use of Digital Applications

Throughout September, ICT continues to review learning and administrative applications with curriculum leaders, the Privacy Office and Procurement. Reviews assess how vendors handle student and staff information, clarify appropriate uses and confirm data protection terms. This work supports the Board's obligations under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA) and implementation of new requirements under the Enhancing Digital Security and Trust Act, 2024 (EDSTA).

Strengthening Staff Account Security

ICT will continue building on existing account protections while preparing for the introduction of passkeys. September work is focused on technical readiness and staff support across Board devices, strengthening protection against unauthorized access while keeping everyday sign-in practical.

Continuing Provincial Cybersecurity Collaboration

The Board is continuing its participation in Phase 2 of Ontario's K–12 Cyber Security Operating Model (CSOM), building on existing cybersecurity assessment and improvement work. ICT attended the September 24th provincial kickoff to review priorities and supports for 2026–27, informing further work to protect information and maintain dependable technology services.

Advancing Student Information Reporting Readiness

ICT and System Special Education are already preparing for October's new Ministry reporting requirement identifying students with complex special education needs. ICT is confirming the release timing of Edsempi's required system update. September coordination will focus on system readiness and targeted support for affected schools to record the information accurately.

Secure Management of School Bus Video

ICT continues to work with Huron Perth Student Transportation Services and Avon Maitland District School Board on secure management of requested bus footage. September priorities include operator access and consistent instructions for requesting, uploading, viewing and retaining recordings. The Board's SharePoint repository limits school administrator access to their assigned schools, supporting student safety investigations while protecting privacy.

RECOMMENDATION

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