



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 MAY

Public Session

BACKGROUND

Many activities take place every month throughout the district to ensure that our students have rich, 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, and Managers of activities that take place under their leadership.

DEVELOPMENTS

The spiritual theme we anchor the 2023-24 school year in is “Go Forth!” and it builds upon the Gospel story of the Road to Emmaus which has been guiding our district over the past three years. The Holy Spirit continues to guide our district and lovingly supports us as we cycle through states of encounter, accompaniment and transformation. As we continue through the Easter Season, we go forward with incredible enthusiasm and joy, ever grateful for the many gifts of our students, families, staff members, parishes, and communities. Together, we are on a journey of discipleship. We are people of hope and we delight in the many signs of God’s love and joy in our schools and facilities.

CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Catholic Education Week 2024

Catholic Education Week was a significant success throughout our system. The event began with a system-wide Mass celebrated by Rev. Bishop Fabbro, where we were blessed to have students from St. Michael CSS and several music teachers from across the district lead our music ministry. There were several priests and deacons from our Deanery in attendance as well. We inducted Ms. Erma Weernink into The Order of St. André Bessette and recognized Marc Bauer-Maison, Melanie Levinson, Joseph Patrick Ryan, Karen Teahen and Angela Carter with the St. Teresa of Calcutta Faith in Action Award for their outstanding contributions to our schools and parish communities.

Throughout the week, individual schools held their own liturgies and Masses, celebrating our schools and honoring Mother Mary. Students participated in lessons and activities developed by the Ontario Catholic Schools Trustees Association, as well as additional activities co-created with the Mental Health Team to mark Children's Mental Health Week. This collaborative effort highlighted the importance of both faith and mental well-being in our educational community.



Secondary Department Heads Workshop: OCGEs Across the Curriculum

On May 22, all department heads from both secondary schools participated in a half-day workshop at the Catholic Education Centre to support them as they prepare to lead their respective departments on integrating Catholicity in their subject areas at the June 7 Professional Development day (PD). The collaboration included examining the Ontario Catholic Graduate Expectations (OCGEs), Catholic Social Teachings, and other opportunities and resources to support integrating both Catholic content and Catholic context into all secondary subject areas. At the upcoming PD Day, secondary teachers will be examining their curriculum in light of and through the lens of the OCGEs and our Catholic faith. Department Heads will be the facilitators of these sessions and the training on May 22 was designed to support them. Department Heads from both schools were able to discuss and generate ideas, supported by their Administrators and the Secondary Learning Coordinator.

Elementary Sports Council - Soccer Tournaments

This month, four soccer tournaments took place across the system. St. Anne's CSS and St. Joseph's in Clinton hosted the Huron junior and senior soccer tournaments. St. Patrick's, Kinkora hosted the two Perth tournaments. HPCDSB student athletes demonstrated incredible talent and sportsmanship. These four events not only fostered friendly competition but also promoted teamwork, leadership and healthy lifestyles among our students. A special thank-you to the coaches and convenors that worked so hard to make these days successful for our students.

LEADERSHIP

System Leaders in Catholic Education (SLICE)

System and school leaders including members of the senior team, principals and vice-principals, learning coordinators and managers assembled for the annual Director's Retreat. A significant focus was building toward the new strategic plan and using the goals related to faith formation and student achievement to guide the development of Strategy Maps for each school and department. SLICE included a variety of prayer liturgies and the celebration of the Eucharist on Friday afternoon celebrated by our Board's Chaplain, Rev. David Butler. It included learning about change management relative to moving our Board forward in pursuing our strategic goals and embodying our spiritual theme "On Fire With The Spirit". The learning, collaboration, planning and faith experiences enjoyed by all who attend SLICE is an annual highlight for sure.

Pastoral Planning

As part of the work at SLICE, all school leaders are actively engaged in developing a Pastoral Plan for the 2024-2025 school year. A district template has been developed and shared with Principals and Vice-Principals to guide and support their planning. The goal is to ensure that Catholic faith formation, Religion and Family Life programming, and our partnerships with the Families of Parishes are centred in all school improvement planning and scheduling efforts prior to the start of the school year, while also recognizing that this plan will be flexible and updated throughout the school year too. The Pastoral Plan includes planning related to the local pastor and parish team, Catholic School Advisory Council, sacramental preparation, liturgical celebrations, visible signs of our faith, social justice, outreach activities, and recognizing the Ontario Catholic Graduate Expectations.

Regional Supervisory Officers Council Conference (RSOCC/RSEC)

The Superintendents of Education attended the annual Spring RSOCC event May 23-24 where they engaged in learning and collaboration with Supervisory Officers from all of the school boards in the London Region. The topics for this event included:

- Reignite: Building Resilience in an Age of Burnout led by Dr. Jody Carrington, psychologist and leader of Carrington and Company
- Competing Rights in Curriculum and Special Education led by Njeri Damali Sojourner-Campbell from Hicks Morley LLP
- Current Issues in Special Education - Ministry of Education Update
- Current Issues in Curriculum - Ministry of Education Update

Coinciding with RSOCC is the Spring Regional Special Education Council (RSEC), attended by Superintendent Boreham and the Special Education Learning Coordinator.

These opportunities at RSOCC and RSEC to come together with colleagues and regional Ministry of Education Officers is highly valuable.

Leaders' Learning Council (LLC)

May 28 will feature an online LLC where the Superintendents will review recent policy updates and highlight a few policies that are regularly referenced, to support consistency in practices and understanding across the district. There is no in-person LLC in May due to SLICE.

EQAO: Grade 3 & 6

Grade 3 and 6 students across our system began writing the Primary and Junior Assessments of Reading, Writing and Mathematics on May 21. The Math Learning Coordinator prepared schools for EQAO and the Vretta assessment platform by providing 1-1 training for principals and test invigilators. Members of the CEC teaching staff were also available to support schools during the first days of testing.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Special Education Regional Coordinator/Consultant Conference

Members of the System Special Education Team attended the Special Education Regional Coordinator/Consultant Conference (SERCC) on May 29-31. Agenda items included a session on Human Rights & Equity, some learning around Artificial Intelligence, as well as a presentation from LD at School. This conference provides an amazing opportunity for Special Education representatives from school boards to network and share best practices.

Moving Inclusion Forward - Inclusion Rep Working Group Meeting #2

As a key component of the Moving Inclusion Forward initiative, the System Special Education team led a second session with representatives from across the system on May 10.

Representatives from all working groups from both elementary and secondary were present. Agenda items included a review of the project and the role of an Inclusion Rep, sharing successes and areas of improvement from each school, a presentation from the Managing Director of Facile Perth, Emily Branje and Danny Steeves Eby about the importance of creating space and time for genuine friendship to occur between neuro-typical and neuro-diverse students, some learning about the assumptions we make for individuals with disabilities, why these assumptions exist and how to move beyond them. Inclusion Reps will now take this learning and share it at their next school staff meeting.

DIGITAL TOOLS TO SUPPORT LEARNING

Coding and Robotics

Our Grade seven and eight students had an enriching experience delving into coding and robotics using LEGO Spike Education robotics kits. Under the guidance of our Information Technology Learning Coordinator and supported by Engineering students from the University of Waterloo, our students engaged in hands-on learning aligned with the Science curriculum. This initiative not only provided practical problem solving opportunities but also fostered real-world skills essential for their future.

Skills Ontario Competition

Elementary students from HPCDSB proudly participated in the Skills Ontario Competition held in Toronto on May 6. Our six teams of Grade 7 and 8 students showcased their talents in categories such as Robotic Mechanical Engineering and LEGO Robotics. Thanks to the dedication of our teacher leaders in each school and the support of the system team, all teams demonstrated exceptional skill and innovation, as reflected in the HPCDSB team results which included 4th place in robotics and 8th in technology among 26 school boards. Our team from St. Mary's Listowel clinched a gold medal in the Construction competition, a testament to their hard work and dedication.

Secondary students showcased their skill and dedication by participating in the Skills Ontario Competition, held in Toronto on May 7. From carpentry and electrical installation to automotive service, hairstyling, and aesthetics, our students demonstrated exceptional talent and commitment to their crafts. Their participation not only highlights their individual capabilities but also reflects the quality of education and guidance they receive at our Catholic schools. These opportunities were made possible by the generous sponsorship of OYAP which celebrates achievements in skills trades. HPCDSB continues to support growth and success in both academics and vocational endeavors.

Edwin - Teacher Resource

Our Grade 7 and 8 teachers embarked on a pilot project integrating Edwin, a digital teacher tool and student resource, into their classrooms. This initiative aims to enhance student learning by providing access to content in Literacy, Science, History and Geography. Our teachers received professional development to optimize the use of this digital tool and to design blended learning experiences that cater to diverse student needs.

French Immersion Virtual Science Workshops

One of our community partners, Scientists in Schools, offered a limited number of virtual workshops in French to our students in Grades 1 through 6. Although the workshops were

facilitated virtually through a Google Meet call, students were each given a bag of hands-on materials so that they could follow along and explore with their own materials.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Mathematics

In May, the Math Team surged with activity, marking an exciting chapter for our initiatives. Firstly, we enthusiastically welcomed a new Math Facilitator, Megan Lunn, who seamlessly integrated into the team, immediately collaborating with our newest teacher hires in schools. Meanwhile, our existing two Math Facilitators continued their invaluable work, diligently conducting Math curriculum reviews for all Grade 3 and 6 students across our system: 15 schools, 60 classrooms, and over 850 students. The Math Curriculum Review Tour spanned six dynamic weeks, with Math Facilitators and classroom teachers analyzing formative assessment data to pinpoint student learning needs. These insights were then translated into targeted small-group instructional sessions, led by both the Math Facilitators and the classroom teachers. Moreover, the entire Math Team convened multiple times, synergizing efforts to outline system-wide needs for our forthcoming strategic plan.

Simultaneously, we embarked on our next ambitious venture: crafting a comprehensive lesson planning project to decrease the variance of use of core resources and elevate mathematical proficiency across our educational landscape. The Math Team was also excited to receive four more complete Do the Math kits, our Tier 2 intervention program, delivered to schools. We will be working with principals, SERTs, and classroom teachers to ensure this incredible resource is effectively implemented and students' misconceptions are addressed in the areas of operations and fractions. Our Board Math Lead (Superintendent) and Math Learning Coordinator continued to meet with the Math Ministry Team on our Math Achievement Action Plan this month and learned more about the ongoing work of the provincial Math Team for next year.

Literacy

In May, the literacy team achieved their goal of completing important literacy training sessions for all classroom educators (K-8) along with our DECE partners. This initiative ensured that every classroom teacher had the opportunity to engage in professional development, focusing on early reading screening and immersing themselves in Strand B: Foundation of Language within the newly adopted Literacy curriculum. Notably, considerable emphasis was placed on leveraging the invaluable resource "The Writing Revolution" to integrate writing fundamentals across all subject areas seamlessly.

Simultaneously, our dedicated Literacy Resource Teachers (LRTs) have been working side by side with classroom educators to create some forward-looking plans to equip them for the upcoming academic year. This proactive approach ensures that our teaching staff are well-prepared to deliver enriched literacy experiences to their students. The goal is to collectively build capacity and efficacy in our educators both new and experienced across the district.

Additionally, our commitment to early intervention remained steadfast throughout May, with two LRTs extending invaluable support to four schools. This targeted intervention, conducted in SK/1 and Grade 1 classrooms three days a week, is designed to strengthen students' foundational reading skills. By providing this additional support, the goal is to preemptively address any potential hurdles, empowering these students to achieve their personalized reading milestones with confidence.

French as a Second Language: DELF

On May 14 and 15, almost 30 Grade 12 Core and French Immersion students from St Anne's CSS and St Michael CSS challenged the DELF (Diplôme d'études en langue française) exam. DELF is an internationally recognized proficiency exam from France. It is based on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), which defines language proficiency along six global levels: A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, and C2. At each level, proficiency is measured across four competencies: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The French Ministry of National Education awards a diploma to successful candidates. HPCDSB offered the A2 and B1 tests this year.

This is an extremely valuable initiative that promotes linguistic diversity and cultural understanding. By offering the DELF, students can assess and certify their French language proficiency, opening doors to broader educational and career opportunities in a globalized world while fostering a deep appreciation for the French language and culture.

Challenging the DELF is not a required component of the regular FSL program, nor is it a replacement for the French program. Students who are in French Immersion and Core French continue to work toward earning their French Immersion Certificate and FSL credits, with the DELF being an additional option. DELF test results are not included in any course evaluation or final report card grades.

Multilingual Learners (MLL)

Throughout May, the HPCDSB's Multilingual Learner (MLL) Support Teacher team (consisting of Mary Kathryn Simmons and Katherine Miller) demonstrated dedication and proactive engagement in supporting school administrators and classroom teachers. They conducted individual meetings with every school principal to assess each learner's needs and they collaboratively devised tailored plans for MLL student success. Furthermore, the team has been cycling back to classroom teachers, offering personalized support and resources to enhance their ability to meet the unique requirements of each MLL student. Beyond meetings, the MLL team has been actively involved in the classroom settings in both elementary and secondary schools, with newcomer students, ensuring they receive the necessary support as they navigate the process of learning English. Through their collaborative efforts and hands-on approach, the MLL team continues to play a pivotal role in fostering an inclusive and supportive learning environment for all students within the HPCDSB community.

Kindergarten Orientation

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

Indigenous Education

We are fortunate to have the opportunity to welcome Aspens Ojibwe spirit horses to all our elementary schools this Spring. All classes will participate in a virtual learning session with Knowledge Carrier, Christin Dennis, who will explain the significance of the Horses to the Ojibwe peoples, teach the students a song that they will sing to the horses and how people communicated important teaching through art with the example of the Petroglyphs that are found in Ontario. Students will then create their own artwork inspired by the message that Mr. Dennis shared that will then be displayed to the horses when they come to visit each

elementary school this Spring. Some of our elementary schools had this opportunity throughout the month of April and May. The rest of the schools will be visited before the end of the school year.



EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING PROGRAMS IN SECONDARY

Women in Skilled Trades (WIST) Construction and Auto Events

- Secondary students participated in the Women in Skilled Trades Auto Event on May 1. They traveled to UFLY where they used simulators that gave them a chance to experience flying a 747, 727 and other smaller planes with qualified pilots assisting them.
- Students also participated in the Women in a Skilled Trades Construction Event that included travelling to Quality Homes in Kenilworth and the Construction Union Training Centre Local 27 in Woodbridge. This was an excellent opportunity to interact with industry professionals and experience various construction building techniques and training facilities.
- On May 29, 24 Students are looking forward to the very popular Jill of All Trades Event at Conestoga College. Students are encouraged to participate in a variety of hands-on activities in many different trades. It is a great opportunity to ask questions about the benefits and future outlook in the trade sector.

SHSM and Experiential Learning Activities and Excursions

Discovery Day in Health Sciences at Western University

On May 3, students explored different careers in medicine and the health sciences. The day began with a keynote speaker and then students chose from different workshops and panel discussions designed to showcase diverse opportunities in health sciences. Workshop choices included Alzheimer's Support, Chemistry and Neuroscience. The popular "Health Pros Tell All" panel discussion gave students a chance to ask questions about the challenges and joys of careers in this sector.

St. Ambrose Student Visit to Fanshawe College

Grade 7 and 8 students from St. Ambrose visited Fanshawe College on May 3 to explore various skilled trades. Students experienced hands-on skills and visited the college to virtually see trade opportunities and goal setting for the students in the future.

BattleStem (formerly the Science Olympics) at the University of Guelph

On May 9, 36 students working in teams of 4 have been busily preparing to compete in a variety of different areas including 3D Printing, Crime Lab, Crack the Code and Soda Showdown, Lite

Bot and Scavenger Hunt. It was an amazing competition and sparked a high degree of interest in science, engineering and technology.

Brick and Stone Dual Credit Course - Conestoga College

4 students from St. Anne's CSS and 12 students from St. Michael CSS are looking forward to learning more about the masonry trade. Students have been travelling to St. Michael CSS on Tuesdays and Fridays for 4 weeks to earn both a high school credit and a college credit at the same time. The first session was May 21.

MultiCultural Technology Club

The technology department is running a multicultural club every other Wednesday in May (8, 15, 27). The focus of this group is to promote celebrating our differences, common interests, perspectives and helping to broaden understanding and acceptance! We had a great turnout of 20 students.

Hairstyling and Esthetics Trip

On May 3, 20 Semester 2 hairstyling students travelled to the Festival School of Hairstyling to explore different hairstyling techniques. Then they travelled to Elegance in London to learn more about careers in esthetics.

Envirothon for SHSM Environment Students

On May 7, Huron Perth Conservation Authority ran outdoor workshops and set up a challenge that helped students to learn more about the environment including soils, forestry, aquatics, and wildlife.

Self Defense Training

Non-Profit and Sport SHSM students participated in Self Defense Training on May 16 led by Frank Misuraca, owner of Kick Masters Karate and Kickboxing in Stratford.

Educast Fishing Tournament

Environment SHSM students participated in "advanced training in a technique" fishing at Pleasant Valley Trout Farm in St. Thomas. Thank you to East Elgin Secondary School for running this event.

Ontario Science Centre Trip

On May 30, Grade 10 students will travel to the Ontario Science Centre to participate in hands-on activities that directly support their understanding of the Optics Unit in their Grade 10 Science curriculum.

SHSM Pampering Outreach and Experiential Learning

- **Glamour Shots with Seniors** - SHSM students in arts and culture will travel to Spruce Lodge nursing home to do make-over treatments of interested residents with the help of the hairstyling and aesthetics students. They will style hair, paint nails and do makeup applications. Photography students will take the participants' "glamour" photo, which will be shared with the seniors.
- **PSW/Nursing Appreciation Day** - SHSM students in the hairstyling and aesthetics class will likewise provide a day of pampering and appreciation for the Spruce Lodge PSW and nursing staff. Students will perform hairstyles, manicures and makeup applications.

- **Celebrating MOM** - Hairstyling and aesthetics students will invite a 'mom' figure in their life into their classrooms in May to celebrate the women in our lives. Grandma's, moms, aunts, big sisters and community members will receive a complimentary service.

Professional Learning for SHSM, Technology and Guidance Teachers

- **SCWI Conference at Humber College** - HPCDSB had 6 staff members from Guidance, SHSM Co-op and OYAP at the May 14 Symposium. This event focused on Dual Credit and Level 1 apprenticeships.
- **Ontario Council For Technology Education (OCTE) Conference** - A team of secondary educators including the Superintendent of Education, OYAP Coordinator, Grade 7 & 8 Guidance Teacher, and 2 secondary Guidance Teachers attended the OCTE Conference on May 9 in London. The focus was on preparing students for a pathway that leads to success in the skilled trades and other STEM-related fields. There were many presentations and panels featuring current students in various SHSM, Dual Credit, OYAP and other related programs as well as teacher leaders and industry professionals who support these pathways.

At both events, Guidance Counsellors and leaders in technology programs were learning how they can use their influence and support of students to guide them toward the courses, skills and other opportunities available to them, as they pursue and explore their chosen career path.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Catholic Education Week and Children's Mental Health Week

Emphasizing Faith Through Mental Health Literacy Implementation:

During Catholic Education Week and Children's Mental Health Week (May 6-10), the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board (HPCDSB) proudly introduced Mental Health Literacy Grade 7 and 8 modules. Developed collaboratively with School Mental Health Ontario (SMH-ON) and guided by the Ontario Catholic Graduate Expectations (OCGEs) and New Family Life Education curriculum, these modules enhance existing mental health literacy expectations within the Health and Physical Education curriculum. Each module lesson incorporates prayer, scripture references, and Gospel values, promoting a holistic approach to mental health education. By integrating Catholic connections throughout the curriculum, students are inspired to embody Gospel teachings while nurturing their mental well-being.

Our Mental Health and Wellness Coaches collaborated with our secondary school Chaplains to weave the Catholic Education Week Theme, We are Called to Love, into our Children's Mental Health Week Theme, Healing through Compassion. At both secondary schools, students had opportunities throughout the week to reflect on how they are called to love and kindness and what being a Catholic student means to them. St. Anne's CSS started the week by inviting students to participate in "Monday Meditation," where they engaged in Christian Meditation in the Chapel. On Wednesday, staff and students participated in Reconciliation and Mass & Adoration. On Friday, students were welcomed into the courtyard during their lunch break to enjoy music, snacks, and fellowship. St. Michael's CSS included a coffee house over two lunch periods, celebrated Mass and ended their week with a wellness event that included a photo booth, snacks, and a Glimmer Wall. All of these events were well participated in, allowing our secondary students to recognize how their faith supports their mental well-being and celebrate both throughout the week.

Additionally, our Religion and Family Life Coordinator, Caroline Thuss, and the Mental Health

Team provided Faith and Wellness Resources, including a [CEW/CMHW Catholic Educators Resource](#) and a [CEW/CMHW Companion Resource](#) for classroom use. These resources support reflective practices and the implementation of faith-based learning to support the growth and well-being of the whole student.

Professional Development

- **Dr. Michael Ungar May 9 and 10:** Members of the Mental Health and Well-Being team participated in a 2-day training hosted by the Huron Perth Centre, facilitated by esteemed social work scholar, Dr. Michael Ungar. Dr. Ungar's expertise in resilience research and practice provided valuable insights on fostering resilience among children and youth in Huron and Perth Counties.
- **Attendance Conference:** Members of the Mental Health and Well-Being team participated in the Ontario Association for Counselling and Attendance Services (OACAS) annual conference, commemorating the organization's 70th Anniversary. Held on Wednesday, May 22, 2024, the three-day Annual Spring Conference and Anniversary celebration took place at Blue Mountain Resort in Collingwood, Ontario. OACAS' mission to improve student success and foster mental health and well-being resonates deeply with our team's dedication to supporting students. The conference provided our Attendance Counsellors with invaluable tools, strategies, collegial support, and professional development opportunities to support Attendance Services in HPCDSB.

Caregiver Lunch and Learn

During the 2023-2024 school year, the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board and Avon Maitland District School Board hosted monthly lunch & learn sessions for caregivers and staff. Each session, facilitated by community partners, offers a concise 30-minute virtual discussion on children's mental health and well-being topics. In May, Canadian Mental Health Association: Huron Perth Addiction and Mental Health Services provided a webinar titled: Addiction & Mental Health 101 which provided viewers with an accessible, easy to understand overview of the topics.

MAINTENANCE AND HEALTH AND SAFETY

Health and Safety Week

The winner of the third annual Safety Cup Challenge is Perth County. Thanks to all staff for your participation in our Annual Health & Safety Week. Pizza lunch will be provided to staff and the opportunity to have their day with the Safety Cup.

Annual Waste Audits

Per Regulations 102/94 and 103/94, Waste Audits and Waste Reduction Work Plans must be prepared by the Board annually at a school where student enrolment is greater than 350 students. Waste Audits were conducted at St. Mike's, St. Anne's and St. Mary's, Listowel in conjunction with our waste contractor, Waste Management. Final reports will be prepared and submitted to the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks and posted on the Board's website and at each school.

RECOMMENDATION

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