



## REPORT TO THE HURON-PERTH CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

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Submitted by: Karen Tigani, Director of Education and Secretary

# BOARD HIGHLIGHTS FOR MAY

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 Superintendents of Education, Learning Coordinators, the Mental Health Lead, the OYAP Project Lead, and Managers of activities that take place under their leadership.

## DEVELOPMENTS

The month of May is a beautiful and meaningful time in the school calendar, as we celebrate Catholic Education Week and honour our Blessed Mother, Mary. It is a season filled with hope and devotion, marked by the renewed enthusiasm and deep commitment of our students, staff, educators, and families. We are inspired by the incredible learning and growth that continue to propel us forward as we journey together, living out our Board's theme: *On Fire with the Spirit*. We are pleased to highlight some of the many activities and opportunities that have taken place across our district this month.

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## CATHOLIC EDUCATION

### Catholic Education Week 2026

Catholic Education Week was a significant success throughout our system. The week began with a system-wide Mass celebrated by Rev. Innocent Ibeh, where we were blessed to have students from St. Boniface, Zurich, and St. Joseph, Clinton led our music ministry. There were several priests, deacons from our Deanery in attendance as well. We enjoyed the presence of many staff members, students, lay ecclesial ministers, and community members as we celebrated Catholic education within our system.

Following Mass, the Board of Trustees presented awards to community members including students, staff and volunteers who met the criteria for the Catholic Student Leadership Award (grounded in the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations), the Saint Teresa Faith in Action Awards, and a new member was inducted into the Order of Saint Andre Bessette.

Throughout the week, individual schools held liturgies and Masses, celebrating our schools and honouring Mother Mary. Students participated in lessons and activities developed by the Ontario Catholic Schools Trustees Association, and additional activities co-created by the board's Religion and Family Life Learning Coordinator and the Mental Health Team to mark Children's Mental Health Week within the context of our Catholic schools.

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## **LEADERSHIP**

### **Catholic Curriculum Corporation (CCC) AGM**

Members of the Learning Coordination Team along with Superintendent McDade and Director Tigani, attended the Catholic Curriculum Corporation Annual General Meeting in Toronto on May 7 and 8. During the May 7 council meetings discussions focused on how best to support students in Catholic education across various subject areas. Also, a major focus of the work of the CCC is planning Canada's largest Catholic Curriculum Conference, *When Faith Meets Pedagogy*, which is held in Toronto every October.

We are proud to be a "co-host board" of this conference for the next two years, working with the Durham Catholic District School Board. The When Faith Meets Pedagogy Conference workshop selection committee met to finalize the workshops that will be selected. Our Religion and Family Life Learning Coordinator, Caroline Thuss, chairs this committee.

### **Leader's Learning Council**

During the May 12, virtual LLC, vice-principals, principals and learning coordinators engaged in discussions surrounding shared leadership and reviewed recent updates about the 2026-2027 school planners. The meeting also included a review of the Board's Concussion Management Policy (P2.1.19). Time was also dedicated to a special education update that focused on the implementation of transition support packages for students transitioning from grade-to-grade and an update regarding the Removing Barriers for Students with Disabilities Project: Strategic Implementation for Intermediate and Senior Multi-Tiered System of Support (Gr. 7-12+). The session concluded with general updates from the Superintendents of Education.

At our in-person LLC on May 26, 2026, our school leaders will gather to deepen their commitment to academic excellence and equity in mathematics. We are privileged to be joined by special guest speaker Cathy Montreuil, whose extensive experience in system leadership provided invaluable support to our principals. The session will focus on the transformative power of formative assessment, specifically leveraging Knowledgehook to gain real-time insights into student understanding. By utilizing short learning cycles, our educators are empowered to make agile, data-driven adjustments to their teaching practice. This iterative approach ensures that we are meeting every student where they are, honouring their individual gifts, and fostering a community where all learners can thrive in their mathematical journey.

In the afternoon, following the math learning session, principals and system leaders will spend time reviewing and reflecting on their Pastoral Plans and engage in a discussion focused on how we can continue to support each other in forming disciples and strengthening the parish/school partnership.

### **Partnership Meeting with Huron-Perth Children's Aid Society (CAS)**

Members of the senior team and leaders from the Huron-Perth CAS met to discuss joint priorities and affirm communication protocols. This partnership is important in supporting

students and families. In addition to discussion pathways and protocols for support when appropriate, this was a helpful opportunity to share information about community resources that are available and work together to ensure as many families as possible are aware of the parent and family support opportunities available across Huron and Perth counties.

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## **STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

### **Mathematics**

Throughout May, the Huron-Perth Catholic Math Team accelerated system-wide momentum by connecting strategic leadership with focused, classroom-level support. To strengthen this work through a data-informed lens, Cathy Montreuil spent an afternoon mentoring our two Math Facilitators and Math Learning Coordinator on how to support school leaders in using Knowledgehook and short learning cycles to respond dynamically to teacher and student learning needs in mathematics. This commitment to using evidence to “know the learner” further informed classroom visits in Grades 3 and 6, where the team gathered concrete evidence of system priorities in action and engaged students in conversations about their mathematical thinking. In preparation for EQAO, Math Facilitators continued supporting Grade 3 and 6 classrooms through the use of released assessment items designed to reinforce curriculum expectations and strengthen confidence with problem solving. Instructional support emphasized direct modelling and teacher think-alouds to help students approach multi-step tasks with increasing independence and precision. The Math Learning Coordinator represented Huron-Perth Catholic at the elementary council and AGM of the Catholic Curriculum Corporation, at Ministry mathematics meetings, and at secondary school mathematics department professional learning sessions. The Math Team also contributed to Kindergarten professional learning sessions by introducing Kindergarten teachers and DECEs to the new mathematics expectations within the Kindergarten curriculum, highlighting the strong alignment between early years mathematics learning and the Grades 1–9 mathematics curriculum.

On May 14th, 2026, Superintendent McDade and Learning Coordinator D’Hondt participated in the EQAO Data in Action Symposium. This virtual event allowed EQAO to share data intended to assist school boards in refining their educational strategies. The session concentrated on two primary areas: student performance within priority schools and an analysis of the time allocated by students to individual questions during the Grade 9 Math assessment. Key findings revealed that 20% of student responses across the province were submitted without sufficient time spent understanding the prompts. Furthermore, data indicates that students who performed well overall varied their time spent on each question, depending on its difficulty, where students who were not successful on the assessment lacked such variability. Both of these provincial insights point to the importance of calm focus, and strategies to ensure students are better able to demonstrate their understanding overall.

### **Literacy**

Throughout the month of May, the system literacy team’s commitment to early intervention in literacy remained a key focus. The system literacy team concluded a successful 10-week intervention cycle in May, during which Literacy Resource Teachers (LRTs) Karen Kramers and Teresa Oud provided intensive whole-class and small-group support to students in Kindergarten and Grade 1 at Holy Name of Mary, St. Boniface, Precious Blood, and St. Joseph’s in Clinton. This targeted work demonstrated the importance of strong Tier 1 instruction as a proactive measure to address reading gaps before they become larger challenges. Following this, the system team moved their efforts toward the third and final End of Year Screening (EOY) for all students in Senior Kindergarten through Grade 2. This process acts as a key part of the

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) in the strategic plan, as it provides the accurate data needed to identify students at risk of future reading difficulties and helps inform how to best support their continued progress. The data gathered also plays a key role in helping the district make informed decisions about class placements and potential early interventions for September. This EOY screening will continue into June.

### **French as a Second Language: DELF**

On May 11, 12, and 13th almost 30 Grade 12 Core and French Immersion students from St Anne's CSS and St Michael CSS challenged the DELF (Diplôme d'études en langue française) exam. DELF is an internationally recognized proficiency exam from France. It is based on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), which defines language proficiency along six global levels: A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, and C2. At each level, proficiency is measured across four competencies: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The French Ministry of National Education awards a diploma to successful candidates. HPCDSB offered the A2 and B1 and B2 tests this year.

This is an extremely valuable initiative that promotes linguistic diversity and cultural understanding. By offering the DELF, students can assess and certify their French language proficiency, opening doors to broader educational and career opportunities in a globalized world while fostering a deep appreciation for the French language and culture. Challenging the DELF is not a required component of the regular FSL program, nor is it a replacement for the French program. Students who are in French Immersion and Core French continue to work toward earning their French Immersion Certificate and FSL credits, with the DELF being an additional option. DELF test results are not included in any course evaluation or final report card grades.

### **Early Years**

On May 27 and 28, the system literacy and mathematics team, led by MJ Drager and Christine Dale, facilitated a professional development session for all Kindergarten teachers and their DECE partners. This training focused on the upcoming implementation of the new Kindergarten curriculum in September 2026. Educators engaged in a thorough exploration of the curriculum changes, including a deep dive into the updated literacy and mathematics expectations. This professional learning was highly relevant, providing teams with a valuable opportunity to reflect on their current classroom practices and identify new, effective ways of supporting our youngest learners as they prepare for the transition.

Kindergarten Orientation days have also begun in our elementary schools this month. In collaboration with our bus companies, new junior kindergarten students and their families have been welcomed into our schools. These events are geared toward creating an opportunity for families to meet school staff and have some bus safety training. It is very exciting to welcome our newest learners and families into our schools!

### **eLearning**

Coordinator D'Hondt represented the board in Kanata, Ontario, from May 5–7th, attending both the Catholic Virtual Ontario (CVO) meeting and the Ontario eLearning Consortium (OELC) EmpowerED Ottawa Summit. Throughout the week, he participated in provincial discussions regarding the scaling of Catholic online course offerings and shared insights on technical best practices for the Brightspace platform. He also joined the AI Working Group huddle to help shape the board's strategic framework for the ethical use of generative AI in education.

## **Indigenous Education**

The Indigenous Education Teacher Lead was invited to engage in a review of library resources at St. Boniface School, focusing on the representation and accuracy of Indigenous resources. The Indigenous Education Advisory Committee (IEAC) has been invited to offer insight and input into this process. The committee is liaising with other Indigenous Education leads from other school boards to inform this process, learning from their experiences, suggestions and processes. When ready, recommendations based on these findings, will be presented by the Indigenous Education Teacher Lead and Superintendent of Education to the Director of Education for consideration.

The Indigenous Education Teacher Lead attended the Southwest Regional Leads meeting in London recently. This session facilitated vital networking and support among regional peers, with a specific focus on collaborating on Self-Identification strategies, financial reporting, and Action Plan frameworks. Furthermore, we continue a partnership with Indigenous Leads from various Catholic school boards focused on the ongoing development of a dedicated Indigenous unit for the Grade 11 World Religions course, ensuring the curriculum reflects authentic voices and Catholic teachings.

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## ***SPECIAL EDUCATION***

### **Ontario Council for Administrators in Special Education Presentation**

The Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board is proud to share that the Coordinator of Special Education, alongside the Managing Director of Facile Perth, presented at the Ontario Council for Administrators in Special Education (OCASE) conference on May 14. The presentation, *“Partners in Transition: Exploring Cross-Sector Approaches to Supporting Student Transitions in Rural Communities,”* highlighted the collaborative work between Facile Futures and the Board through the *Building Bright Futures* initiative. This partnership supports youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities, ages 14–25, as they transition from school into meaningful community-based futures. The presentation focused on person-directed planning, valued roles, and the intentional use of school, family, and community relationships to expand opportunities for youth in rural communities. Participants also learned about innovative approaches that support students in accessing natural community spaces in socially meaningful ways, while helping to shift perspectives and possibilities for youth, families, and the broader community.

### **New Teacher Learning Day Focused on Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)**

On May 15, the Learning Coordination Team welcomed new teachers from across the board for a professional learning day titled “Every Student, Every Tier: Bridging the Gap in Your First Year.” The day focused on strengthening understanding and implementation of a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) through collaborative learning and practical classroom strategies. Sessions explored MTSS foundations, the three-tiered framework, collaboration and school-based supports, and effective instructional practices in literacy and mathematics. Teachers also engaged in learning around high-leverage instructional moves and reflected on next steps for supporting diverse student needs in their classrooms. This learning opportunity reinforced the Board’s commitment to supporting new educators and ensuring every student has access to responsive, evidence-informed instruction and intervention.

### **Educational Assistant Onboarding Day**

On May 22, the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board (HPCDSB) welcomed newly hired Educational Assistants for a comprehensive onboarding session focused on supporting student success, inclusion, and well-being across our schools. The day provided participants with an

introduction to HPCDSB's faith-based mission and values, while also exploring the essential role Educational Assistants play in creating safe, caring, and inclusive learning environments. Sessions focused on differentiating roles within the classroom, supporting diverse learners, confidentiality, inclusive instructional strategies, and an introduction to exceptionalities. Educational Assistants also engaged in learning related to Applied Behavioural Analysis (ABA), data collection, personal care supports, technology in education, workplace safety, and maintaining professional boundaries.

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## ***MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING***

### **Children's Mental Health Week: Better Together - Cultivating Connections**

During Children's Mental Health Week, many of our Elementary schools celebrated Children's Mental Health week by wearing green and participating in our Mental Health and Wellness curated activities throughout the week. St Anne's CSS (SACSS) and St Michael CSS (SMCSS) celebrated the theme of connection, highlighting how meaningful relationships and shared experiences strengthen student well-being. SACSS, led by Student Council and Chaplaincy, offered a full week of connection-focused activities that included: comfy clothing and PJ day and positive-note kindness initiatives, to therapy dog visits, outdoor gatherings, and a vibrant Colour Run, which are all designed to bring students together in joy, in-person connection, and belonging. At SMCSS, the outdoor Coffee House created a warm, welcoming space for conversation, music, snacks, and board games, giving students a relaxed opportunity to connect with peers and staff.

Across our district, the week emphasized that connection to self, to others, and to community which is a foundational protective factor for child and youth mental health, and each activity offered students meaningful ways to strengthen those connections in supportive and memorable ways.

### **Spring School Services Advisory Committee (SSAC) Meeting:**

Each May, the Mental Health Lead co-facilitates the in-person Student Support Advisory Committee (SSAC) meeting alongside the Avon Maitland District School Board's Mental Health Lead. This year's session was hosted at the Catholic Education Centre, welcoming approximately 25 valued community partners who deliver essential social services and classroom programming that support our shared mission of nurturing the whole student.

The half-day session focused on meaningful collaboration, with activities designed to deepen our understanding of emerging student needs and strengthen coordinated service pathways between home, school, and community. These conversations continue to reinforce our collective commitment to responsive, integrated support for students and families.

The SSAC will reconvene in September for a full day of professional learning and collaboration at our annual symposium.

### **Mental Health Week Caregiver Events: Supporting Healthy Technology Use—Better Together**

As part of Catholic Education Week and Mental Health Week 2026, the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board (HPCDSB), in partnership with the Avon Maitland District School Board, hosted two engaging parent/caregiver and student learning events focused on supporting youth well-being in a digital world.

Held on May 5, 2026, at St. Anne's Catholic Secondary School and May 25, 2026, at St. Michael Catholic Secondary School, these sessions feature author and speaker Katherine Martinko (Childhood Unplugged; The Analog Family Substack). Each event included same-day presentations for our Catholic secondary students alongside evening sessions for parents and caregivers, creating a shared learning experience that strengthened home-school connections.

Martinko explored the impact of excessive screen use on children's mental health and overall well-being, offering clear, evidence-informed strategies to help families establish healthy boundaries around technology and social media. Caregivers were equipped with practical tools and approachable conversation scripts to support balanced technology use, encourage face-to-face relationships, and foster age-appropriate independence.

These sessions directly reflect this year's CAMH Mental Health Week theme - *Come Together, Canada: Stronger Connections, Better Mental Health* which emphasizes the importance of connection, open dialogue, and collective responsibility in supporting mental health. This focus on connection also reflects the spirit of Catholic Education Week, which calls us to build caring, faith-filled communities where students, families, and educators come together to support the dignity and well-being of every person. By engaging both students and caregivers in a shared learning environment, these events highlighted the vital role of collaborative education in navigating today's digital landscape.

Supporting youth mental health requires a united approach, where schools and families work together to build awareness, strengthen relationships, and promote healthy habits around screens and technology. Notably, 106 caregivers registered for the sessions to date with additional participants joining the event without pre-registration. This indicates that our caregivers and community partners have a strong interest in this important topic.

### **Ontario Association of Attendance and Counselling Services Annual Conference**

Our Mental Health Lead and Attendance Counsellor are attending the Ontario Association of Counselling and Attendance Services (OACAS) 2026 Annual Attendance Conference. The theme of the conference is *"Take What You Need: Empower Your Mind, Strengthen Your Practice"* which represents a strategic opportunity to strengthen our board's attendance programming through access to provincial expertise, evidence-based practices, and cross-board collaboration. The conference will support staff capacity building in attendance compliance, data accuracy, and intervention strategies, while providing practical tools to address complex and chronic absenteeism. This learning directly aligns with our strategic priorities related to student engagement, well-being, equity, and system effectiveness, ensuring that our attendance processes remain responsive and aligned with evolving ministry expectations. We particularly look forward to the Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL) session, which will deepen our understanding of flexible, student-centered pathways for learners at risk of disengagement while reinforcing accountability requirements. Insights gained from this session will support the enhancement of our SAL programming, enabling more effective re-engagement of vulnerable students, improved credit accumulation, and stronger overall attendance outcomes.

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### ***DIGITAL TOOLS TO SUPPORT LEARNING***

Over the last month, we have achieved significant milestones in both digital safety and innovative pedagogy through strategic collaboration and targeted professional development. By partnering with the Halton Catholic, Bruce-Grey Catholic, and St. Clair Catholic District School

Boards, we have finalized an implementation plan for student cyber safety learning resources, utilizing Ministry funding to deploy Cyber Legends and KnowledgeFlow resources. This regional synergy ensures our board meets the legislative mandates for cybersecurity while providing students with faith-based digital citizenship training.

Simultaneously, we successfully transitioned from our recent Artificial Intelligence Professional Development Day for elementary staff and our Highschool AI Summit into high-impact coaching sessions for secondary teachers on the use of NotebookLM. These sessions empowered educators to integrate AI as a "source-grounded" research co-pilot, directly supporting our use of the tool and ensuring that our staff interact with AI in a safe, ethical, and academically rigorous environment.

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## **EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING PROGRAMS**

The Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board was well-represented at the Skills Ontario Provincial Competition held from May 4–6, 2026, at the Toronto Congress Centre. Our elementary and secondary teams joined thousands of students from across the province to showcase their technical expertise, creativity, and dedication. These competitions provided our students with invaluable experiential learning opportunities, allowing them to apply classroom knowledge to real-world challenges in the skilled trades and STEM fields.

We are incredibly proud to report that HPCDSB continues to be a provincial leader in these sectors, with four of our entries reaching the podium. Congratulations are extended to the Sacred Heart, Wingham Construction team for winning Gold, and to the student from St. Michael, Stratford, who secured Gold in the Aesthetics category. Furthermore, our teams from St. Joseph's, Clinton, earned Bronze medals in both Mechanical Engineering and the newly introduced Landscaping division.

In addition to our medalists, we want to recognize the outstanding efforts of our teams from St. James, Seaforth (Robotics), St. Mary's, Goderich (Green Energy), St. Anne's CSS, Clinton (Carpentry, Plumbing, and Electrical), and St. Michael CSS, Stratford (Hairstyling). While they did not reach the podium this year, these students represented our Board with extreme professionalism and put forth an incredible effort against the best in the province. Their hard work and sportsmanship served as a testament to the high caliber of our students and mentors.

### **Jill of All Trades Event**

On May 28, twenty-five female elementary students attended the *Jill of All Trades* event at Conestoga College's Reuter Campus. This event encouraged young women to explore skilled trades pathways through hands-on experiences in twelve different sectors. Students worked directly with industry mentors, building confidence and awareness of future career opportunities. The keynote was delivered by Mandy Rennehan, the "Blue Collar CEO" and North American Brand Ambassador for the program.

### **OCTE Conference and Professional Learning**

Representatives from OYAP, alongside staff from St. Michael CSS and St. Anne's CSS, attended the Ontario Council for Technology Education (OCTE) Conference in Windsor from May 7–9. The conference provided professional learning focused on emerging workforce trends, OYAP, SHSM, and experiential learning, allowing staff to network with industry partners from across Ontario.

### **Guidance Counsellor Apprenticeship Pathway Session**

On May 29, guidance staff participated in a professional learning session focused on apprenticeship pathways and labour market trends. Presenters included representatives from regional Economic Development Panels and workforce development organizations. This session supported ongoing collaboration between Guidance and OYAP programming to strengthen pathway planning for students.

### **St. Michael Catholic Secondary School**

- **Aesthetics Certification:** Students in Hairstyling and Aesthetics classes earned industry certifications through the Festival School of Hair on May 26, providing them with recognized training connected to the cosmetology sector.
- **Pathway Information Sessions:** In late May, students and parents participated in presentations focused on OYAP, Dual Credit, and SHSM opportunities to support postsecondary transition planning.
- **Sports Injury Workshop:** Students in the Health & Wellness program participated in a hands-on workshop led by a local physiotherapist, exploring techniques in kinesiology and rehabilitation services.

### **St. Anne's Catholic Secondary School**

- **Discovery Day in Health Sciences:** On May 8, ten students attended Western University for engaging workshops ranging from the study of the human brain to the use of AI in healthcare.
- **BattleSTEM:** Approximately 35 SHSM students participated in the annual BattleSTEM event at the University of Guelph on May 21, joining 700 students from across Ontario to strengthen their problem-solving and teamwork skills.
- **Dual Credit & OYAP Success:** Students continue to excel in apprenticeship opportunities, with four students currently enrolled in Level 1 Plumbing, Electrical, and HVAC programs through Conestoga and Fanshawe Colleges. Additionally, eight students are successfully earning simultaneous secondary and college credits through Lambton College in courses such as Criminology, Digital Photography, and ECE within our district.

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## ***FACILITIES AND HEALTH AND SAFETY***

### **Annual Waste Audits**

In accordance with Ontario Regulations 102/94 and 103/94, the Board is required to conduct annual Waste Audits and develop Waste Reduction Work Plans for all schools with an enrolment exceeding 350 students. During May, audits were completed at St. Michael Catholic Secondary School, St. Anne's Catholic Secondary School, and St. Mary's Catholic School in Listowel. These audits were conducted in partnership with our waste contractor, Waste Management. The final reports will be submitted to the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, and will be made publicly available on the Board's website and posted at each participating school.

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## ***FINANCE & PROCUREMENT***

### **Consolidation Financial Report and Audit**

The March 31 consolidation financial report is an annual requirement to support the province's public accounts process and is required by the Ministry of Education. Specified audit procedures are required to be completed by the Board's external auditor. The Board's external

auditor, BDO, completed their audit work the week of May 5th and the final report and Ministry submission were completed by the due date of Friday, May 15, 2026.

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## **INFORMATION & COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY**

### **Administrative Workstation Modernization (OA Equipment Refresh)**

The Information & Communications Technology department has initiated a comprehensive hardware refresh for school office teams to replace aging equipment with reliable and modern technology. A key feature of this refresh is the transition to a "Hub Monitor" system. By adopting this setup, the department eliminated the need for standalone docking stations, capturing significant savings. Phase 1 of this rollout was successfully managed throughout the spring, ensuring that school staff have appropriate technology to support school operations.

### **Strategic Transition to Insignia Asset Management**

To ensure accurate tracking of the Board's 1:1 student device fleet, the department is migrating all IT assets into the Insignia Asset Manager module. By selecting Insignia, the department is leveraging existing staff expertise, as board staff are already familiar with the platform. The team is currently utilizing a sandbox environment to test Chromebook inventory management before a full district-wide implementation.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

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