



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

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Presented to: The Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board

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Submitted by: Chris N. Roehrig, Director of Education and Secretary

# BOARD HIGHLIGHTS FOR OCTOBER

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 spiritual theme anchoring our new Strategic Plan is “On Fire With The Spirit: Awaken! Illuminate! Rejoice!” Inspired by the Holy Spirit and enlivened by the Pentecost story, we go forward into the school year full of faith, hope, love and joy. We are excited about the incredible learning and growth that propels us forward as we journey together throughout the school year. October showcases the glory of God as the environment around us reveals colour, change and transformation. We are delighted to highlight some of the activities and opportunities that took place this month across our district.

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## ***CATHOLIC EDUCATION***

### **Faith in Action**

Our schools participated in a variety of food drives connected with local Catholic service organizations, such as the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, throughout the month. We give thanks for our collective ability to serve and support our brothers and sisters in this manner. We appreciate the generosity of students, families and staff members to support the food drives.

### **Student Leadership: Catholic Social Teachings in Action**

We are pleased to share that two classes from Holy Name of Mary Catholic School and Jeanne Sauvé Catholic School are participating in the Green Leaders Program through the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority. This is a year-long environmental education and civic engagement program, for Grade 6//7 and 7/8 classes. The program is centered around the “Community Action and Problem Solving Process”. This is a six-step process where each class identifies an environmental issue in their local community and then implements a sustainable solution to the issue. During the program, students take on the roles of investigators, researchers, analysts, decision makers and planners. They learn from and work with stakeholders and experts in the local community. The students are challenged to think critically and solve problems creatively, focused on using Catholic Social Teachings and the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations. This allows students to take real action toward being

stewards of creation. They also work as a team, collaborate on solutions, and learn how to engage in democratic decision-making.

### **Sports Council Events**

The Elementary Sports Council has successfully organized four Soccer Tournaments and the district-wide Cross Country Meet this year. The tournaments were held in Clinton at St. Joseph's School and in Kinkora at St. Patrick's School, with participation from students in Grades five to eight. Each team played four games, showcasing impressive sportsmanship and dedication throughout the events. The Annual District Cross Country Meet took place at St. Joseph's and St. Anne's schools in Clinton on October 16, attracting nearly 700 students. This event was a tremendous success and demonstrated the enthusiasm for physical activity among our students. We would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to the Elementary Sports Council members for their hard work in organizing these events. Their efforts foster community spirit and encourage a commitment to physical activity within our schools. The experiences provided by the Elementary Sports Council events are invaluable and exemplify the unity and sense of community that characterize the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board. We are grateful to the coaches, convenors and various volunteers who make these events such a success.

### **Catholic Curriculum Corporation Council Meetings**

Members of the Learning Coordinator Team, the Program Team, and Superintendent Karen Tigani recently attended the inaugural Catholic Curriculum Corporation council meetings for the school year. These councils, which include Elementary, Secondary, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), and Faith in Education, provide a vital platform for collaboration and exchange among different boards. Our participation in these councils is instrumental in supporting the Strategic Plan of the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board. By engaging with colleagues from various Catholic education partners, we are able to discuss shared objectives, identify common challenges, and collaborate on initiatives that enhance our curriculum and align with our faith-based values. Through these meetings, we aim to foster innovative curriculum-writing projects that benefit not only our students and educators but also the broader community. By sharing best practices and resources, we strengthen our commitment to providing a faith-integrated education. This collaborative effort ultimately enriches the learning experience for all involved, ensuring that we remain focused on our mission to nurture both academic excellence and spiritual growth within our schools.

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## ***LEADERSHIP***

### **Leaders Learning Council (LLC)**

On October 8, school and system leaders met online to review the Police-Board Protocol and related Board policies. This was an opportunity to review important practices related to safe schools. Principals received a copy of the [Pastoral Letter to Young People from Pope Francis](#) with an invitation to read it and pray about it prior to the November LLC where we will welcome the priests and deacons of our Deanery to join the Principals on Pastoral planning. There were several reminders and updates shared as well.

On October 29, the Leaders Learning Council met in-person at St. Patrick's School in Kinkora. It was a wonderful day in the countryside, experiencing the joy of a school day all around us as we engaged in learning and faith-sharing. In the morning, there was a presentation from members of the Experiential Learning Advisory Team related to our Pathways and Student Success goal in the Board's Strategic Plan. Following the break, Director Roehrig walked the team through a

presentation on Emergency Preparedness and updates to our Board policy and processes in this area. We also welcomed Ryan Erb from United Way to share an update with our leaders and promote the 2024 campaign. Following lunch, we welcomed Mr. Greg Rogers, a former Catholic Faith Animator and Teacher Leader with the Toronto Catholic District School Board. Greg was instrumental in leading the development and implementing the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations (OCSGEs) in Ontario's Catholic school boards. He will lead a workshop on the OCSGEs and invite each school and system leader to consider how these come alive in their school and portfolios each day. Additionally, Principals looked ahead to setting their school team up for rich discussion on the November 15 Faith Day when they will have an opportunity to work with their staff on "setting our hearts on fire" with our Catholic faith for a session in the afternoon.

### **Lake Huron Family of Parishes Collaboration**

As part of our ongoing partnership with the Families of Parishes, our school principals, vice-principals and the priests and deacons in their associated parishes regularly collaborate on how they are bringing the Board, school and parish pastoral plans to life. They schedule and co-plan school visits, liturgies and Masses, and discuss how we can support Sacramental preparation and parish engagement. We work as a team to nurture the parish-school-home relationships. Once a year, these teams come together to share a meal. The Lake Huron Family of Parishes clergy, school leaders, trustees, and members of the senior team met on October 10 for dinner in Exeter.

### **When Faith Meets Pedagogy Conference (WFMP)**

We were pleased to have 12 teachers attending the Catholic Curriculum Corporation's (CCC) When Faith Meets Pedagogy Conference in Toronto from Thursday, October 24 to the 26. The keynote speaker was Fr. Richard Leonard, S.J. PhD. from Australia and Mass was led by celebrant Auxiliary Bishop Lobsinger from the Diocese of Hamilton. Of note, is the leadership that HPCDSB teachers and system team leaders provide within the CCC and at this conference each year. ICT Coordinator Jenna Meyers and Guidance and Transitions Teacher Nikki Gibson presented. The Kindergarten team from St. Patrick's in Dublin of teacher Stephanie Shore and DECE Amy Ritz presented about bringing the OCSGEs alive in practical ways in their Kindergarten classroom. St. James teacher Christa Ducharme presented an innovative program that she uses to support the OCSGEs. Secondary Learning Coordinator Paul D'Hondt co-presented the work of Catholic Virtual Ontario and the resources it has developed to support our secondary educators online. We look forward to seeing the new knowledge, and the many fruits of the networking with other Catholic educators brought back and used to nurture students and staff in our schools. Superintendent Karen Tigani is Chair of the CCC and Religion and Family Life Coordinator Caroline Thuss is a leader on the WFMP planning committee. Our Board is well represented and deeply respected within the CCC community and we are proud to be part of this annual conference that brings incredible joy, faith and pedagogy together for Catholic educators and partners.

### **Bringing Online Teams Together Conference (BOLTT)**

Two elearning teachers, Ms. Kristina McDonald and Mr. Steven Reid, along with Secondary Learning Coordinator Paul D'Hondt attended the BOLTT conference on October 22 in Toronto. The conference focused on best practices in online teaching, providing opportunities for educators to learn, share, and network in order to better serve our students. Paul D'Hondt also co-presented a session called "Honouring Humanity in a Digitized Environment".

### **Catholic Virtual Ontario Forum**

On October 23, Superintendent Karen Tigani and Secondary Learning Coordinator Paul D'Hondt attended the Catholic Virtual Ontario Forum hosted by the Ontario Catholic School Trustees Association (OCSTA). This forum discussed various aspects of Catholic online learning in Ontario, including our history, upcoming goals, logistics, successes, and shared challenges. The information gathered here is instrumental as we continue our work in developing and sharing Catholic online learning for our students and those across the province.

### **International Education Program**

International student recruitment has already started for the 2025-2026 school year. Principal and International Education lead Chris Grace traveled to Denmark, Norway, Holland and Spain as part of a delegation of school boards who belong to the GlobalEyes Network, a third party who is a Canadian-based organization focused on the development and enrichment of K-12 International Student Programs (ISP). Ten school boards from across Canada took part in this mission trip to develop relationships with international recruitment agencies in these countries. Currently, the Board has five agents in Holland and three in Spain that have signed Agency Agreements to be the non-exclusive student recruitment agencies in these countries. All of these agencies belong to the GlobalEyes Network. GlobalEyes has set up a series of meetings with these agents and other agencies in all four of the countries noted above, so that board representatives from all ten school boards on this mission have the opportunity to make their school board known in the international student recruitment marketplace. Mr. Grace is proudly showcasing the exceptional communities of Huron and Perth counties and the world class Catholic education offered in our Board. He presented at many student and parent fairs in these four countries to put the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board on the map and make its name internationally known. To date, the board has fourteen agreements with agencies in Europe, Asia and Australia that are recruiting students with four new agreements with agencies in Brazil, Italy, Chile and the United States awaiting signatures on the Agency Agreements.

### **Ontario Council for Technology Education (OCTE) Fall Leaders' Conference**

The Board OYAP and SHSM Lead and Experiential Learning Teachers attended the OCTE Conference in Orillia from October 6-8. The conference focused on supporting leaders in OYAP and SHSM and offered collaborative workshops to enhance program delivery. Our Board has significant success with these programs and this is supported by the shared learning and planning that takes place at these events. We continue to seek ways to enhance these programs and increase student participation, noting that this is in alignment with Ministry priorities and the Board's Strategic Plan related to student success and pathways.

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## ***SPECIAL EDUCATION***

### **RSEC (Regional Special Education Council)**

RSEC was held in Niagara on the Lake on October 24-25. This event brings together system leaders in superintendent and coordinating roles a couple of times each year. Some key agenda items included a session with Steven Kats, Director of Aporia Consulting Ltd. and faculty member in Applied Psychology and Human Development on "Re-culturing Leadership for System Change", a workshop on "ChatGPT and the AI Revolution", and discussions on topics related to legal issues in education and current trends and issues in special education.

### **Educational Assistants Professional Development (PD)**

On October 25 all Educational Assistants (EAs) participated in Professional Development. New EAs were invited to the Catholic Education Centre where they received NonViolent Crisis Intervention (NVCI) training. Secondary EAs were at St. Michael CSS where they took part in a

PD opportunity with Dr. Richard Zayed and our Mental Health team, and then joined secondary teachers while The Literacy Team presented on “Teaching literacy across the curriculum” with some high leverage strategies, rooted in the new Ontario Language Curriculum. Elementary EAs took part in the same literacy session in the morning and met virtually online during the afternoon with members of our System Special Education Team where they received PD on topics related to supporting students with Special Education needs.

### **New Members of our System Special Education Team**

During October, we welcomed three new members to our System Special Education Team. Megan Delcourt and Emma DeWever joined our team as Behaviour Consultants. Both are Board Certified Behaviour Analysts, and Julie Masse joined our team as a Communicative Disorders Assistant.

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

### **Chrome Tablets for Kindergarten**

To enhance the technology available for kindergarten classrooms, we have purchased a Chrome Tablet for use by teachers and Designated Early Childhood Educator (DECE) teams. This Chrome Tablet, which has a similar form factor to an iPad, is well-suited for our Google environment. The primary goal of this device is to streamline pedagogical documentation, making it easier and more efficient to capture student learning.

### **Edwin Digital Resource**

We are excited to announce the implementation of a new digital tool, Edwin by Nelson, for teachers in Grades 6-8. This innovative platform is designed to enhance teaching and learning across key subject areas, including science, language arts, and social sciences. Edwin is a valuable addition to our educational toolkit, supporting teachers in delivering high-quality instruction and empowering students to take charge of their learning. By integrating technology in meaningful ways, we are committed to preparing our students for success in an increasingly digital world.

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## ***STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT***

### **Mathematics**

The Math Team continues to support the teaching and learning of mathematics in our system by working with teachers and students in the classroom. Our three Math Facilitators and one Math Learning Coordinator have been in every elementary school supporting the implementation of our Scope and Sequence Math lessons and the Effective Math Block. Supporting the monitoring of the Scope and Sequence, the Math Team launched the first set of common assessments from our new assessment framework in Math. We employed Knowledgehook as our primary tool for data collection, enabling us to track student progress through a comparison of ongoing formative and periodic common assessments. The Math Facilitators and Coordinator supported the summative assessments during the end of October to gauge progress. The Math Team will analyze the results of these common assessments to identify areas needing support within the MTSS framework.

### **Strategic Planning for Board Math Leads**

Our Superintendent of Education and Math Learning Coordinator attended an online meeting on October 16, hosted by the Ministry of Education Math Team for all provincial Math Leads. These regularly scheduled sessions focus on strategic implementation of the Math Achievement Action

Plan. These sessions include strategic planning and monitoring related to priority school support, cultivating excellence, data driven decision making, Key Performance Indicator (KPI) development and implementation, and timely Interventions, among other essential topics. The objective of these sessions is to ensure a shared comprehensive understanding of the MAAP and shared work across and between Boards and the Ministry of Education to improve the strategic alignment and implementation of achievement and improvement efforts across the province. This meeting provided a valuable venue for Leads to share their progress, challenges, resources, and success stories, promoting a collaborative environment for the advancement of the Math Achievement Action Plan.

### **Literacy**

October was a month filled with Early Reading Screening activities. Every child in Grades SK-3 underwent screening using the Acadience Reading Screening Tool. Classroom Teachers collaborated with the System Literacy Team to administer the screenings, score the results, and input the data into a digital tracking sheet. These results were shared with school teams, and future data analysis meetings are scheduled for November. Additionally, the system team prepared for and presented at the professional development day on October 25. The morning featured a virtual session for all elementary staff, complete with grade-level breakout sessions. In the afternoon, an in-person presentation for secondary staff focused on “Teaching Literacy Across the Curriculum,” highlighting high-leverage strategies grounded in the new Ontario Language Curriculum.

### **French as a Second Language (FSL)**

Throughout October, our System French Support Teacher, Ms. Sandra O’Neil, was actively visiting schools to support our new FSL Core and Immersion teachers, focusing on planning, assessment, and resources. On October 22, Sandra and Learning Coordinator MJ Drager traveled to London to attend a regional CEFR meeting, where boards across the region collaborated to plan future FSL opportunities for educators. Finally, on October 25, our elementary and secondary FSL teachers participated in professional development led by Denis Cousineau on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). Denis is widely regarded as an important and influential leader of FSL teaching and learning. He has been a strong partner with our Board, personally leading some of the teacher training for the DELF assessment our students took for the first time last spring, and he also presented to French Immersion Principals in the French Immersion Network a couple years ago. We are delighted to welcome him to support all FSL educators in our Board as we strive to improve and enhance FSL teaching and learning.

### **Multilingual Learners (MLL) Update**

October was an eventful month for our System MLL Support Teacher, Ms. Katherine Miller. She completed 21 initial assessments with our newcomer students, ensuring that each was placed on the STEP continuum. All documentation was finalized, shared with classroom teachers, and filed in the Ontario Student Record (OSR). From these assessments, priority students and schools were identified across both elementary and secondary levels.

Current student data indicates the following about Multilingual Learners in our Board. We have:

- 22 students who are MLL in Secondary
- 176 students who are MLL in Elementary
- 24 students (6 Secondary, 19 Elementary) who are new to Huron and Perth counties
- 16 students (4 Secondary, 11 Elementary) are new to Canada

The collective capacity-building taking place in our schools and Board is important and exciting.

### **Professional Development Day**

On October 25 the Professional Development Day centered on literacy and explicit instruction. In the morning, elementary educators participated in virtual professional learning sessions focused on the principles of explicit instruction rooted in the work of literacy leader Anita Archer and aligned with the new Ontario Language Curriculum. Key topics included data-informed teaching, cognitive load of students, and creating rich, playful opportunities for student engagement.

Participants engaged in grade-level breakout sessions, with primary educators receiving a refresher on phonics instruction using the UFLI resource adopted by our district. Teachers from Grades 3 to 5 explored the junior literacy block and the role of morphology, while educators in Grades 6, 7, and 8 had the opportunity to delve into the digital tool Edwin, which has been newly implemented this year. The afternoon session allowed elementary teachers time to write progress reports.

In our secondary schools, morning collaboration sessions were held within departments, enabling educators to discuss best practices in their respective subject areas and review all new curriculum that has come in recent months or years. In the afternoon, the system literacy team facilitated an in-person session that provided an overview of the Ontario Human Rights Commission's Right to Read report for all secondary teachers. This session emphasized the integration of literacy across subject areas, highlighting five high-leverage strategies for effective instruction.

### **Right to Read Update with Ontario Human Rights Commissioner (OHRC)**

On October 15, the OHRC Chief Commissioner, Ms Patricia DeGuire from the Ontario Human Rights Commission, met with Director Roehrig, Superintendent Tigani and Literacy Learning Coordinator Mary Jo Drager to discuss our Board's implementation of the recommendations in the Right to Read Report. This was a celebration of the commitment and passion of the educators in our district as we reflected on how far we have come and how much capacity-building has already taken place, as well as discussion of some of the challenges we face and our plans to continue to move forward where there is still work to be done.

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## ***EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING PROGRAMS IN SECONDARY***

### **SHSM Events and Excursions:**

- **Arts & Culture Trip** - A total of 54 students from both St. Anne's and St. Michael Arts & Culture SHSM participated in an exciting trip to Toronto. The day began with a visit to the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO), where students explored a range of exhibits. In the afternoon, they attended a performance of *Come From Away* at the Mirvish Theatre. Students were captivated by the way only 12 actors portrayed a variety of characters, using techniques that highlighted the transformative power of performance art.
- **Grade 11 Recruitment** - Ongoing efforts to promote SHSM programs among Grade 11 students have shown encouraging results, with final participation numbers expected by the end of October. Notably, the Construction SHSM program has seen significant growth reflecting a positive year-over-year increase. Additionally, female participation in Construction is on the rise
- **GPS Training**  
On October 16, 15 Environment SHSM and Agriculture SHSM students from St. Michael completed mandatory GPS training. They navigated an orienteering course at St.

- Michael CSS in the morning and engaged in GPS training at TJ Dolan in the afternoon.
- **SHSM Sector Partner Experience Teacher Training**  
On October 18, one of our newest SHSM Teachers attended training on Sector Partner Experience (SPE) delivery. The session provided valuable resources for planning and executing SPEs that align with Ministry expectations.

### **SHSM Certifications**

In October, both secondary schools are offering various SHSM certifications including Fire Extinguisher Safety, Customer Service, and Infection Control. St. Anne's CSS is also adopting Worksite Safety online training, aligning with the standards used by some co-op employers.

### **Manufacturing Bus Tour**

Later in October, SHSM students will participate in a Manufacturing Bus Tour across Huron and Perth Counties. The tour provides insights into local manufacturing careers, inspiring students to explore opportunities in the trades.

### **Hairstyling Cultural Presentation and Demonstration**

At the end of October, a London-based hairstylist, introduced to our school communities by Leroy Hibbert, will visit St. Anne's CSS to conduct a cultural talk and hairstyling demonstration for the hairstyling classes. This experience will provide students with valuable insights on working with diverse clientele, enhancing their professional skill set.

### **Dual Credit Programs**

Both secondary schools are taking advantage of dual credit opportunities through various college partners as follows:

#### **St. Anne's CSS Dual Credit Participation:**

- **Lambton College:** 6 students in courses such as Baking, Intro to Residential Electrical, Criminology, Arboriculture, and Welding.
- **Conestoga College:** 7 students in Electrical and Culinary courses.
- **Fanshawe College:** 37 students in two dual credit classes at the REACH Centre, Clinton. The new Food Preparation course includes safety gear for students, such as kitchen shoes and chef outfits upon course completion.

#### **St. Michael CSS Dual Credit Participation:**

- **Conestoga College:** 17 students in a Food Culture course that began on October 1

### **Desire to Learn (D2L) Skills Page**

The Skills D2L page continues to serve as a vital hub for technological education and SHSM information. Updates include details on training, certifications, dual credits, and OYAP programs. It is a one-stop location for SHSM-related information for students, families and staff.

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

### **World Mental Health Day**

On World Mental Health Day the Board launched a [Media Release](#) to share with the community that we are implementing our Mental Health and Addictions Strategy. Additionally, we shared an educator information sheet across the District to support ongoing learning about mental health and well-being.

### **Dr. Zayed Parent Night**

The MHWT, in partnership with AMDSB, held their third presentation as part of the ongoing Caregiver Series. Dr. Zayed presented on “What Do Children Need From Parents?” There were 40 caregivers/community members present and we received extensive positive feedback on the session. This aligns with our fourth priority of the Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan which is “Increase Student Attendance, Safety, and Family Engagement”.

### **Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Conference**

Members of our Mental Health Team attended the St. Clair Catholic District School Board’s first annual Social Emotional Learning Conference Titled: Building Success in Our Children and Youth. This SEL conference was invaluable to our learning as we heard from renowned speakers such as Dr. Jean Clinton the author of ‘Love Builds Brains’ and Dr. Kim Schonert Reichl, a scientific advisor and researcher of MindUp.

We also had the privilege to learn from our colleagues at St. Clair Catholic District School Board and Halton Catholic District School Board about their experiences successfully integrating SEL into their schools. A key takeaway from the conference was St. Clair Catholic DSB’s creative approach to intertwining faith and wellness by aligning the Ontario Catholic Graduate Expectations (OCGEs) with SEL Competencies. This approach not only reinforces our commitment to holistic education but also validates our ongoing efforts. Since last spring, our Mental Health Team has been actively working to integrate OCGEs and SEL Competencies. We are currently utilizing School Mental Health Ontario’s Wayfinder resource to enhance our Religion and Family Life curriculum, ensuring we support the growth and development of the whole student.

We are excited to continue this important work, fostering an environment where both academic and emotional well-being thrive!

### **Attendance Awareness Campaign**

October was Attendance Awareness Month and this year’s theme was “Be Present, Be Powerful!” The District initiated *Attendance Awareness Month* by sharing information for school staff and caregivers via social media and school newsletters, including this [resource](#) that was created by O.A.C.A.S. Our Attendance Counsellor also participated in a training titled “Creative Interventions to Assess and Treat School Refusal.” This training focused on teaching strategies for assessing and treating school refusal, empowering educators and counsellors to effectively support students in overcoming barriers to attendance and school engagement.

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## ***MAINTENANCE AND HEALTH AND SAFETY***

### **Joint Health and Safety Committee**

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

- Monthly inspections
- Annual review of Board Policies
  - Health and Safety p 3.1.1.
  - Workplace Harassment P 3.4.12.
  - Violence in the Workplace P 3.4.16.
- Annual workplace risk assessments
- WSPS inspections - St. Michael and St. Anne’s (update)

**Snow Removal**

An RFP for snow removal was issued in July of 2023 for the provision of snow removal service for five years. We are in the second year of the five-year agreement. PO's have been issued to the snow removal contractors for the 2024-2025 season.

**RECOMMENDATION**

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