HURON-PERTH CATHOLIC
District School Board

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From: Karen Tigani, Chief Executive Officer

Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board Hosts International Dutch Delegation for Two-Day Inclusive Education Showcase

DUBLIN, ON – The Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board (HPCDSB) recently welcomed an international delegation of 41 educational leaders from the Netherlands for a comprehensive two-day deep dive and school observation showcase of the Board's recognized inclusive education model. Organized in partnership with Western University's Canadian Research Centre on Inclusive Education led by Dr. Jacqueline Specht, the visit brought together delegation leaders, strategic consultants, CEOs, superintendents, applied science professors, inclusion specialists, and school principals seeking to observe HPCDSB's lived inclusion practices to inform and strengthen inclusive education systems in the Netherlands.

The showcase highlighted how HPCDSB embodies Catholic social teaching, affirming that every child is created with inherent dignity and purpose. Delegates explored the Board's "Planning for All" approach, which leverages Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to proactively design environments, instruction, and assessment for all learners. They also examined HPCDSB's Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), prioritizing accommodations and skill remediation over curriculum modifications and watched structured work systems in action to foster student independence.



A central highlight was direct classroom observation across four host schools:

- Jeanne Sauvé Catholic School (Stratford)
- St. Joseph's Catholic School (Stratford)
- Precious Blood Catholic School (Exeter)
- St. Anne's Catholic Secondary School (Clinton)

The delegation also explored HPCDSB's work in Peer-Mediated Supports and Student Diversity Education. Initiatives like *Everyday Speech*, *Schools on TRACKS*, and the *PEER Pals* recess leadership program empower students to serve as natural allies. Furthermore, delegates reviewed the Board's 50+ annual classroom diversity sessions, including student-led self-advocacy presentations which shift focus from adult proximity and dependence to peer-led inclusion and student agency.









The visit concluded by examining how HPCDSB uses the 5-Stage Continuum (from *Presence* to *Contribution*) from K-12+, instilling the belief that every student can be a valued contributor to their school community. Building on this foundation, the work being done with secondary transition planning prepares students for a "good life" in community together. Supported by community partners, HPCDSB demonstrated how barrier-free co-op placements, experiential learning, and customized employment guide graduates into meaningful adult life, competitive employment, and active citizenship.





"Hosting our international guests from the Netherlands was such a proud moment for our team," said Jessica Langan, Learning Coordinator of Special Education. "It gave us the chance to step back and celebrate the culture of inclusion and belonging our educators and students nurture every single day. When you build classrooms and school communities where every single student is welcomed, supported, and included from day one, every learner thrives."

"We are honoured by the global interest in our inclusive Special Education model," said Tara Boreham, Superintendent of Education. "Rooted in human dignity and Gospel values, this visit affirms our commitment to nurturing school communities where every child moves from presence to active participation, belonging, and meaningful contribution."





As the two-day delegation visit concludes, the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board remains committed to advancing inclusive practice, strengthening global educational partnerships, and ensuring every student experiences true belonging throughout their academic journey and beyond.

To keep up to date with our Board's events and initiatives, please consider following the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board; Facebook @HPCDSB and Instagram @huronperthcatholicdsb.

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