

*Inspired by the mystery of Christ,
we will guide our students on a journey of discovery
that celebrates life.*

Director's Annual Report 2004

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O'GORMAN HIGH SCHOOL

The O'Gorman High School staff and students are greatly appreciative of the wonderful Christmas display on our cafeteria roof. The display consists of three angels playing trumpets and is outlined with Christmas lights. It was donated by the O'Gorman Reunion Committee.

People traveling along Jubilee Avenue have enjoyed the sight and have commented on its beauty. Many thanks to the committee and its co-chairs Colleen Landers and Louis Clausi.

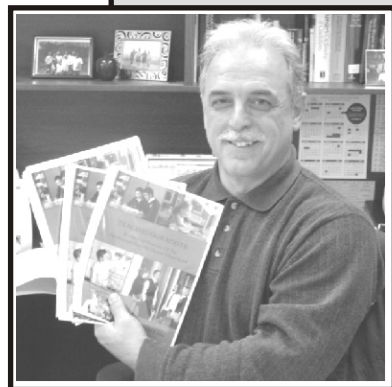


**Northeastern Catholic
District School Board**

www.ncdsb.on.ca

Director's Message

I am very proud to present this, my first, Director's Annual Report. What graces these pages is information on the successes that have been achieved over the past year. I could not be happier with the results.



Our dedicated Trustees, Teachers, Pastoral Care Workers, Educational Assistants, Child and Youth Workers, Custodians, Secretaries, Principals, Support Staff and Senior Administrators have achieved a level of teamwork unprecedented in this board. What underpins all of our efforts are the tenets that we hold fast to: a love of children, a professional attitude, and most of all, our desire to serve as disciples of Christ.

In the end, what we all work toward and hope to achieve adds up to exactly what is embodied in our Mission Statement:

Inspired by the mystery of Christ, we will guide our students on a journey of discovery that celebrates life.

CATHOLIC SYMPOSIUM

On October 16, the Board hosted a Catholic Symposium, entitled "Ontario Catholic Education: The Enduring Gift... Connecting Schools, Parishes and Families." This gathering of all of our stakeholders, including administrators, principals, teachers, parents, members of the clergy and parishioners helped us examine our purpose in a changing world. The dialogue ranged from the values that we promote in relation to those of the greater society to the articulation of responsibilities of each of our partners to further meet the needs of the people whom we serve.



Many thanks to Carollynn Desjardins of the Northern Ontario Catholic Curriculum Cooperative for facilitating the day.

She provided participants with some food for thought about our strengths and weaknesses. The ideas and comments shared during the symposium will serve as the foundation for the religion component of the Board strategic plan.

The success of the event was evident by the positive feedback expressed by participants:

"Great issues, what we all think of, but don't normally say (in public)"

"Helped me think and evaluate my contribution to my class"

"The enthusiasm shown by true professionals for our children's welfare"

TRACING OUR ROOTS

The Northeastern Catholic District School Board is proud to announce the public release of "Tracing Our Roots: A Historical Overview Of The Northeastern Catholic District School Board". The booklet follows years of research by members of Catholic School Councils, staff, and the parish communities into the origins of their schools and boards. It provides many accounts of the sacrifices and efforts of the founders of Catholic education across Northeastern Ontario. Each one of our communities has such a rich Catholic heritage, that we felt it necessary to preserve it by documenting it so that it can be shared for generations to come.

CATHOLIC EDUCATION WEEK 2004

Our school communities were actively involved in celebrating Catholic Education Week again this year, under the theme 'Fully Alive in Christ'. This theme emphasized the fundamental belief of Catholic education that spiritual and moral formation are critical to the formation of the whole person and to the realization of the fullness of life. Catholic education always aims at forming students in life affirming virtues that give life its true freedom, meaning and joy.

FINANCIAL SERVICES

Rural Education Strategy

The Board was allocated approximately \$842,347 of new funding for the Ministry's Rural Education Strategy initiative. Funds were used to provide full-time school principals and school secretaries in all our rural schools, to ensure that there are as few split grades as possible, to offer full-time Junior and Senior Kindergarten, to provide French Immersion in some of our schools from JK to grade 3, to continue Music programs, and to keep the schools in good repair as well as safe and clean.



These funds will ensure that these schools can offer the same services and resources as those in our larger communities. The additional monies will give small communities the opportunity to keep their schools open, while giving the students needed supports and resources.

Public Sector Accounting Board

The Ministry has adopted Public Sector Accounting Board for financial reporting, effective for the 2004-2005 school year. The new system is intended to provide better information for decision-making. With these changes, school funds will have to be consolidated in the 2004-2005 financial statements. The Ministry provided funding to assist us with the implementation of and training for a new accounting software to facilitate entries.

Good Schools Open Initiative

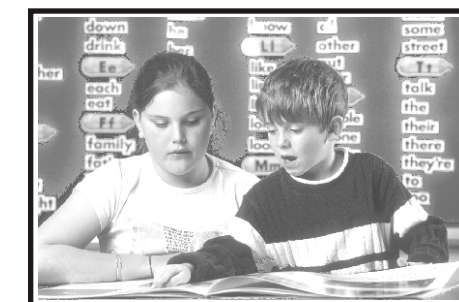
The Good Schools Open Initiative has generated \$363,863 to support the continued operation of schools located in rural areas. These funds will be used to strengthen programs and services in our schools.

Learning Opportunities Grant

In 2003-04, students benefitted from an additional \$32,368 in funding thanks to the Learning Opportunities Grant provided by the Ministry to improve achievement. The Board allocated these monies towards professional development, classroom programs, classroom libraries and resources to support literacy initiatives. To further support students at the intermediate level and to encourage the development of workplace literacy skills, a technology program was put in place. These programs are having a positive effect on all aspects of learning and also have helped to create a cohesive school environment. This direction was supplemented in the current school year with a family studies program which is also expected to be successful in developing literacy skills.

A pilot program to support early readers was initiated in one school and will be continuing in the fall. There was significant improvement in the reading ability of the students involved as evident through running records and in visits to the school by curriculum team members.

Primary literacy training included all teachers across the Board, and the benefits of this training quickly became evident in the classrooms as word walls, morning messages and word family charts sprang up, while the sound of wonderful literature being read could be heard door to door.



Although the Learning Opportunities Grant was only a small part of the cost of these initiatives, it supported numerous students towards achieving competence as readers.

For 2004-05, the Ministry has allocated an additional \$22,262 for a total of \$54,630. One of the focuses this year will be the support of students in areas with poor socioeconomic conditions. A Later Intervention Program is being initiated at Sacred Heart School in Kirkland Lake. Holy Family School in Englehart will be given support for the purchase of Early Literacy resources. St. Paul School in Timmins will receive funding to assist in providing learning materials for students. They may also use their funding to support Early Literacy programming.

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2004-05

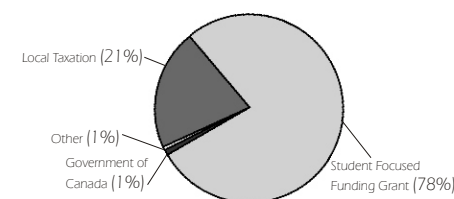
REVENUES

Government of Canada	198,739
Community Use	6,000
Working Funds Reserve	50,000
Other Revenue	37,000
Taxation	5,984,271
Student Focused Funding Grant	22,245,289
Other Provincial Grants	165,000
TOTAL REVENUES	28,686,299

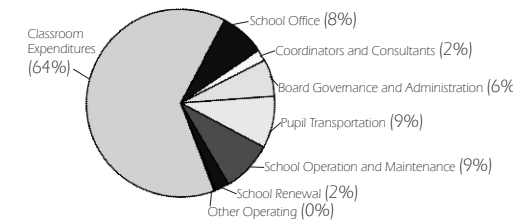
EXPENDITURES

Classroom Expenditures	18,061,156
School Office	2,262,865
Co-Ordinators and Consultants	531,153
Board Governance and Adm.	1,832,204
Pupil Transportation	2,679,710
School Operation and Maintenance	2,550,876
School Renewal	718,335
Other Operating	50,000
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	28,686,299

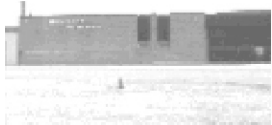
OPERATING REVENUES



EXPENDITURES BY FUNCTION



ENGLISH CATHOLIC CENTRAL SCHOOL



Students participated in a read-a-thon to raise money for the CJTT radio station Christmas Wish and for student reading materials. The response was overwhelming, and enabled the students to donate \$500 to the Christmas Wish campaign, and direct \$700 to classroom libraries and leveled books for the school library.

ST. PATRICK SCHOOL (Cobalt)



Students were treated to a performance by the St. Michael's School Junior Choir from Toronto. They also participated in an interactive presentation, led by the St. Michael's choir conductor. It is safe to say that the presentation made an impact on our students, as they were practicing holding their notes as they were boarding their buses later in the afternoon!

ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL



We continue to have big success at the Little School on the Lake! Our students have enjoyed the rewards of many school and family based activities that enhance our school spirit and academic progress. Our student trips to Ottawa and Sudbury, family nights, and success with the balanced and later literacy initiatives have offered all of our students meaningful and memorable experiences.

HOLY FAMILY SCHOOL



Students participated in the Annual Rotary Christmas Program to help needy families, as well as Operation Christmas Child which assists underprivileged children around the world. Our students once again discovered that "it is better to give than to receive", with the knowledge that they were able to make Christmas just a little bit brighter for some through their actions.



POLICIES IN MOTION

The Board has introduced several new policies this year and revised existing policies in order to provide clear and concise direction to our Catholic school system in regards to expected practices, behaviours and standards.

New policies include:

- Anti-Bullying
- Homework
- Community Involvement and Christian Service
- Conferences/Conventions - Trustees
- Progressive Discipline of Employees
- Performance Appraisal of Teachers



Current policies which received minor modifications include:

- Communication with the Public
- Fund Raising - Elementary Schools
- Fund Raising - Secondary Schools
- Criminal Background Checks / Police Records Checks
- Replacement of a Trustee

NORTHERN ONTARIO CATHOLIC CURRICULUM COOPERATIVE

In November, our principals gathered in Timmins with their peers from other English Catholic school boards in the North for an enlightening conference on leadership and the law. The goal of the conference was to provide participants with a pragmatic understanding of the theory and practice of educational leadership in challenging times.

CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCILS

In March, the Board provided an opportunity for a Catholic School Council chair to attend the first ever Ontario School Council conference in Toronto. Krista Grebenc of St. Jerome School in Kirkland Lake agreed to represent us at this event. The conference included keynote speakers on Bullying, Self Esteem, School Council Effectiveness and The Role of the School Council in the Education System. She returned home to her council with valuable insight and resources to further strengthen her council.

Members of our Catholic School Council were invited to take part in our annual Regional School Council Meetings which were held in the spring this year. In addition to the preliminary discussions about the Catholic Symposium in the fall, presentations were made on the new PSAB system and revisions to fund raising policies. The anti-bullying policy and administrative guidelines were also outlined, followed by open discussion between parents, staff and administration.

FOCUSING ON LITERACY

Among our key focuses in 2004 was the implementation of the **Balanced Literacy** initiative for primary grades. This framework involves a variety of reading and writing opportunities, to children, with children and by children. St. Patrick School in Cobalt was designated as the lighthouse school for this approach.

The theme of literacy was also at the forefront of the agenda for the January 30 PD Day. New Ministry Initiatives, including Literacy Across the Curriculum and Later Literacy, were outlined.

Several teachers and principals received training on the Later Literacy Intervention during the year. Four professionals within the Board will be certified as internal trainers by April 2005, and will continue to train their colleagues. The approach involves engaging students in literacy learning experiences to acquire strategies to become independent readers and writers. Currently, 90% of intermediate teachers and 100% of special education resource teachers have been trained on the use of this invaluable tool.

The "Think Literacy" document was shared with teachers from throughout the Board. Divisional group meetings were organized to plan the implementation of some of these strategies across the curriculum.

A series of literacy workshops for teachers at OHS were provided to help students improve achievement on the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test. The initiative will target specific writing and reading tasks. Portfolios of student work will be kept and analyzed in order to determine which students will need additional remediation in these areas. Literacy kits, consisting of resources to support the initiative were distributed to all teachers involved in the training. The reaction and feedback from the staff has been overwhelmingly positive, and they deserve to be both recognized and commended for their enthusiasm and commitment to the project.

Hats off to...

...St. Patrick School in Cobalt, winners of the Terry Fox Trophy for having the highest per capita participation for the 4th consecutive year!

...St. Paul School, for ranking Top New School in the Hop for Muscular Dystrophy Program for Central North Ontario.

...Victoria Chang, a Grade 8 student at O'Gorman Intermediate Catholic School, who captured second place at the provincial level in the Royal Canadian Legion Public Speaking competition. She enlightened the judges and the audience with her speech on the 3 R's.

...Jasmine Moreau, a grade 3 student at St. Jerome School, who also participated at the provincial level in the Royal Canadian Legion Public Speaking competition, for her speech on family.

...Cathy Verreault, Supervisor of Transportation Services, who received a Road Safety Achievement Award by the Ministry of Transportation in the Partnership Category for the Bus Buddies Program.

Congratulations to...

- Mario Avoledo
- Lynda D'Alessandri
- Lila Furlong
- Yvon Garon
- Dorothy Lajeunesse
- Regina Pawson

on their recent retirement from our Catholic school system

Teachers have been reviewing and critiquing many of the books purchased for junior and intermediate classrooms to build strong book kits. This was the first step towards the implementation of Literature Circles, where small groups of students meet to discuss a piece of literature. They are called to think critically and reflect as they read a book, and then share their thoughts in an informal forum with their peers. In support of this initiative, an investment in the classroom libraries was made by allowing each intermediate class to purchase \$200 in literature.

As part of our Successful Pathways initiative, a Literacy Committee was established to implement strategies that will improve achievement for all students, with a focus on the needs of students at risk. They are currently in the process of developing a long range plan for literacy from junior kindergarten to grade 12, with a 'year-at-a-glance' resource document for Junior/Intermediate teachers which will give them clear direction regarding the stages of implementation for Balanced Literacy at this level.



A book fair was brought to each of our schools in the month of April to support our work in Literacy. Teachers in the junior and intermediate divisions were given the opportunity to supplement their classroom libraries with an array of information books and picture books. The students and teachers thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to see the books and give input on their orders, which totaled \$11,000. This is in addition to the \$6,000 in books added to the intermediate classrooms in the fall.

A NEW JK/SK REPORT CARD

Parents of Junior and Senior Kindergarten students can expect a new look to their child's report card this year. Consultation were held to devise a new model to be used Board-wide, which will better reflect the curriculum expectations and the Balanced Literacy framework. It will also address the five strands in Math in a more specific way.

ST. PAUL SCHOOL



As a Remembrance Day tribute, students and staff brought in photos and newsclips of ancestors who have served in the military. A Remembrance Day Honour Roll display was set up showcasing names and historical photos of veterans and current soldiers, as a solemn reminder that war transcends generations and cultures.

AILEEN WRIGHT ENGLISH CATHOLIC SCHOOL



A unique fund raiser was developed for the Help Haiti Fund, with each staff member creating, baking or purchasing a Christmas related item. A silent auction was then held for the items. This was a great opportunity for staff members to share their creativity and Christmas spirit to help those less fortunate.

ST. PATRICK SCHOOL (KAPUSKASING)



Hats off to our Librarian, Mrs. Peggy Heon, for organizing the St. Pat's "Hot Off the Press" Book Fair and Bazaar. The fund-raiser included a bake table, penny sale, white elephant table, teachers' wish list for classroom library, and draws. The door prize winner went home with a bike donated by Tim Horton's.

ST. ANNE ENGLISH CATHOLIC SCHOOL

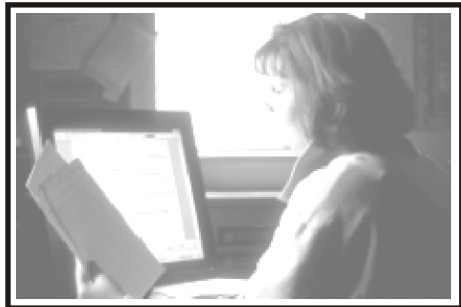


Our Christmas musical, "Three Wise Men and a Baby", is a drama production involving all 185 students and staff in various roles: acting, background and prop production, music, lighting and of course, singing. The three part harmony involving the whole school takes one's breath away. The talent of these students is truly amazing!

BUILDING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES

As part of our plan to form professional learning communities in each of our schools, a series of training opportunities were coordinated by our outstanding team of program principals and special assignment teachers. The workshops provided our educators with the latest strategies to help each of our students achieve. They are balanced with faith development and personal growth opportunities for our teachers to maximize their potential as role models for our youth.

Many teachers from grades 4 to 12 were involved in **Professional Reading Exchange Program (P.R.E.P.)** to share knowledge gained from professional reading. Each participant had the chance to select reading material to enhance their own professional practice.



On the numeracy front, the TIPS Math Committee planned a workshop for intermediate and senior division teachers to share practical ideas and suggestions for improving Math instruction in our classrooms. This learning continued in April with twenty teachers from grades six to twelve being introduced to the TIPS document.

Math pilot projects were undertaken using the Pearson program in grade 1 at St. Patrick School in Cobalt, grade 3 at Holy Family School in Englehart and grade 4 at English Catholic Central School in New Liskeard. Three teachers also piloted the Nelson program, with both groups comparing notes and sharing impressions later in the year.

Early Reading and Early Math training occurred for lead teachers at the primary level through Ministry consolidation days for teachers. The teachers had the chance to examine the Ministry Technical guides as well as prepare literacy and math centres for their classrooms.

All new teachers in grades 3 and 6 received training on the administration of provincial testing administered by the Education Quality Assessment Office.

Grade 5 teachers participated in a professional development session using 6+1 Writing Traits, which supports the Balanced Literacy Framework.

Renowned mathematician, John Mighton, provided training on his **Junior Undiscovered Mathematical Prodigies (JUMP)** approach at the Summer Institutes. The JUMP program focuses on building confidence and success in students by breaking down mathematical concepts and operations into simple steps. This method had already been tested in some of our classrooms late last year with much success. The students are more confident about their ability to solve math problems, and therefore are more enthusiastic about completing assignments and tackling new math concepts.

In September, twenty-eight new teachers participated in our **New Teacher Orientation Day** at Sacred Heart Church in Timmins. The day featured a session called Celebrating Your Faith as a Teacher of the NCDSB as well as literacy tools for each division. Overall, this orientation day strengthened their understanding of the role of faith in learning, while enhancing key pedagogical approaches.

MERCHANTS OF HOPE

A powerful message was delivered to all teachers at the October 1 professional development day, by renowned speaker **Dr. Crystal Kuykendall**, who inspired them to become "Merchants Of Hope". She invited them to practice her version of CPR, where the 'C' stands for commitment, consistent display of caring and compassion. The 'P' stands for patience and persistence, to help them overcome the fear of failure that normally keeps them from even trying. The 'R' stands for resilience, because some kids have already reached the edge, and need to know that the sun still shines.

The Celebration of Faith Day continued with a mass celebrating community and hope at Sacred Heart Parish in Timmins, led by Father Wayne Mills. During the offering of the ceremony, each school presented a colourful satchel containing various items to aid the children and families of Iraq.



Video Conferencing Series



In order to provide additional training, the program principals have launched a video conferencing series to foster greater professional dialogue among teachers from different areas in our Board and to enhance classroom practice. The 30-minute sessions have included topics such as "The Anticipation Guide: How to Focus and Motivate the Reluctant Reader in One Easy to Use Strategy", as well as "What Good Readers Do". This initiative is creating a true Professional Learning Community within the Board as participants take the time to share with their colleagues and learn some quick tips for their classroom.



Making a difference, one child at a time.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Special Education Advisory Committee was provided with a new resource this year to assist them in their mandate in the form of a new Ministry web site. Two representatives from SEAC attended a training session to familiarize themselves with the use of the e-Learning web site. The site contains information on the role of SEAC, new government policies and other useful links.

New initiatives at the Board level included:

- the purchase of laptop computers and FM systems for students with special needs;
- the training of SERTs and Child and Youth workers on the Social Skills Rating System screening tool to develop intervention programs that will help children learn and interact positively with others;
- the implementation of a new Individual Education Plan Engine;
- the participation of SERTs at a workshop on the Woodcock Johnson Assessment Tool by Dr. Alan Lawrence, head of Psychological and Educational Services;
- the training of Junior Kindergarten teachers on the administration of the Early Development Instrument (EDI) which profiles the groups' readiness to learn in order to help communities assess how well they are supporting young children and their families, and to help us in resource planning; and
- the collaboration of grade seven and eight teachers, special education personnel, high school guidance staff and Northern College personnel at the School Intervention for Aggression Forum.

BOARD ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

As legislated by the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001, the NCDSB Annual Accessibility Plan for 2004-05 was prepared by our Accessibility Working Group. This year, the NCDSB committed itself to the continual improvement of access to school premises, facilities and services, and the provision of quality services to all students, parents and members of the community with disabilities.

Highlights of Barrier Removal Initiatives

- wheelchair ramp built at OICS for Tech Shop;
- buzzer installed at front door of St. Patrick School (Cobalt);
- automatic door opener installed at Holy Family School, ECCS, and St. Paul School.
- wheelchair ramp built for Music portable at St. Paul School;
- stairs painted yellow for visually impaired at St. Patrick School in Kapuskasing; and
- elevator installed at St. Paul School.

HUMAN RESOURCES

The Board has ratified its collective agreement with OEETA regular teachers bargaining unit. The agreement, which extends to August 31, 2006, provides for a wage parity adjustment. There will be a two percent increase effective September 1, 2004, followed by a further two percent increase the second year.

The Health and Safety Committee diligently continued its work this year to ensure that all facilities meet standards. Members attended training sessions in order to provide them with the knowledge to conduct their inspections.

First Aid and CPR training was completed through the Canadian Red Cross to nine staff members, to ensure that we have certified individuals at each of our locations.

WHMIS training manuals were sent to all schools to facilitate proper training of staff in this area.

The Pay Equity Process is nearing completion for members of CUPE Local 4681.

PHYSICAL PLANT

Among the capital projects completed this year, Sacred Heart School in Kirkland Lake received extensive renovations to provide a woodworking shop for their technology program, as well as a home economics room, as part of a \$250,000 investment. The purpose of the program is to enhance the entire student, and help each one develop the skills that they may require in the future, by learning and applying design and production principles.



At St. Paul School in Timmins, windows were replaced and ventilation was upgraded, including air conditioning in the computer room. An elevator was also installed to improve access to facilities. Students will benefit from an expanded gymnasium through the relocation of a storage area. New flooring and paint, as well as remodelled student washrooms will provide a modern new look to the school interior.

Re-roofing projects were completed at St. Anne English Catholic School in Iroquois Falls, and over the gymnasium at St. Patrick School in Kapuskasing. St. Patrick School also received an upgrade of the second floor hallways, with new lighting and ceilings. A large area of their school yard was paved to provide a more practical play area for students.

A new dust collector system in the woodworking area at O'Gorman High School is currently being completed.



ST. JEROME SCHOOL



During Catholic Education Week, we hosted an evening Pyjama Party for families to promote literacy. Children, staff and many parents dressed in their pyjamas to hear Mrs. Stewart model the reading of a Big Book, read a school story that grew from class to class throughout the week, listen to guest readers, and shop at the Book Fair.

O'GORMAN INTERMEDIATE CATHOLIC SCHOOL



Our students have been working extremely hard on the second annual Christmas play for the feeder schools. This production is a celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. The students represent the events of this celebration through acting, singing and playing instruments in a way that hits home to the younger audience.

Sacred Heart Catholic School continues to support Operation Christmas Child. This year, the students collected 51 boxes of gifts to be sent to children overseas. This gesture is a true testament to their desire to be stewards of their Catholic faith.

SACRED HEART SCHOOL (Kirkland Lake)



The Panthers continue to soar in 2004! Our school spirit spilled out into the community this year, and we are proud of our new and prosperous partnerships with Wal-Mart Canada through the Adopt-a-School program and Coles Book Store showcasing our Panther's Picks Literature Reviews. Great things continue to happen at the Big School on the Block!

SACRED HEART SCHOOL (Timmins)

