

Safe and Healthy Schools

Providing a safe and healthy learning environment for our students continued to be a priority. Roots of Empathy, alternative education programming, care and treatment day program and our restorative justice practices are just a sampling of programs that make our schools safe environments for learning. In addition, our schools have implemented initiatives (many of which focus on our faith) to raise awareness about and to prevent bullying.

From healthy eating to eco-schools, our schools focused on providing students with a healthy place to learn and grow. EcoSchools certifications were awarded to 18 schools in our board for their commitment to environmental education and sustainability.

Facilities Facts & Figures

Enrolment

Our board provides exceptional faith-filled learning to 21,283 students in 53 schools (nine high schools and 44 secondary schools). The enrollment for 2011 – 2012 in our elementary schools was 13,261 and in our secondary schools was 8,022.

Staffing

As one of the largest employers in the area, we continued to draw upon the wealth of skills that is available to us from our local communities when hiring employees. Our board has 3,293 employees in a range of positions. Last year, we hired 40 new permanent teachers and 188 occasional teachers in long-term assignments. In addition, 197 people were hired into a variety of permanent and casual positions. Seven new Designated Early Childhood Educators were hired for the provincial Full Day Kindergarten program. All new employees were welcomed to our board through an orientation session.

St. Bernard's Catholic School Opens

We were excited to open the doors of a brand new school for the St. Bernard's Catholic School community in Orillia. The old school was demolished to make way for the new \$8.7 million facility. Students, staff, parents and members of the community made a pilgrimage from their temporary location to a new 43,200 square foot building. The new school features an open and inviting lobby, a chapel, geothermal and solar heating as well as large and bright classrooms.

Guardian Angels Catholic School Closes - Construction Begins at Monsignor Lee Catholic School

After more than 100 years of providing Catholic education in the Orillia area, Guardian Angels Catholic School closed at the end of June 2012. The students will join the Monsignor Lee Catholic School community and will prepare to move into a brand new school facility in the fall of 2012. Construction on the \$10.4 million new school facility for Monsignor Lee and Guardian Angels Catholic Schools began in 2011 – 2012. The new school will have 11 classrooms, a special needs room, a resource room, a new gymnasium and library, and four large Kindergarten rooms, to accommodate full day Kindergarten.

Approval for Our Lady of Grace Catholic School

A new school, which will serve students from Prince of Peace, Our Lady of Grace and Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Schools, was approved in July 2012. Construction of the school will take place on the Our Lady of Grace site. Students from Our Lady of Grace will move into Prince of Peace's school during construction, while students from Our Lady of the Assumption remain at their current location until the project is completed.

Upgrades at St. Theresa's Catholic High School

A \$2.1 million investment in renovations and improvements for specialized academic programs was completed at St. Theresa's Catholic High School. In addition to upgrades to flooring, lighting and the HVAC system, the school is now benefiting from new program space for transportation technology and a cosmetology classroom as well as improvements to the existing hospitality suite, guidance office and administration area.

Pupil Accommodation Review for North Barrie

During the school year, an accommodation review was conducted for six Catholic schools in north Barrie in response to declining enrolment. The schools in the review included Monsignor Clair, Sister Catherine Donnelly, St. Marguerite d'Youville, St. Mary's, St. Monica's and The Good Shepherd Catholic Schools.

In June 2012, the Board of Trustees deferred a decision on the north Barrie pupil accommodation review to allow staff the opportunity to explore another option. This option is to end the lease at the Academic Services building in Barrie and move board staff into empty classrooms on the second floor at Monsignor Clair Catholic School. Part of this option also includes the use of empty classrooms at St. Joseph's Catholic High School for meeting room space.

Budget

Our Board of Trustees passed a balanced budget for the school year in the amount of \$266,873,300.

Hope for Learning

The Hope for Learning Foundation is a separate, charitable entity that brings hope and help to our students. Funds raised through contributions to the Foundation went directly to helping children in our schools. Whether providing funds for basic needs like food and clothing, or investing in a student's future with scholarships, the Hope for Learning Foundation made a significant difference in the lives of many of our students during the past school year.

Trustees

In December 2011, the Board of Trustees elected Clayton Ferguson and Maria Hardie as Chair and Vice-Chair (respectively) to serve for the 2012 board year. Other trustees representing our board are:

Shawn Cooper (Clearview, Collingwood, Springwater, Wasaga Beach)
Carol Corriveau-Truchon (Huntsville, Muskoka Lakes, Lake of Bays, Bracebridge, Gravenhurst, Georgian Bay, Parry Sound)
Clayton Ferguson (New Tecumseth, Essa, Essa-CFB, Adjala-Tosorontio-CFB)
Maria Hardie (Barrie, Wards 6, 7, 8, 9, 10)
Catherine MacDonald (Midland, Penetanguishene, Tiny, Tay)
Connie Positano (Barrie, Wards, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
Jeanny Salmon (Bradford West Gwillimbury, Innisfil)
Francis Smith (Orillia, Ramara, Severn, Oro-Medonte)
Jessica Bews (Student Trustee)

For more details on these highlights, visit our website www.smcdsb.on.ca



Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board

Annual Report

2011-2012



Dear Partners in Catholic Education,

Being part of Catholic education during the 2011 – 2012 school year has been an amazing experience. Each day, I had the privilege of witnessing our students learn and grow under the professional guidance of our dedicated staff. Our teachers and support staff provided inspiration that unleashed the potential in every child. There are many expressions of Catholic education and we offer you a glimpse at some of these in this annual report to our community.

Throughout the year, we celebrated many aspects that make our Catholic schools unique and distinct. The Gospel of Jesus Christ permeates the learning environments. It guides our Catholic schools in every dimension – philosophy of education, curriculum, community life, selection of teachers, and even our physical environment. By celebrating recent achievements and building on our strengths, we can ensure Catholic education will flourish for generations to come.

Important work with our key partners continued to support our Catholic schools. Our connections with priests and local parishes are a blessing. The parish community offered students educational support and helped prepare them to receive the sacraments. Now, more than ever, teachers and administrators are encouraging parental participation in each school's mission and life. Such a partnership was directed toward academic achievement, and toward planning and evaluating the effectiveness of the school's goals.

A strong commitment to social justice flourished in our schools as students responded to issues of global social injustice. We offer a learning experience that brings out the very best in our students and helps them work toward transforming the world. Catholic school life encourages academic excellence and also self-discipline, personal integrity, moral values and a deep caring for others who are less fortunate.

We know we have much to look forward to in the coming years. We can be very proud of the breadth of effort, the extent of achievement and the depth of commitment to faith-filled learning that will serve our students and Catholic schools in the future.

Peace to you in Christ,



Brian Beal
Director of Education

Our focus on faith

One of our key goals as a Catholic community is to provide our students with a distinctive learning environment, one that integrates faith values and spiritual formation into academic programming. Our board's Catholic virtues and values and the *Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations* continue to guide our staff in delivering a faith-filled education.

Our theme for the 2011 – 2012 school year, *You are the Voice of the Living God*, was woven into many aspects of student learning and growth – be it academic, social and spiritual. In addition, we saw many wonderful expressions of learning and faith during Catholic Education Week, which took place from May 6th to May 12th. During this special week, we saw students and staff celebrating the gift of Catholic education through literacy, numeracy, technology and social justice initiatives.

Our Religious Education Coordinator worked throughout the year to ensure our Gospel values were infused into all aspects of the curriculum for students from Kindergarten to Grade 12. Religious education programs were offered in every grade.

The Adult Faith Animator continued to provide our staff with resources to enliven faith in the workplace. Staff participated in liturgies and faith day celebrations, while the Faith Ambassador program served faith development at the schools and board offices.

Year At A Glance

There were many changes throughout the year. We welcomed more students into full day Kindergarten, hired new staff, began a strategic multi-year planning process, said goodbye to one of our oldest schools, started major construction projects, opened a new school and kept a focus on learning excellence. Here are highlights:

Multi-Year Planning

The board was excited to begin the process of developing a new strategic multi-year plan. Jim Sirdevan, a former principal with the board and former education officer with the Ministry of Education, was hired as a facilitator to lead the planning and consultation. A committee of representatives was established to guide the process – committee membership includes:

- Ab Falconi, Superintendent of Education
- Sherry Chapman, Adult Faith Animator
- Karen Pond, Religious Education Coordinator
- Linda McGregor, Manager First Nation, Métis and Inuit education initiatives
- Jo-Anne Flood, Manager Payroll and Benefits .

The context setting phase of the planning process took place during the past school year and draft vision and mission statements were developed. A scan of the internal and external environments as well as an analysis of our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were completed to understand challenges facing the board. It was determined that one of the most important responsibilities is to emphasize our distinct difference as a faith-based system and that the overarching goal of the plan is "student achievement and well-being." The committee also began extensive consultation with staff, students, parents, parish representatives and members of the community.

Full Day Kindergarten

We were happy to offer the full day Kindergarten program in 21 classrooms in 13 schools across our board during the past school year. In total, 638 students benefited from the extended Kindergarten program. The next phase of this program will see an additional 13 schools offering full day learning for the 2012 – 2013 school year.

Four Pillars – Improvement Planning for Student Achievement

To achieve our learning goals and objectives, our board has an improvement plan for student achievement. The plan outlines goals, strategies, opportunities for professional development and methods for evaluation for the school year. It is based on four key pillars and it informs how we achieve our teaching and learning objectives and identifies future areas for improvement. The four learning pillars for 2011 – 2012 were Catholic community, culture and caring, literacy, numeracy, and pathways.

Programme and Services

The Programme and Services Department works as a team to ensure that we meet our improvement planning goals and objectives in each of the four pillars. During the school year, staff continued to offer programmes and services in support of our schools including:

- Reading Recovery® in all of our elementary schools
- Numeracy initiatives
- English Language Learner support
- Expanding technology in the classroom with interactive whiteboards and iPad technology
- Student Success initiatives such as Specialist High Skills Major, Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program, Dual Credits and School Within a College.

Including Everyone

The fourth and final year of implementation of our Equity and Inclusive Education strategy culminated during the year. Schools were provided with resources, curriculum materials and support to assist with implementation.

Special education programs and services are available for students who require assistance to achieve success. Inclusion continues to be of central importance to us so that all students learn together. We focussed on maximizing funding available to us through Special Equipment Amount and Special Incident Portion to enhance learning for students with special needs.

In addition, our psychologists, social workers and school counsellors provided consultation, assessment and counselling services for students who have complex emotional and learning needs.

Implementing the *Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Policy Framework* continued to be a priority. Our Voluntary Self-Identification process for students with First Nation, Métis and Inuit ancestry guided us in the development of programs, services and support to ensure cultural awareness and student success.

EQAO

Our board's overall results showed achievement above or equal to the provincial average in Grade 3 reading, writing and mathematics as well as Grade 6 reading and writing. In addition, there continued to be steady progress in the number of students who are meeting or exceeding provincial standards since the tests were first introduced in 2002 – 2003. The results for Grade 9 academic and applied mathematics also showed continuous improvement over time.

GRADE 3	Board Results	Provincial Results	GRADE 6	Board Results	Provincial Results
Reading	68%	66%		76%	75%
Writing	76%	76%		74%	74%
Mathematics	69%	68%		53%	58%

GRADE 9 MATHEMATICS	Board Results	Provincial Results
Applied	41%	44%
Academic	74%	84%

ONTARIO SECONDARY SCHOOL LITERACY TEST (OSSLT)

The overall success rate for the high school students in our board was 78%. The overall success rate for the province was 82%. For more detailed information about our EQAO results, please visit www.eqao.com

Parent Involvement

Parents' involvement in their children's education plays a critical role in student success. We are committed to engaging and involving our parents in many aspects of learning in our schools. Each of our schools has a Catholic School Community Council (CSCC) which works toward making improvements at the school through a number of spiritual, social and academic initiatives.

Parents also got involved in a central advisory body called the Parent Involvement Committee. This important group of parents from each region in the board acts as a direct link between the CSCCs, Director of Education and the trustees.

Parent Reaching Out grants are another way in which our parents seek to enhance the success of students in our schools. In 2011 – 2012, parents applied for 32 grants for a range of projects including website redesign, bullying prevention programs and English Language Learner support.

