



Northeastern Catholic District School Board

Director's Annual Report 2014

Dear Friends in Catholic Education

Enclosed, please find some information about the Northeastern Catholic District School Board for the school year 2014. This Director's Report is but a snapshot of the many educational programs and activities that occur in our Catholic school board. Our Catholic schools are alive with young students eager to learn, grow and develop. Led by Principals that are devoted to our students and who foster teamwork among them, our teaching and support staffs contribute daily to the many successes our children experience in our schools. Our greatest asset is our people who inspire, instruct and mentor our students daily. To the best of our abilities, we all attempt to adhere to our Board's Vision Statement of *"Living our Catholic Faith to shape success for all of our learners."*

In Matthew 19:14, Jesus said "Let the little children come to me". This sentiment is at the very heart of all that we do for our students. We take very seriously the responsibility entrusted to us in having your children attend our schools.

We invite our students to come to school to learn and to challenge them to grow spiritually, physically, academically, and socially as responsible life long learners. In doing so, we hope that we are successfully in delivering on our mission statement:

"To provide a Catholic Education to all of our learners in a safe, nurturing, equitable and inclusive environment that prepares them for life."

If you have any questions about the enclosed information or would like any additional information about our schools, our Board or individual programs that we offer, please do not hesitate to contact me or any one of our neighbourhood Catholic schools or visit our website at www.ncdsb.on.ca.

Yours in Christ,

Glenn Sheculski
Director of Education

Mental Health

The Mental Health Strategy is gaining momentum across our district school board. As part of our strategic actions, a Mental Health Steering Committee was formed in 2014. This committee is a leadership team that provides input and suggestions regarding the system's strategies, initiatives and programs. The members work collaboratively to assist in the development and delivery of the board wide mental health services. The committee consists of a cross section of board staff to enable healthy discussions from a variety of perspectives to ensure that the NCDSB meets the needs of our students and enhances their well being.

There have been some capacity building opportunities afforded to our staff with the delivery of SafeTalk training, mental health learning sessions at local schools, and growing relationships with our community partners.

The Early Years

Full-Day Early Kindergarten (FDK) is now in full implementation at the NCDSB. We are committed to providing rich, learning-based play opportunities in a mixed-age learning setting. Our FDK teams have been exploring how the classroom environment can act as the "third teacher," and gaining greater understanding of how to provoke higher level thinking and inquiry using a wide variety of natural and found materials.

The classroom environment is carefully designed as a highly organized space, with materials intentionally arranged to inspire and elicit learning. The space is comfortable and calming using natural tones on the walls which allow the children's work to feature more prominently than traditional classroom charts and decorations. It is an inviting and supportive space where students are free to explore independently or in small groups. The classroom is flexible, evolving and based on the ongoing interests of the students, inspiring them to engage in learning that is meaningful and authentic.

To support work in this area, we have introduced 4 inquiry areas into FDK classrooms that are consistent across the district. They are:

- **Construction:** This is a place to extend imaginative play, promote language development and mathematical and language understanding (wood blocks, tree blocks, mirror blocks)
- **Discovery:** This space urges children to ask scientific questions about the world around them (plants, books, magnifying glasses, baskets for collections)
- **Graphic Communication:** This area provides a variety of tools for communicating ideas, thoughts, and experiences by way of dialogue, writing and graphic representation (variety of paper, pencils, crayons, personal writing books, alphabet books).
- **Hands-On Thinking:** Students benefit from hands-on experiences when exploring mathematical concepts (math manipulatives for sorting, patterning & counting, five and ten frames)

Student Learning

Our Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement (BIPSA) is the guiding resource for our shared work. We remain true to the two Board Priorities that serve as the foundational elements of our planning and actions:

1. *Identifying and Responding to Student Learning Needs*
2. *Actively Preparing our Students for the 21st Century*

Our efforts focus on providing all learners with the opportunity to master the skills of problem solving, critical thinking, communicating their ideas, understanding media and collaborating in teams to achieve maximum results. Using small group instruction strategies at all grade levels and across all subject areas, we are targeting our instruction to ensure precision in our teaching and personalized programs for all of our students. We are refining our understanding of collaborative inquiry and identifying how this approach is impacting practices in teaching and learning. Further, we have made some small gains in our monitoring efforts as linked to our BIPSA. We are building consistency in the way we capture evidence in order to gauge our progress and identification of next steps for action.

Aboriginal Education

The Ontario First Nation, Metis and Inuit (FNMI) Education Policy and Implementation plan continues to serve as the foundation for our work to support FNMI students and their families across the district. We are pleased to share that we have a very high percentage of students who have chosen to self-identify as FNMI and we are working closely with schools and community partners to improve the social, emotional, spiritual and academic experiences for each student through specific strategies outlined in our action plan.

With the assistance of our Aboriginal Support Worker, we have been able to help students and staff gain a more comprehensive understanding of the cultures, histories, traditions and perspectives of the First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples. In addition, we have formed a new FNMI Steering Committee that emphasizes the role that our community partners play in providing suggestions and feedback that will better help the NCDSB to support FNMI students and their families.

Student Achievement EQAO Assessment of Reading, Writing and Mathematics

Grade 3 Reading	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	Grade 6 Reading	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14
Provincial Average	62%	65%	66%	68%	70%	Provincial Average	72%	74%	75%	77%	79%
NCDSB	44%	49%	44%	45%	54%	NCDSB	57%	61%	70%	67%	71%
Females	46%	52%	48%	46%	55%	Females	67%	60%	74%	77%	75%
Males	43%	47%	40%	44%	54%	Males	48%	62%	66%	58%	67%
Special Needs	17%	20%	20%	25%	49%	Special Needs	30%	26%	40%	40%	49%
Grade 3 Writing						Grade 6 Writing					
Provincial Average	70%	73%	76%	77%	78%	Provincial Average	70%	73%	74%	76%	78%
NCDSB	51%	52%	63%	52%	58%	NCDSB	46%	55%	64%	62%	67%
Females	65%	63%	79%	60%	63%	Females	69%	62%	73%	72%	84%
Males	37%	43%	51%	46%	55%	Males	24%	49%	57%	51%	52%
Special Needs	19%	32%	51%	35%	60%	Special Needs	12%	25%	46%	40%	38%
Grade 3 Math						Grade 6 Math					
Provincial Average	71%	69%	68%	67%	67%	Provincial Average	61%	58%	58%	57%	54%
NCDSB	59%	52%	51%	51%	56%	NCDSB	43%	39%	47%	42%	41%
Females	55%	53%	56%	51%	56%	Females	47%	33%	41%	41%	46%
Males	62%	52%	48%	51%	56%	Males	38%	43%	53%	43%	37%
Special Needs	35%	31%	27%	25%	42%	Special Needs	21%	12%	25%	19%	15%
Grade 9 Academic Math	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	Grade 10 OSSLT First Time Eligible	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14
Provincial Average	82%	83%	84%	84%	85%	Provincial Average	84%	83%	82%	82%	83%
NCDSB	53%	60%	58%	53%	68%	Board	77%	76%	78%	66%	68%
Females	55%	55%	62%	50%	68%	Females	73%	81%	73%	80%	62%
Males	50%	69%	53%	56%	68%	Males	68%	67%	76%	50%	57%
Special Needs	75%	88%	0%	0%	50%	Special Needs	37%	40%	40%	24%	46%
Grade 9 Applied Math	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14						
Provincial Average	40%	42%	44%	44%	47%						
NCDSB	25%	32%	33%	26%	33%						
Females	32%	19%	25%	18%	41%						
Males	12%	47%	41%	28%	25%						
Special Needs	21%	40%	28%	29%	21%						



Special Education

The NCDSB continues to be at the leading edge of practices related to Special Education. We are very proud of the ongoing work to support struggling readers using the Levelled Literacy Intervention Program. As a result of these efforts, more and more students are reading within the grade level range. We have also noticed that the number of students requiring a non-identified IEP have been decreasing as a result of this work. Given the success of our work in literacy, we are considering how to bring a similar implementation strategy to intervention in the area of mathematics.

Our NCDSB Special Education Plan has undergone significant revision to ensure that it is organized to reflect the areas required by the Ministry of Education. During this revision process, it was noted that we need to review our Early and On-Going Identification and Intervention section, as well as the board definitions for the categories of exceptionality.

This work is now underway. We are also currently revising many of the existing templates used in Student Services to bring greater consistency to the practices in place across the district. Key to this work is a new Central Referral Process for all services provided to students by Board Personnel. This Central Referral Process is managed at a Board level and will increase our capacity to gauge the effectiveness of programs and services related to Special Education.

Finally, during the later part of 2014 small groups of educators have begun to collaborate to learn more about how explicit tier 1 interventions are in the areas of oral language and mathematics. We are also exploring the role of touch technology for students with special needs and we are eager to learn the impact of these projects on instruction and student learning.

Board Profile Our Schools (2014-2015)

- 13 elementary schools
- 1 secondary school
- Alternative & Continuing Catholic Education Support Services Centre
- 25,000 sq. kms in size spanning: Moosonee, Kapuskasing, Cochrane, Iroquois Falls, Timmins, Kirkland Lake, Englehart, New Liskeard, Cobalt
- Enrolment: 1758 elementary; 381 secondary
- Teachers: 175 FTE
- Principals: 13 elementary; 1 secondary
- Vice-Principals: 1 elementary; 1 secondary; 1 ACCESS Centre
- Educational Assistants: 47



2013-2014 Board of Trustees

Board Chair Message

Let me begin by saying that it has been an honour and a privilege for me to have served as Chair of the Northeastern Catholic District School Board during 2014. As I reflect upon the highlights of this past year, a number of important factors come to mind. First of all, our Board continues to demonstrate support for our students and their families by, first of all, aligning our resources, both human and financial, and focusing them directly on student achievement. Secondly, we provide a Christian/Catholic environment in each of our schools that is safe, healthy, vibrant, nurturing and welcoming to all students. Thirdly, we continuously strive to make our schools safe places for all children to learn with the best possible principals, teachers and support staff.

As a Board, it is no secret that we will also be faced with a number of challenges as we move into the future and, needless to say, declining enrolment is one of those major issues that impact our board as well as other northern and rural boards in Ontario.

In light of that challenge, we will continue to focus our budget on student achievement and on those factors which influence it. We will continue to invest in technology so that our teachers and our students are not left behind as technology changes at an accelerating pace. We will also ensure that our students continue to develop their faith in an environment that reflects the teachings and practices of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I would like to thank all of our supporters for your belief in Catholic education and for sending your children to our Catholic schools. May God bless everyone and may He keep you well during this year 2015.

Yours in Catholic Education,

Rick Brassard
Chair of the NCDSB

