



What's New

[Celebrating Excellence in Catholic Education Awards](#)
[HWCD SB raises close to \\$20K for "Toonies for Tuition"](#)
[Students and staff recognized with "Yes I Can!" Awards](#)
[Bishop's Letter: Let us return with Joy!](#)
[Summer Catch-up Clinics for Grade 7-12 students](#)
[Archbishop Leo: The Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Crucifix](#)

Outgoing Student Trustees thanked for service

Chairperson Patrick Daly thanked Paige Wallace (Cathedral HS) and Alice Okpere (St. Thomas More CSS) for their dedicated service, leadership and contributions of the past year as Student Trustees for the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board. "They've provided outstanding service and are great ambassadors, not only for their fellow students but for our entire Catholic school system," he said in words of appreciation.

Succeeding the two in the role of Student Trustee are Alyssia Perri, a Grade 11 student at St. Thomas More CSS and Jeleina Rasiah, a Grade 11 student at St. John Henry Newman CSS, whose appointments were approved by trustees at the May 2, 2023 meeting of the Board.



Left to right: Director of Education David Hansen, Paige Wallace, Alice Okpere, Chairperson Patrick Daly

Board of Trustees

Patrick J. Daly (Chairperson)
Ward 7

John Valvasori
(Vice-Chairperson)
Ward 8 & 14

Mark Valvasori
Ward 1, 2 & 15

Josie Angelini
Ward 3 & 4

Aldo D'Intino
Ward 5

Ellen Agostino
Ward 6

Louis Agro
Ward 9 & 11

Mary Nardini
Ward 10

Phil Homerski
Ward 12 & 13

Student Trustees
Alice Okpere
Paige Wallace

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My Math Path Core Resource

The Board has procured a new “My Math Path” core math resource that aligns with the 2020 Mathematics Curriculum. The resource, for Grades 1-8, places problem-solving at the heart of mathematical learning. My Math Path will be introduced in September 2023.

Catholic School Safe Schools (MDI) Survey (Grades 4-8)

Ontario school boards are required to conduct a survey every two years to gauge students’ feelings on safety and security at school. The survey was administered to Grade 4-8 students between June 7-23, 2023.

Board Meeting Highlights

The following reports were received or approved by the Board of Trustees at the June 6th and June 20th Meetings of the Board:

- An **operating budget** of \$405,596,233 and a capital budget of \$19,308,422 were approved for the 2023/2024 school year. The budget estimates reflect an in-year compliant deficit budget in the amount of \$1,224,389. Due to effective financial planning, the board has sufficient accumulated surplus to cover the deficit. Per Ministry of Education regulation, an in-year deficit elimination plan will be included in the budget filing. The 2023/2024 budget provides additional investments in support of faith formation, academic and co-curricular excellence, and student and staff well-being, as well as additional resources and initiatives which promote Indigenous Education/Truth and Reconciliation, Anti-Racism, and Equity in Educational Opportunities. “By placing Christ and the teachings of the Catholic Church at the centre of students’ learning experiences, Catholic schools have an awesome opportunity to positively influence their hope-filled journey,” said Chairperson Patrick J. Daly.
- As part of the **Student and Classroom Device Strategy**, 76% of Grade 9 students received a computer laptop in the first year of the 1:1 Student Device Initiative. The initiative is a multi-year commitment to provide devices to all Grade 9-12 students to support the development of the core competencies necessary for success in today’s technology-driven, globalized world. Subject to budget, devices will be distributed to incoming Grade 9 students with the expectation that all students, Grades 9-12, will have had the opportunity to participate and obtain a device by 2025-2026.
- An update on the **Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP)** showed that participation rates have returned to pre-pandemic numbers with 1,226 students participating in co-op placements in 2022-2023 compared to 1,139 in 2019-2020. Approximately 391 students this year registered for apprenticeships in the skilled trades; of these, 64% were male students and 36% female. Board staff will continue to promote and market apprenticeships as a viable post-secondary pathway, and to raise awareness among female and Indigenous students of opportunities available to them in the skilled trades.



- In **Child Care and Early Years Programming** updates, a Consolidated Municipal Service Management (CMSM) advisory group meets monthly to ensure that children and families have equitable access to early years programs and services and that programming is in place to support transition needs. The board has partnership agreements with 7 licensed child care operators to provide full day child care for infants at 5 school sites, and for toddler and pre-school aged children at 16 school sites. EarlyOn Centres are established at 4 schools and provide free programming for families and children from prenatal to 6 years of age. Before and after care programs are offered at 47 elementary schools for children 4-12. Capital projects in support of infant, toddler and preschool services are currently in the works at St. James the Apostle CES, St. Patrick CES, St. Thomas the Apostle CES and Guardian Angels CES.
- An **Interdisciplinary Mental Health Community Consultation (IMHCC)** made up of HWCDSB special education and social work staff and community mental health and development service providers was formed in the fall of 2019 to develop new integrated strategies to support student mental health issues. The IMHCC allows HWCDSB staff to consult with the community team to receive recommendations and to open community pathways for students who are at high risk for suspension and expulsion but are not receiving services from community mental health providers. Sixteen students were presented in 2022-2023.
- The **HWCDSB Robotics Program** report focused on four key activities during 2022-2023: the *FIRST* Lego League (FLL) Challenge; the *FIRST* Tech Challenge (FTC); the *FIRST* Robotics Competition (FRC); and the *FIRST* Provincial Championships. Fourteen elementary schools participated in the FLL Hamilton Qualifier Event on December 10th, with four teams advancing to the Provincial Championships in January 2023. At the secondary level, Cathedral and St. Mary CSS entered teams in the FTC Central Scarborough Qualifier in November 2022, with St. Mary qualifying for the FTC Provincial Championships. Three secondary schools – St. Mary,



Photo: The Hamilton Spectator

Bishop Ryan and St. Thomas More – participated in FRC district events with St. Mary and Bishop Ryan qualifying for the Provincial Championships and later the World Robotics Championship in Houston where both made it to the semi-finals in their respective divisions. The HWCDSB received grants from *FIRST* for \$222,714 to support K-Grade 8 STEM programming for the next two years.

- School Cash Online, an **Online Payment Solution** provides schools with an integrated portal for managing, tracking and accounting school-generated funds, including online payments. Elementary and secondary school online adoption rates are 91.49% and 93.64% respectively, which represents the number of students/families who have registered to pay online. Utilization rate – the percentage of actual funds collected online – is lower at 78.25% for

elementary and 83.74% secondary. The goal over the next year is to achieve a 100% utilization rate across all schools.

- In **capital maintenance and school renewal projects**, roof section replacement was identified for St. Anthony Daniel CES, St. Margaret Mary CES, and a 4-pak portable at Our Lady of the Assumption CES. A multi-year program to improve aesthetics, acoustics and lighting quality within older schools will see upgrades at St. John the Baptist CES Corpus Christi CES, and St. Eugene CES which this year will receive new acoustic drop ceilings and LED energy efficient lighting. A new 6-pak portable will be installed at St. Eugene CES and two at St. Thomas the Apostle CES to accommodate student enrolment.
- Per Regulation 306 under the Education Act, school boards are required to review and amend their **Special Education Programs and Services Plan** and accompanying Parents/Guardians' Guide to Special Education Programs and Services on an annual basis. The updated documents will be posted on the [HWCDSB website](#).

- In **Design & Construction Updates**, construction is well underway at the new St. James the Apostle CES (pictured right) with the bulk of the 1st and 2nd floor mechanical and electrical systems roughed in, and 25% of the 1st floor steel stud framing and 90% of the 2nd floor masonry non-load bearing walls complete. Windows are in the process of being installed. Substantial completion of the Childcare Centre at St. Thomas the Apostle CES is expected by the end of June. The Board has received conditional site plan approval on the 5-classroom and 3-room childcare addition at Guardian Angels CES and the 11-classroom addition at Bishop Ryan CSS.



- A **Pastoral Services Employee Family Assistance Program (EFAP)** report outlined the range of programs and services available to HWCDSB staff and their families, including assessment and treatment, consultation, referral and service coordination. EFAP also provides system support in the area of crisis response, leadership training, and workplace culture. The service was used by 22.82% of board employees during the 2021/2022 school year, with 54% of the services requests for mental health and addictions issues, following by family and relationship issues, including caregiver burden and parenting at 21%.
- Injury prevention continues to be the primary focus of the **Occupational Health and Safety Program**. The top three reported injuries over the past five years were due to violence, slips/trips/falls, and strikes/contact. In 2022-2023, violence represented 48% of workplace incidents. Injuries under violence include bites, kicks, scratches and punches. Strategies to reduce injury include staff engagement through site-based Joint Health and Safety Committees (JHSC), detailed incident/accident investigation to push corrective actions, a targeted system-wide communications campaign, behavioural management training, streamlined reporting processes, and school security reviews.

The following **Religion, Family Life and Faith Formation Committee** reports were also received or approved by the Board of Trustees:

- A **Faith Day** on March 3, 2023 provided an opportunity for staff to engage in personal growth and well-being, rooted in faith. The day included a Celebration of the Eucharist, keynote address by Bishop Gerard Bergie, as well as an afternoon session on one of four topics.
- Teachers and educators serving in administrative capacities are required, per board policy, to participate in **Faith Formation and Religious Renewal** courses. In 2022-2023, 20 newly hired teachers took part in the Faith Formation course as part of the New Teacher Induction Program. A second semester Religious Renewal course was attended by approx. 36 staff.
- 50 HWCDSB schools participated in the **EcoSchools application process** in 2022-2023. Results are expected later this month. Although EcoSchools certification is a school-wide effort, the work of the school enviro-reps has been indispensable in school adoption of eco initiatives.
- **Catholic Education Week** (April 30-May 5, 2023) was marked with a number of system and school events, including an [Opening Mass and Pilgrimage Walk](#), Ontario Catholic Student Youth Day Event/Provincial CEW Mass, Food Drive, and [Intermediate Scripture Reading Event](#).
- **Student Faith Formation** opportunities are facilitated by the board's Religion Consultants and include, on-site school mini retreats, a study of St. John's Bible, a [Passion for Prayer Day](#), Advent/Lenten retreats, off-site school retreats, and sacramental retreats.
- **Christian Meditation** as a prayer form continues to grow in the HWCDSB through activities such as Faith Day, overnight silent Christian Meditation retreats, Online Christian Meditation Thursday, Christian Meditation LMS/mySite Widgets, classroom visits and sacramental retreats, staff retreats, and Christian Meditation Student Groups.
- The **HWCDSB online Catholic Space: Our Catholic Community** was created in 2014 to provide members of the HWCDSB community with an online space to unite in prayer and reflection, to explore our faith and to encounter Christ during Advent and Lent. Between Sept 2022-May 15, 2023 the site was accessed 43,419 by 16,612 community members.

Police in the Park

As part of Police Week, Hamilton Police Service hosted "Police in the Park" featuring various exhibits and displays. The May 19th event provided 700 students from local schools an opportunity to learn about Forensic Services, the Marine, K-9 and Mounted Units, as well as interactive displays from other emergency services, the RCMP, and the military.



Photo and story: The Hamilton Spectator

Award ceremony celebrates “Excellence in Catholic Education”

More than 80 individual students and 9 clubs/teams were recognized at an awards ceremony at Bishop Tonnos Catholic Secondary School on Tuesday, June 6, 2023 for “Excellence in Catholic Education.” The awards acknowledge student achievement in academics, athletics, Catholic leadership, environmentalism, Christian service, robotics, science and the arts.

The annual awards ceremony was established by the board to recognize and honour students who demonstrate excellence through their talents and hard work, and who, by their commitment, serve as models to other students in their schools and communities.



Graduates urged to “make the world a good place”

“Make the world a good place,” said Bishop Crosby in words of encouragement to graduating students at a mass in their honour. “You are young, you are energetic, you are full of new and creative ideas, and you are good. The world needs you to get out there and make a difference, a positive difference.” The bishop was celebrating a Graduates’ Mass at St. Mary Pro Cathedral on May 16 attended by more than 400 graduating students from the board’s seven Catholic



secondary schools. “When your life is about to change in such a major way, it’s always a good time to pray,” said Bishop Crosby. “In the midst of all the excitement and in preparation for graduation and whatever the future holds, it is a good time to give thanks for what has been.” More than 2,500 Grade 12 students will be graduating from high school this month.

OCSTA Updates

[Bill 98, Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act, 2023](#)

The legislation, introduced on April 17, 2023, advances a vision for Ontario's kindergarten to grade 12 education system that is centred on preparing students to succeed in life and work and on putting highly qualified educators in the classroom while strengthening the voices of parents. The reforms would ensure students graduate with a competitive advantage while learning modern curricula in modern schools, preparing them for the jobs of the future. The Bill passed Third Reading Debate and now awaits Royal Assent.

[Bill 123, Erin's Law \(Child Sexual Abuse Prevention and Reporting\), 2023](#)

The Bill proposes to amend the *Education Act* to require each school board to establish a policy under which pupils in its schools are engaged annually, in a developmentally appropriate manner, regarding the topics of child sexual abuse prevention and reporting. Each board is also required to make information available to parents and guardians and to provide information annually to teachers and other staff in schools. The Bill has passed First Reading.

[Bill 108, Education State Law Amendment Act \(Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder\)](#)

The Bill proposes to require schools to have guidelines for supporting students with fetal alcohol disorder. The Bill has passed First Reading.

Ontario Newsroom

[Ontario Launching New Mental Health Learning and Increasing Funding](#)

[Ontario Combating Violence and Improving Safety in Schools](#)

[Province Improving Accountability and Transparency in Ontario Schools](#)

Resources

[HWSTS Transportation Portal](#)

[School year calendars 2023-2024](#)

[Registration](#)

Happy Summer

As the end of the 2022-2023 school year fast approaches, it is my prayer that all of our students, staff, families and parish communities enjoy a safe and enjoyable summer.

We look forward to seeing you in September.

Patrick J. Daly

