



REPORT TO THE HURON-PERTH CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Prepared by: Tara Boreham and Sean McDade, Superintendents of Education
Presented to: The Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board
Date: Monday, May 5, 2025
Submitted by: Karen Tigani, Director of Education and Secretary

BOARD HIGHLIGHTS FOR APRIL

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 responsible for the activities 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 Easter season 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. April marks a vibrant time in our school year, filled with renewed energy and commitment, particularly as we celebrated Holy Week and Easter. We are delighted to highlight some of the activities and opportunities that took place this month across our district.

CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Easter Season - On Fire with the Spirit in our Schools

Through the Lenten season many schools participated in a variety of activities to help prepare for Holy Week and the Easter Triduum, culminating in the celebration of Christ’s resurrection. These activities included fundraising for the Share Lent Campaign, support for Project Precious and Chalice, food drives for St. Vincent de Paul and other local food banks, and prayers for peace in our world. Across the district, prayer services and Masses took place to celebrate the resurrection of the Lord. Priests from our Deanery offered opportunities for students and staff to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation in our schools.

Development and Peace Schools (D & P Schools)

Schools throughout the system participated in the Major Mustard challenge as part of the D & P Schools program this Lent. Many schools raised funds for Share Lent. The theme for this year’s Share Lent Campaign – “Turn Debt into Hope” – focuses on the efforts of Development and Peace to support decision-makers to prioritize people and planet over mere profit, and demand debt justice for communities crushed by unjust and unpayable debts.

Catholic Student Leadership Retreat

Close to 40 students from St. Anne's Catholic Secondary School and St. Michael Catholic Secondary School gathered for the Catholic Student Leadership Retreat at Camp Kintail on March 27 and 28. This annual retreat aims to strengthen faith leadership in schools by providing students with an opportunity to deepen their faith and build meaningful connections with peers from both communities.



The retreat was planned by Religion and Family Life Learning Coordinator Caroline Thuss, in collaboration with secondary school Chaplains Zack Fitzmaurice and Natalie MacKay. This year's theme, "*Worthy*" focused on the Catholic teachings of human dignity and the preferential option for the poor.

Fr. Tom Donohue led an engaging session, sharing his 28-year connection with L'Arche and encouraging students to recognize the worthiness in themselves and others. Board staff facilitated an activity on food insecurity, after which students wrote notes of encouragement to accompany meals prepared by the Fishes and Loaves program, supported monthly by St. Peter's Parish in Goderich. Students also brought non-perishable items that were donated to the Fishes and Loaves program and the St. Vincent de Paul food bank in Goderich.

Fr. Tony Laforet joined the retreat on the first evening for a faith talk, Eucharistic Adoration, and to hear confessions from students and staff. On Friday morning, students participated in a "Stewards of Creation" guided walk, followed by a closing Mass celebrated by Deacon Dan McPhee and Fr. Laforet.

Inspired by their experiences, students returned to their schools and parishes ready to live out their faith and serve as leaders in their communities.

Junior Bordenball Tournaments

The Huron and Perth Grade 5 and 6 Bordenball tournaments were a huge success again this year. After being rescheduled from the original date due to weather, the events took place on April 30 with the Perth schools participating at St. Michael Catholic Secondary School in Stratford and the Huron schools at St. Anne's Catholic Secondary School and St. Joseph's Catholic Elementary School, Clinton. A special thank you to all of the coaches for dedicating their time and effort to support and develop student athletes. The convenors did an excellent job organizing the events, ensuring students were engaged, challenged and had fun throughout the day.

International Education

March provided international students with valuable opportunities to further develop their English skills and become more attuned to the academic expectations in Canada. There has been noticeable improvement in their speaking, listening, and overall communication abilities, with continued progress underway. Katherine Miller, the Board's Multi-Language Learner teacher,

meets with these students biweekly - alternating between St. Anne's CSS and St. Michael CSS, to support their language development.

Principal Grace attended major recruiting events at the Canadian Embassy in Tokyo and Osaka, Japan on March 20 and 22, respectively. The Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board was showcased to various agents from across Japan. The events in Tokyo and Osaka were extremely well attended and there was a line up at the Huron-Perth table for the first five hours of the day. With the help of an interpreter, Principal Grace was able to see and talk with close to forty families during the six hour event. Students and their families that attended were asking questions about possible enrollment for September 2025 and September 2026. Additionally, meetings were held with schools in Tokyo and Yokohama, Japan who are looking at sending Grade 10 students to the district within the next 18 months. This invaluable facetime with these representatives is a must to build a long-term relationship.

A third student from Spain has committed to attending our Board for September 2025. This Grade 10 student still needs to determine which of the high schools that she would like to attend. She will be coming to Canada for a four month stay and possibly extending it to the full year. This marks the third student to confirm for September 2025. Two of the three students are being represented by agencies who are brand new to the Board as they were just introduced to us as the result of the October 2024 mission to Europe that Principal Grace participated in.

LEADERSHIP

Secondary NTIP

Our secondary NTIP teachers met in Dublin on April 22 to continue our shared learning and work. Teachers in their first two years as a permanent Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board teacher, and those on Long Term Occasional positions in our secondary schools met with learning coordinator Paul D'Hondt to discuss several topics related to beginning their journey as a teacher in the board. Items discussed included a review of our board and its mission, our approach to student success, course planning, assessment, classroom management, the integration of technology, differentiation, UDL, and more! This shared learning and collaboration is critical to supporting the success and well-being of these new teachers and their students.

Primary and Junior EQAO

Principals and Vice-Principals received 1-1 training in preparation for the Primary and Junior Test of Reading, Writing, and Mathematics. The learning coordinator for EQAO met with each school leader to support the set-up for testing on the assessment platform, Vretta.

Provincial Math Leads

The Ministry of Education resumed meetings after the election and held another Strategic Planning Sessions for Board Math Leads on Wednesday, April 16. Our Superintendent of Curriculum and Math Learning Coordinator were in attendance and followed up with our Ministry Math liaisons with feedback on our Math Achievement Action Plan. Our math leaders also communicate and collaborate with the Ministry math team on as-needed basis.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Network

A team of leaders from the corporate and academic teams at the Catholic Education Centre including the Director, Executive Assistant to the Director, Superintendents, Manager of Human Resources, Manager of Information Technology, Secondary Chaplain, members of the Curriculum-IT Committee and finance department attended a day of learning with teams from

many other school boards from across southwestern Ontario. This was the beginning of a series of learning sessions and resource sharing opportunities designed to assist us with developing best practices and implementation plans for the upcoming school year.

Catholic Supervisory Officers and Directors at King's University

On April 4, members of our senior executive team attended a professional development opportunity hosted at King's Catholic University along with Supervisory Officers and Directors from the other Catholic school boards in our region. The agenda included a brief presentation from King's about post-secondary educational opportunities in Catholic education as well as special education, early reading screening and creative solutions to staffing challenges. An update from the Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers Association was also provided.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Coaching to Inclusion Conference and Champion of Inclusion Award

On April 10, the Coaching to Inclusion Conference took place in London Ontario. This conference first took place in 1998 and ran every year until the pandemic. This year marked its long awaited return with the theme being "All Means All: Reigniting the Commitment to Inclusion Education." Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board has a long history of supporting and participating in this conference, with the Learning Coordinator of Special Education sitting on the committee, and various employees throughout the board being recognized with a Champion of Inclusion Award throughout the years. This year, the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board took the lead on organizing the agenda for the day.

There were several great guest speakers, and we heard from our very own St. Boniface Bulldogs staff and students who presented about the work happening in their school using the programs Stay, Play, Talk, Schools on TRACKS, and PEER Pals. Participating school boards selected a Champion of Inclusion Award recipient. Our winners were a classroom team at St. Ambrose - Angela Van Geel (Classroom Teacher), and Marianne Lupton (Educational Assistant). We are very proud of these two winners and all of our nominees and the ways they are advancing inclusion in Huron-Perth Catholic. Other nominees included Heather Brown (Classroom Teacher at St. Joseph's Clinton), Kathy Rutledge (Educational Assistant at St. Joseph's Stratford), and Crystal Brennan Yeo (Classroom Teacher at St. Anne's CSS). This conference reaffirmed that Huron-Perth Catholic continues to be held in high regard as leaders in inclusive education.



World Autism Awareness Day

April was Autism Awareness Month and World Autism Day was April 2. Schools across the district were encouraged to use

resources provided by our System Special Education Team and Autism Ontario to follow this year's theme of "Celebrate The Spectrum." Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board celebrates the many students in our schools with Autism Spectrum Disorder. We are thankful for the gifts and talents that they bring to our school communities on a daily basis. We recognize that days like April 2 provide opportunities for education and advocacy with the goal of improving our inclusive spaces in our schools and communities for all students.

Infinite Horizons

During April we began our Infinite Horizons program for our students in grades 4 to 8 who are identified as being Gifted. The board has once again partnered with Seeds Rooted in Youth to help support us with offering these students meaningful enrichment opportunities. Day one took place on April 8 and focused on Science and Bridge Building. The second day took place on April 29 and students learned about Mindfulness and Discovery. Days three and four will be May 20 and June 5. Day three will revolve around Cooking and on day four students will travel to the Stratford Art Gallery for a guided tour and activity, and then to Stratford Festival to engage in an interactive pre-show opportunity and view this year's production of Annie.

Transition Fairs

This year the Board has partnered with Avon Maitland District School Board to offer a series of events for students with Developmental Disabilities and their families about transitioning to adult life after high school. The first of two in person transition fairs took place at St. Michael Catholic Secondary School on April 12 and had over 20 organizations in attendance. These in person transition fairs are designed to provide essential information on accessing services and support for students and their families as they prepare for a future beyond high school. Information was shared about community resources, employment services, and community programs and included presentations from Developmental Services Ontario, Ontario Disability Support Program, and Passport Funding. The second in person transition fair will be held May 3 at Central Huron Secondary School in Clinton.

DIGITAL TOOLS TO SUPPORT LEARNING

French as a Second Language - Coding Resources and Support

The Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board through the Ontario Public School Boards' Association, received a grant and access to French as a Second Language (FSL) Experiential Resources. These resources aim to connect French language learning with authentic, real-world STEM opportunities. The board's IT Learning Coordinator then introduced these lessons to French Immersion classes, enabling teachers to integrate STEM activities into their FSL programs. This initiative seeks to enhance FSL proficiency and engagement by providing students with opportunities to interact in French through STEM-based activities. These lessons effectively integrate expectations from the Ontario FSL, Mathematics, and Science curriculum.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Leaders Learning Council (LLC)

Our Leadership Learning Day was an inspiring and energizing experience! We began the morning by reinforcing our commitment to building an inclusive school board where all students can meet high expectations with the right support. We explored how principal-led special education programming is transforming students' lives daily, with a focus on the power of reading interventions like Lexia, the impact of positive reinforcement, and a deeper understanding of Executive Functioning and Universal Supports. Midday, we enjoyed a special

Indigenous cooking event with Chef David Wolfman, celebrated host of *Cooking with the Wolfman* (APTN), who guided students and leaders alike through culinary traditions and cultural teachings. The day concluded with a faith-filled Religion and Family Life session, featuring Catholic Education Week highlights, the launch of our "Stop, Pause, Pray" initiative, and a deep dive into the renewed Family Life curriculum, as we reflected on our shared mission as Pilgrims of Hope. It was a day rich in learning, leadership, and inspiration.

Mathematics

Throughout April, the Math Team, which includes three Math Facilitators and one Math Learning Coordinator, remained dedicated to enhancing math instruction and learning across all elementary schools. Their primary focus was on giving Grade 3 and Grade 6 students meaningful practice with selected-response questions. In collaboration with teachers in Grades 3 and 6 classrooms, the team worked to get students ready for the upcoming EQAO assessments by leveraging the High Impact Instructional Practice of "Teaching About Problem Solving," using recently released EQAO math items.

Problem-solving is a foundational skill that fosters critical thinking, resilience, and independent reasoning. The released EQAO questions serve as valuable tools to revisit key curriculum expectations while also teaching students how to approach mathematical problems with confidence. By making thinking visible, students are encouraged to think more deliberately and express their reasoning clearly. This approach also promotes the use of strategies like "think alouds" and "self-talk," which empower students to tackle new and unfamiliar problems. Focusing on problem-solving helps students understand the importance of grappling with challenges, learning from their errors, and developing flexible approaches to thinking. Strong instruction in this area invites students to examine how they think, making their internal strategies more apparent and easier to refine. Math Facilitators support this by modeling their own problem-solving processes, openly sharing their thinking with both students and educators. These moments foster meaningful discussion and support the development of strong mathematical reasoning skills.

Beyond Grades 3 and 6, the Math Team also continued to support mathematics instruction in other grades, responding to requests and maintaining key initiatives such as the "Do the Math" intervention program. The Math Team met several times in April to prepare for the May 2 professional development day and took Pam Harris' online course, "Developing Mathematical Reasoning".

Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT)

In preparation for the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT), training sessions were held at both St. Anne's CSS and St. Michael CSS to familiarize staff with the online testing platform, and students engaged in a practice test to gain comfort with the platform. The actual OSSLT assessment was administered on April 9. Leading up to the test, students had the opportunity to engage in practice activities and have received ongoing support throughout the school year, both in their classrooms and through additional literacy interventions. School-based literacy support teachers continue to work with students who may need extra help. The Secondary Learning Coordinator has been actively supporting school administrators to ensure the platform was fully operational for testing day.

Secondary Math Learning Session

On April 8, math teachers from both secondary schools met in Dublin with coordinators Christine Dale and Paul D'Hondt. Together, they engaged in discussions about assessment, a moderated marking activity, and collaborated on specific models of spiralling their curriculum.

Multilingual Language Learners (MLL)

Work with our MLL student population continued to move forward throughout April, with a focus on inclusivity, growth, and support for our school communities. We welcomed MLL students from various countries into our schools, including a group of international students from Brazil who joined both of our secondary schools at the start of Term 2. Our commitment to supporting our multilingual learners remained strong as we worked with emerging learners to enhance their learning and boost confidence in their abilities. By fostering a welcoming environment that encouraged risk-taking, we strengthened learning relationships and, in turn, helped build students' confidence to take chances in their reading, writing, and communication in English. In small groups, we remained dedicated to modelling meaningful conversations and using visuals or gestures to help students make connections to new words or phrases, while celebrating success in the moment. Our ongoing efforts reflected our commitment to supporting the continued growth and confidence of both our students and educators. In addition to the work within our schools, we began networking with outside agencies across our counties, including Immigration Partnership of Huron and YMCA Immigration Services, to gather valuable information that will be shared with families and schools across the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board.

French as a Second Language

On April 2, 2025, several educators participated in a professional development session designed as a refresher in preparation for this year's upcoming Diplôme d'Études en Langue Française (DELFL) exams. Principal Shona Gracey led the session and brought together experienced DELFL correcteurs, who will once again serve as evaluators for our Grade 12 students taking part in the certification. This year, students will have the opportunity to challenge the DELFL at three different levels: A2, B1, and B2, offering flexibility and an individualized approach based on each student's language proficiency. The DELFL assessments will take place from May 5–7, 2025, at St. Michael's Catholic Secondary School.

In addition to DELFL preparation, our System French Support Teacher, Sandra O'Neil, along with two primary French Immersion educators, attended a regional professional learning opportunity in London, Ontario focused on Structured Literacy in the French Classroom. These sessions provided valuable insights into effective literacy practices within French Immersion settings. These educators will now take the lead in sharing and modelling their learning with other primary French Immersion teachers across our system in the coming months, helping to build capacity and strengthen instructional practices.

Literacy

April was an exciting, productive month for our Literacy team, marked by targeted support, collaborative planning, and evidence-based interventions across our schools. Our Literacy Resource Teachers (LRTs), Karen Kramers and Teresa Oud, began the month with a system-wide coaching block. During this time, they visited each school to provide educators with the opportunity to engage in individualized conversations, addressing specific questions and instructional needs. Key areas of focus included analyzing assessment data and planning for effective small group instruction. In addition to one-on-one coaching, the LRTs provided in-class support by modelling newly released EQAO practice questions with Grade 3 and Grade 6 students. These sessions not only familiarize students with the assessment format but also supported them in building confidence and readiness ahead of the upcoming provincial assessments. On April 22, the second round of primary literacy intervention began in four schools, selected based on Middle of Year (MOY) screening data. This targeted intervention is focused on Grade 1 students identified as being at risk for future reading difficulties, with the

goal of providing early, intensive support to build foundational skills and prevent long-term challenges.

Also throughout April, Learning Coordinators MJ Drager and Jessica Langan visited each school to facilitate focused conversations about MOY screening results. These collaborative meetings included administrators, Special Education Resource Teachers (SERTs), and classroom educators, and served as a valuable opportunity to review existing Data Action Plans. Based on the data, teams were able to make informed updates and create new, actionable plans to support continued literacy growth for all students.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING PROGRAMS IN SECONDARY

Certification & Safety Training

First Aid/CPR Certification

Our final round of First Aid and CPR training for the school year was held April 23-24. This essential certification is a requirement for all SHSM students and equips them with life-saving skills.

Grade 10 Class Presentations

Grade 10 students continue to receive in-class visits to explore course selection options that align with the eight SHSM programs offered at St. Anne's:

- Agriculture
- Arts & Culture
- Business
- Construction
- Health & Wellness
- Non-Profit
- Education & Childcare
- Sports

Specialized Learning & Field Trips

From exploring local industry and Indigenous culinary arts to hands-on tech days and SHSM certifications, April has been an exciting month of experiential learning across our board—connecting students with real-world skills, career pathways, and inspiring mentors in meaningful and memorable ways.

- **Huron Manufacturing Association (HMA) Trip - April 10**
Both SMCSS & SACSS students enrolled in Career Studies will tour two manufacturing facilities in Perth County: The visit will include guided tours, information about summer employment, apprenticeships, and career opportunities in the local manufacturing sector.
- **Grade 6 Tech Days & Grade 7 Arts Days**
For the first time, Grade 6 and 7 students from across Huron County were welcomed to participate in interactive, hands-on sessions led by our technology and arts program teachers and students on April 15 -16. These events aim to build early engagement and excitement in SHSM-related pathways.
- **SHSM Health & Wellness Kinesiology Trip**
SACSS students in the Health and Wellness and Sports SHSM programs will visit the University of Waterloo on April 28 to complete a lab practices certification, gaining real-world post-secondary experience.

- **Indigenous Cooking Event**
Chef David Wolfman, Professor of Culinary Arts at George Brown College and host of *Cooking with the Wolfman* (APTN), returns to lead an engaging Indigenous cooking workshop on April 29. He will work with St. Anne's students in Foods classes and English Indigenous literature courses to share culinary traditions and cultural teachings.
- **Grower Pesticide Safety Course**
In partnership with the University of Guelph, both SMCSS and SACSS SHSM Agriculture and Environment students participated in the Grower Pesticide Safety Certification in April. This training is an important component of agricultural career readiness.
- **Perth Huron Builders Association (PHBA) Spring Home Show**
St. Michael CSS Tech Department hosted a dynamic and interactive booth at the Stratford Rotary Complex during the PHBA Home Show. April 11-12. The booth showcased SHSM and OYAP programs and offered hands-on trade activities for elementary students. Activities included face painting, building gumball machines, and a free draw for a handcrafted metal fireplace made by our students.
- **Group Dynamics Certification (Business SHSM)**
Business SHSM students are completing an asynchronous online certification in Group Dynamics as part of their sector-specific training.
- **Sector Partnered Experience Coding & Math Literacy**
On April 18 students attended a half-day workshop focused on building digital fluency and meeting the SPE (Sector Partnered Experience) requirement of their SHSM.
- **Arts and Culture Experience**
SMCSS Arts and Culture students attended a half day event with musician Justin Maki on April 22. The day included a guitar technique workshop, an interview with Justin on his music career journey and a mini-concert. On April 24, both students from SMCSS and SACSS participated in a full-day event with composer Bill Thomas. The students came together to learn a piece of music that was commissioned through the School Board and written by Bill.

Dual Credit Program

- **Aesthetics – Begins April 30**
Ten students from SMCSS began an Aesthetics Dual Credit course through Fanshawe College, combining theory with hands-on salon experience.

Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP)

Our commitment to skilled trades education continues to grow through a range of innovative programs and partnerships that open doors for students—from early exploration in Grades 7 and 8 to Level 1 apprenticeship training at the college level. These opportunities empower students to discover their passions, gain hands-on experience, and begin building meaningful pathways in the trades.

- **OYAP Level 1 Apprenticeship Training**
OYAP students from SMCSS have begun their Level 1 in-school apprenticeship training at Fanshawe, Lambton, and Conestoga Colleges in various trades.
- **OYAP Parent & Student Info Session - Date TBD**
Information sessions are being offered for interested students and parents to learn more about apprenticeship pathways, Level 1 training opportunities, and registration procedures.
- **After-School Co-op**
The after-school Co-op program continues to offer opportunities for students who

traditionally may not have considered the trades, allowing them to fulfill SHSM requirements in a more flexible format.

- **Grade 7 & 8 Skilled Trades Exploration Event – Stratford Rotary Complex**

This hands-on event is designed to introduce students to various skilled trades through real-world, mentor-guided workshops. It also gets students excited about the opportunities that await them at St Michael CSS.

- **Grade 7 Program:** Students rotate through 8 interactive trade stations led by industry professionals and PHBA and many other industry mentors.

Grade 8 Program (in partnership with Conestoga College): Students engage in two in-depth workshops, Plumbing and Electrical led by certified Conestoga College instructors.

These sessions help students explore potential future careers and inspire interest

OYAP SWCOCA Regional Meeting in Hamilton

Board leads will attend the regional OYAP meeting to discuss updates from MLITSD and Skilled Trades Ontario. Topics include the rollout of the new FAST-OYAP model, Level 1 program delivery updates, and continued regional coordination.

OCEA Spring Conference April 27- 29

Staff from across our board will attend the Ontario Cooperative Education Association's Spring Conference. This three-day event will cover new trends in Cooperative Education, innovative programming, tracking, and cross-border collaboration.

PHBA Municipal Breakfast: Ontario Building Code in Action

Board staff and SHSM partners will participate in this breakfast networking event hosted by the Perth Huron Builders Association, aimed at building stronger school-to-industry connections.

We are proud of the incredible work happening across our schools and deeply value the partnerships with post-secondary institutions, local employers, and industry organizations that help make these opportunities possible for our students.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) in our Catholic Elementary Schools this Month

Throughout the month of April our Catholic Elementary Schools received 14 SEL classroom presentations that were delivered across the district to approximately 330 students. These presentations weave together our Catholic School Graduate Expectations and School Mental Health Ontario's SEL Competencies to support the growth of the whole student.

Staff Mental Health Literacy and Capacity Building

The MHWT is facilitating another book study on Relationship, Responsibility and Regulation: Trauma-Informed Practices for Fostering Resilient Learners by Kristin Van Marter Souers and Pete Hall. The school staff participants are exploring trauma-informed practices to better understand and support students who have experienced trauma, aiming to create a safe and resilient learning environment.

School-Based Social Workers' Professional Development

The School-Based Social Workers (SBSW) were fortunate enough to receive a variety of professional development throughout the month of April with varying team members attending

opportunities that fit the needs of their practice in supporting our students mental health and wellbeing. The opportunities attended are listed as follows:

DBT Suicide Risk Assessment and Monitoring - Part 1: SBSWs enhanced their expertise in assessing and managing suicide risk among students with chronic suicidal ideation through interactive activities, role plays, and problem-solving exercises.

Differentiating MH Interventions for Students with Special Needs: Training focused on research-based and practice-based knowledge for students with special education needs, applicable to various protocols and interventions.

Supporting MH in Early Years: A 2-hour session combining didactic education on the current state of mental health in Early Years (K-3) and the role of school mental health professionals.

Group Facilitation Training: Webinar covering types of groups, stages of group development, meeting stages, challenges during facilitation, and strategies for dealing with them.

Eating Disorders Ontario Multi-Session Facilitation Training and Weight Bias and Stigma Training (EDOP): Training to facilitate a ten-week group promoting body positivity for adolescents, emphasizing weight bias awareness, eating disorder prevention, and mental health literacy.

Launch of our PPM 128 Caregiver Engagement Series Facilitated by Rami Shami

The Mental Health and Wellness Team facilitated the first of three sessions of Rami Shami's Empathy in Action series, held in person in Stratford and Clinton to support accessibility for caregivers in both counties. These sessions focused on the impact of trauma on youth, exploring stress and coping mechanisms such as social media use and vaping.

The engagement session was offered in support of meaningful implementation of Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM) 128 which is a directive from the Ministry of Education that outlines the Provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Codes of Conduct. This PPM aims to foster safe, inclusive, and accepting school environments by setting clear expectations for behavior and addressing issues such as cell phone use, social media, and vaping.



At Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board we believe that understanding PPM 128 is important for caregivers as it helps them support their children in navigating the challenges posed by modern technology and substance use. Excessive social media use has been linked to increased anxiety and depression among students, while vaping poses significant health risks, including nicotine addiction and exposure to harmful chemicals. By being informed, caregivers can better guide their children towards healthier behaviors and coping strategies. The Mental Health Team will continue to seek and provide more learning opportunities about this topic.

Community Partnership: Connecting Student's Minds and Bodies for Wellbeing

Team UNBREAKABLE Launch: On April 4 at St. Mary's Goderich, in collaboration with the Maitland Valley Family Health Team, promoting mental and physical well-being through running-based activities for grades 4, 5, and 6. The program includes 8 weekly sessions, culminating in a 2km run/walk and celebration on June 5, 2025.

FACILITIES SERVICE AND HEALTH AND SAFETY

Joint Health and Safety

The Joint Health and Safety Committee met at the CEC on April 2. Items discussed including the following:

- Naloxone
- eBase Reporting
- ORT - training/info sheet
- Bill 190 Update
- Monthly and Annual Inspections
- Incident Reporting
- First Aid Kits

Annual Health and Safety Week

Annual Health and Safety Week is April 28 - May 2. The week coincides with the National Day of Mourning on April 28.

Maintenance and Operations

With the cold weather now behind us, maintenance and operations is shifting its focus toward seasonal priorities, including yard clean-up, preventive maintenance of key building components and waste audits. Planned maintenance activities will include, but are not limited to, rooftop units, pumps, and boiler systems. These efforts are essential to ensure that our buildings remain safe, efficient, and fully operational as we prepare for the warmer months ahead.

Capital Planning

Over the past several months, significant effort has been directed toward planning new capital projects, with a focus on aligning these projects with the Ministry of Education's condition assessment schedule in preparation for summer construction. Ministry reporting has also remained a top priority to ensure compliance and transparency across all planning activities.

Ongoing communication has been maintained regarding the proposed addition and childcare centre at St. Mary's (Listowel) ensuring that the project remains a central priority. In addition, I continue to review recently submitted Ministry condition assessments, which play a key role in guiding both short- and long-term infrastructure planning and capital funding. Finally, we have been remaining in close contact with municipal and community partners to monitor local growth and ensure that our facilities are meeting community needs.

RECOMMENDATION

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