



## 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 JUNE

Public Session

## BACKGROUND

Each month, a wide range of activities take place across the district to provide students with rich, faith-filled, and inclusive learning experiences that support achievement and advance 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, Learning Coordinators, the Mental Health Lead, the OYAP Project Lead, and Managers of activities that take place under their leadership.

## DEVELOPMENTS

June is a truly inspiring month in the life of our Catholic school system, as it beautifully aligns with the core of our new Strategic Plan and spiritual theme: *“On Fire with the Spirit – Awaken! Illuminate! Rejoice!”* Anchored in the joy of Pentecost which we celebrate this month, and in the love revealed in the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, this month calls us to live out our mission with renewed passion and purpose. It marks both a culmination of learning and a spiritual launching point—where the fruits of faith, hope, and love are visible in the hearts of our students, staff, and families. As we reflect on the activities and opportunities throughout June, we celebrate the vibrant witness of our Catholic community, joyfully journeying forward in faith.

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## CATHOLIC EDUCATION

### Novena to the Sacred Heart of Jesus for Schools

Our schools recently participated in the Novena to the Sacred Heart of Jesus for Schools. Resources prepared by the Institute for Catholic Education were shared with staff, offering a clear overview of the novena, including daily themes, prayers, and reflections to guide classroom participation. This spiritual practice helped deepen our collective devotion and connection to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

### Graduation and End of Year Celebrations

Our elementary schools are planning their Grade 8 Graduation liturgies and celebrations, which will occur over the last two weeks of June. Our secondary schools hosted Graduation Proms once again this year and the students were thrilled to participate in this highly anticipated evening with family, friends and staff. The St. Michael CSS and St. Anne’s CSS Proms were both held at their respective schools on Friday, June 6. Our secondary school commencement ceremonies are fast approaching as well. The St. Anne’s CSS and St. Michael CSS Graduations will be held at the schools on Thursday, June 26.

### **Diocese of London Pastoral Study Days**

A team including Director Karen Tigani, Superintendent Sean McDade, Principal Chris Grace, Religion and Family Life Support Teacher Kate Dobson, St Michael CSS Chaplain Natalie MacKay and St Anne's CSS Chaplain Zack Fitzmaurice attended the 2-day Pastoral Study Days in Stratford on June 2 and 3. The days were hosted at the Arden Park Hotel and included the celebration of Mass. The theme of the event was "Cultivate" and was organized by the Diocese of London team under the leadership of Most Reverend Bishop Ronald Fabbro. The Pastoral Study Days were attended by the priests, deacons, religious brothers and sisters, and ecclesial lay ministers from all of the Families of Parishes in the Diocese of London. It was also attended by Catholic educational leaders and Chaplaincy leaders from Catholic school boards within the Diocese of London. Our board team was able to work and learn alongside the members of the various Families of Parishes within the Huron-Perth Deanery, as well as engage with our priests, colleagues and partners from all across the Diocese of London. Significant take-aways from this event include the importance of praying together, listening to one another and genuinely living out the mission of God in discipleship. Our Board had an information table where we met and dialogued with people from all across the Diocese during breaks, showcasing and sharing our On Fire with the Spirit prayer, our strategic plan, and sharing the joy of working and learning in our Board.

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## **LEADERSHIP**

### **Symposium for Leaders Igniting Catholic Education: SLICE**

Leaders from across the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board gathered for a dynamic two-day symposium - Igniting Catholic Education: Conversations in the Spirit - dedicated to deepening our collective capacity for change management and strategic leadership. Rooted in synodal listening and spiritual discernment, the gathering invited leaders to reflect on their School Improvement Plans, share emerging practices, and strengthen their 2025 commitments. The event was marked by moments of profound faith sharing and fellowship, including a dinner and community-building evening joined by Most Rev. Bishop Fabbro and our dedicated Trustees. On the first day, we focused on discerning our next steps with strategic priorities rooted in a synodal listening style approach. On the second day, theologian Dr. Josephine Lombardi led us through a moving spiritual journey, "*As It Is in Heaven*," rooted in the Lord's Prayer and the Jubilee Year, thus reinforcing the Board's commitment to adult faith formation as a path toward our faith goals. The symposium was intended to ignite everyone's hearts and minds, thus living out our response to the call of the Holy Spirit to "ignite" Catholic education in our schools. The time together culminated in the celebration of Holy Mass, presided over by Bishop Fabbro with music led by members of the leadership team.

This symposium was a powerful embodiment of our Strategic Plan's theme, *On Fire with the Spirit – Awaken! Illuminate! Rejoice!*, intentionally designed to fan the flame of Catholic leadership, ignite spiritual renewal, and propel us forward in joyful service to our mission.

### **EQAO Data in Action Symposium**

The Superintendent of Education and four Learning Coordinators attended the virtual Spring 2025 EQAO Data in Action Symposium. EQAO's team members shared the agency's latest work, including insights into how students are interacting with the e-assessment system. There were also guest speakers from school boards discussing how they are supporting students during EQAO assessments. This provided our team an opportunity to examine our practices in light of EQAO's stated theme "data in action" and consider ideas and strategies showcased by other Boards.

### **Elementary Sports Council - Two Pitch Tournaments**

The Elementary Sports Council successfully hosted this year's two-pitch tournaments for both junior and senior students! Tournaments were held in Huron (Exeter) and Perth (Stratford), and athletes from across the district represented their schools with outstanding skill, athleticism, and sportsmanship. The success of these tournaments wouldn't have been possible without the dedication of many. Coaches from every school did an excellent job training their athletes and ensuring the field events ran smoothly on the day of the tournaments. Behind the scenes, our Sports Council teachers and principals worked tirelessly to organize a safe, fun, and memorable day for all the participating students.

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## ***SPECIAL EDUCATION***

### **Educational Assistants Professional Development**

On the June 6 PD Day, all of our Educational Assistants gathered at St. Anne's CSS. This full-day professional development session for Educational Assistants (EAs) focused on faith formation, student well-being, inclusive education, and staff voice and reflection. The day began with our Religion, Family Life, and Faith Formation Support Teacher leading a reflective, faith-based session featuring "Breath and Flame," a contemplative Taizé-inspired retreat, and "Stop, Pause, and Pray," a practical spiritual tool for emotional regulation. EAs also took part in a breakout session based on Holland Bloorview's "Project Inclusion," exploring accessibility, engagement, and post-secondary readiness. The day concluded with a workshop called "On Fire with the Spirit: A Fireside Chat to Awaken, Illuminate, Rejoice" co-facilitated by the Superintendent of Special Education and Learning Coordinator of Special Education. This fireside chat offered Educational Assistants a reflective and empowering space to gather in community. The session aimed to:

- Celebrate the vital role of EAs in student success
- Provide a safe space to share both successes and challenges
- Collaboratively identify practical solutions to recurring issues
- Strengthen connection and trust between leadership and frontline staff

Through meaningful dialogue, small group collaboration, and active listening, the goal was to uplift the voices of those who provide direct support to our students, ensuring their insights help guide future supports and system-level improvements.

### **Elementary Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT) Meeting**

On June 18, Elementary SERTs participated in a full-day session at the Catholic Education Centre focused on data-driven instruction and inclusive practices. The morning opened with a session from our Lexia partners, who supported SERTs in exploring student data to identify areas of growth and inform next steps. Following this, the Learning Coordinator for Math facilitated the third installment of the ongoing book study, *Rethinking Disability and Mathematics*, encouraging thoughtful dialogue around equity and inclusion in math education. The afternoon provided valuable time for collaboration, where SERTs engaged in planning, exchanged effective strategies, and strengthened their collective expertise.

### **Ontario Disability Employment Network Training**

On June 4, system leaders, secondary administrators, and educators from both secondary schools along with community partners gathered at the Catholic Education Centre for a full-day session focused on advancing youth employment for students with disabilities. The day began with a 2.5-hour training from ODEN (Ontario Disability Employment Network) that introduced the JobPath curriculum—a six-week program designed to help students transitioning from secondary school to explore their strengths and prepare for the workforce through in-class activities, guest speakers, and workplace tours. Participants received supplementary resources to support the program’s implementation. After lunch, the group engaged in a community debrief, brainstorming creative strategies to enhance pre-employment training and improve youth access to meaningful employment opportunities.

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

### **1:1 Chromebook Initiative**

To ensure the continuity and efficacy of the 1:1 Chromebook initiative for all students within the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board, library technicians and teacher librarians have allocated significant time this month to prepare for Stronghold Services' forthcoming summer refresh operations. During the summer period, all Chromebook devices will undergo necessary maintenance and software updates. Subsequently, these devices will be distributed to each school in proportion to student enrollment, thereby ensuring their readiness for the commencement of the subsequent academic year. This preparedness is attributable to the dedicated efforts of staff during the summer refresh program.

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## ***STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT***

### **Mathematics**

In June, the Math Team continued to support schools writing EQAO and undertook a variety of initiatives to enhance and refine math instruction across grade levels. Math Facilitators provide 1-8 math teachers with suggested report card comments for Second Term. These asset-based comments align with topics covered in our Scope and Sequence lessons. We updated the First Two Weeks of Math lessons to support students’ social-emotional learning and foster a growth mindset in mathematics, while gradually building stamina for the Effective Math Block routines. Our Scope and Sequence was revised to incorporate Number Talks, EQAO preparation, and spiralled, purposeful practice opportunities. To ensure consistent implementation, we developed a Number Talk continuum that outlines a clear, developmentally appropriate progression of reasoning strategies. This continuum helps educators introduce and reinforce mental math strategies at the right stages, promoting deeper understanding, numerical flexibility, and confidence in mathematical thinking. By aligning with curriculum expectations, it also creates more opportunities for rich math discussions and effective communication. To better support multi-grade classrooms, we created a combined grade version of the Scope and Sequence lessons. These lessons will ensure both sets of students have equitable access to their respective grade-level curriculum. This approach supports teachers in addressing varied learner needs and fosters a more cohesive classroom environment. Additionally, we collaborated with junior math teachers to revise the Grade 5 and 6 pathways, focusing on enabling students to access the full curriculum within the instructional year. Work also began on developing Grade 9 lessons aligned with the Scope and Sequence, extending our efforts to support students across grade levels.

The Superintendent of Education and Math Learning Coordinator attended various meetings with the provincial Math Team, including the last Strategic Planning Sessions for Board Math Leads, which provided learning with Jhonel Morvan, PhD, learning about his research in Equity in Mathematics, and reflecting on the year and considering next steps for 2025-26. During the session, there was an opportunity to engage with other Board Math Leads in breakout group discussions. The Superintendent of Education and the Math Learning Coordinator submitted the final Math Achievement Action Plan on behalf of our system and priority school.

### **Literacy**

June has been a productive month for the Literacy Team. With the support of the system team, all elementary schools participated in the End-of-Year Early Reading Screening for students in Grades SK–2, helping to identify potential reading challenges and monitor student progress. These assessments not only highlight areas for celebration but also inform next steps for instruction and class placements for the upcoming school year. In addition, Literacy Coordinator MJ Drager attended a session with Edwin, where updates to Edwin’s Language Library were shared. Edwin is a digital platform that our students in grades 6-8 use in Literacy, Science and Social Studies. Edwin’s enhanced Grade 4–9 program now features a project-based framework aligned with all strands of the Ontario Language curriculum. To wrap up the month, the Literacy Team engaged in forward planning and reflection. The Educator’s Literacy Warehouse was refreshed with new resources, and the district’s phonics diagnostic tool was revised to include updated word lists and sections that better align with the new curriculum.

### **Early Years**

Kindergarten orientation and bus safety sessions have now wrapped up at all elementary schools. These events provide a wonderful opportunity to celebrate our Catholic school communities while offering families essential information about what to expect when their child begins school in September. We are also eagerly anticipating the release of a new Kindergarten curriculum from the Ministry of Education. Our Kindergarten teams are well prepared for any upcoming changes in literacy or mathematics, having already begun to implement adjustments to their instructional practices.

### **French as a Second Language**

In June, Sandra O’Neil, the System French Support Teacher, supported new Core French teachers with assessment and reporting in preparation for final report cards. She attended final conferences with the Modern Languages Council (MLC) and the CEFR West Region, where she contributed to year-end reflections and planning for future professional learning. Sandra also prepared and organized materials to support the implementation of Structured Literacy in French Immersion across the Board, including a CEFR-aligned slide deck and resources from the OTF-funded Science of Reading project at John Sweeney. Her work ensured continued alignment with evidence-based practices and effective support for French language educators.

### **Indigenous Education**

Members of the Indigenous Education team, including lead Caroline Thuss, Indigenous Student Support Advisor Josh Pagan and Special Assignment Teacher Mary Fischer, attended the Ontario Catholic School Trustees Association Indigenous Education conference held in Ottawa June 2-4. The opportunity to collaborate and learn with Catholic boards from across the province was so valuable for the team. The keynote speaker was Dr. Niigann Sinclair, a professor with the University of Manitoba, who encouraged us to move from presence and practice into pedagogy and permanence in all we do in Indigenous Education.

## **EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING PROGRAMS IN SECONDARY**

### **Specialized Learning & Field Trips**

- **Physics Field Trip to Canada's Wonderland**  
Grade 11 and 12 SHSM students from St Anne's Catholic Secondary School (SACSS) will be applying physics principles during an upcoming field trip. Students will work in teams to complete a scavenger hunt and analyze the physics of various amusement park rides by calculating time, distance, speed, and acceleration. One challenge involves determining whether the Drop Tower's motor lift is operating at its expected speed and engaging real-world applied learning of classroom content.
- **Music Workshop with Tim Schou**  
On June 3, over 100 Arts & Culture and Music students from St Michael Catholic Secondary School (SMCSS) participated in a full-day music workshop and live concert with internationally recognized artist Tim Schou, held in the St. Michael CSS gymnasium. The event combined performance, songwriting, and industry insight.
- **Business and Visual Merchandising Event, June 4**  
15 SHSM students from SMCSS in the Arts & Culture and Business sectors attended a field trip to Conestoga College for a Visual Merchandising workshop, earned a Business certification, and participated in a campus tour. The event blended artistic creativity with marketing skills, exposing students to career possibilities in retail and design.
- **Fencing/Stage Combat Certification June 9 & 10**  
On June 9 and 10, Arts, Culture and Construction SHSM students from SACSS participated in a unique fencing and stage combat certification workshop. Under the guidance of a retired drama teacher, students will learn safe and realistic stage combat techniques while constructing their own stage swords.

### **Dual Credit**

- Fanshawe College:
  - The Facials and Makeup dual credit course will be taught at the REACH Centre until June 11.
- Lambton College
  - Five students from St. Anne's Catholic Secondary School are attending courses every Thursday including:
    - Introduction to HVAC
    - Plumbing Techniques
    - Residential Electrical
    - Arboriculture & Chainsaw Practices
    - The Great Outdoors
    - Bakeshop
- Conestoga College
  - One student from SACSS is enrolled in:
    - Cabinet Making
    - Security Guard Licensing

### **Dual Credit and Level 1 Apprenticeship Programs**

St. Michael Catholic Secondary School students enrolled in Dual Credit and Level 1

Apprenticeship programs are completing their final classes by June 27. These students have been actively engaged in skilled trades training through partnerships with Conestoga, Fanshawe, and Lambton Colleges—5 in Electrical, 2 in HVAC, 1 in AST Automotive, and 1 in Welding—gaining valuable hands-on experience and a head start on their postsecondary pathways.

### **OYAP Level 1 at St. Anne's Catholic Secondary School**

Electrical (Conestoga College): Student completed the program in May.

Welding (Lambton College): Students began on April 28 and will finish at the end of June.

Students who complete Level 1 Apprenticeship programs earn a significant head start in their skilled trades careers while still in high school.

### **Grade 10 Class Presentations**

Grade 10 students are continuing to receive presentations on the SHSM program offerings to support their course selections. Students will use this information to assist them with decisions around courses and pathways as they enter Grade 11.

### **In-House SHSM Certifications at SACSS**

- Infection Control
- Leadership Skills

### **SHSM Graduation Preparation**

Guidance counselors are working closely with all SHSM students to ensure they are on track to graduate with their SHSM Red Seal designation. Final certifications are being collected and submitted as part of the graduation documentation process.

### **Certifications Earned This Year at St. Anne's and St. Michael Catholic Secondary Schools**

Students across multiple SHSM sectors have earned a wide range of certifications, including:

- WHMIS
- Safe Food Handling
- Mental Health Awareness
- Working at Heights
- Electrical & Confined Space Safety
- Infection Control
- Customer Service & Business Etiquette
- Stage Combat & Audition Preparation
- Portfolio Development
- Project Management
- Leadership Skills
- Hydraulics (Basic)
- Lock-out/Tagging Procedures
- Lab Practices
- Taping for Performance and Injury
- Grower Pesticide Safety Course
- CPR Level C & Standard First Aid

- Ethical Considerations
- Allyship Awareness
- Elevated Work Platform Training
- Music Technique Training
- Visual Merchandising Certification
- Business Marketing Certification

We thank the Board for its continued support, which has made these hands-on, skill-building opportunities possible for our students.

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## ***MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS***

### **Elementary Panel: De-Stress Lessons**

Throughout the spring term, elementary social workers delivered “De-Stress Lessons” to Grade 3 and Grade 6 classrooms across the district. These sessions were designed to equip students with emotional regulation and mindfulness strategies, helping them approach EQAO assessments with greater confidence and calm. Rooted in our Catholic commitment to nurturing the whole child, these lessons promoted resilience, self-awareness, and inner peace—aligning with our values of compassion, well-being, and holistic development.

### **School-Based Social Worker Professional Development**

#### **Fundamentals of Addictions and Trauma & Addictions Courses**

In June 2025, members of the Mental Health Team participated in varying professional learning opportunities focused on trauma and addiction. These opportunities included 2 courses through Laurier University in which the online courses provided a comprehensive overview of the bio-psycho-social nature of addiction, exploring its complexities, theoretical foundations, and treatment options. Key concepts such as harm reduction, the stages of change model, and the continuum of care were introduced, equipping staff with essential knowledge to support students and families facing addiction-related challenges.

The second style of learning involved two in person sessions with Rami Shami, a seasoned professional with over 30 years of experience in palliative care, who provided the team with insights into applying our trauma informed knowledge to practice in our work with students. For the second session, we hosted Avon Maitland District School Board’s Mental Health Team and Huron Perth Centre clinicians to focus on strengthening our inter-agency collaborations between school boards and children’s mental health services. The session emphasized the importance of empathy, intentional presence, self-awareness, and a human-first perspective when collaborating with colleagues and engaging with children, youth, and families.

The sessions offered a deeper understanding of trauma-informed care, and served as an opportunity to build rapport and enhance collaborative relationships across agencies serving our students throughout the district.

#### **Working with Neurodiverse Children and Youth: An Anti-Oppressive Approach**

The team also engaged in a two-day workshop focused on supporting neurodivergent children and youth, including those with ADHD, ASD, dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia. Grounded in the neurodiversity rights movement, the training challenged systemic stigma and explored disabling environments and barriers. Practical strategies were shared to help integrate inclusive,

anti-oppressive practices into mental health support, fostering a more equitable and affirming approach for neurodiverse students.

### **O.A.C.A.S. Annual Attendance Conference**

This month, our Attendance Counsellor and Mental Health Lead attended the Ontario Association for Counselling and Attendance Services (O.A.C.A.S.) Annual Attendance Conference. This event provided a valuable opportunity to connect with Attendance Counsellors from school boards across the province. The conference focused on the science of motivation, offering evidence-based insights and strategies to enhance student attendance and engagement. The learning gained from this experience will be integrated into our Board's attendance strategy to support our ongoing efforts of increasing student attendance and fostering the conditions for positive academic outcomes.

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

#### **Health and Safety**

The Joint Health and Safety Committee met on June 4, 2025. Items discussed included the following:

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

The meeting minutes are posted on the Google Administrative site.

#### **Annual Water Sampling - Ontario Regulation 243/07**

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

#### **Custodian Appreciation Lunch**

On June 6, 2025, all custodians were invited to attend an appreciation day at St. Patrick's School, Dublin. The agenda included Professional learning featuring: Introduction to New Swish & Charlotte Products (ES72 and ES364); Custodial room setup with new product; and Introduction to the Swish eLearning portal followed by a luncheon. This annual day is an opportunity for the Board to say thank you to the custodians for the vital role they play in our schools.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

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