

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND RENEWAL PROCESS: BELIEVING

PURPOSE:

To provide trustees with an overview of the specific action steps related to Desired Outcomes and Strategic Commitments, in the “*Believing*” category of the Board’s Strategic Planning and Renewal Plan, *Achieving, Believing, Belonging 2010 – 2015*.

BACKGROUND:

At the January 18, 2011 meeting of the Board, Trustees received a Staff Report which provided an update on the status of the Board’s Strategic Planning and Renewal Process - *Achieving, Believing, Belonging 2010 – 2015*. Trustees were presented with a set of Desired Outcomes and Strategic Commitments in each of these three (3) areas as well as one additional area called “*Creating Conditions for Success*” (see chart attached).

This report is the first in a series that will provide Trustees with an overview of some of the specific action steps and initiatives that are currently underway which align with each Strategic Commitment as well as some of the future initiatives that have been identified as next steps.

SUMMARY:

Throughout the 2009-2010 school year, HCDSB undertook a comprehensive consultative process to identify strategic directions. The initial stages included an environmental scan to identify opportunities and challenges, and to establish priorities. On June 16, 2010, the Board approved *Fulfilling the Promise: Strategic Directions for 2010-2015*.

The starting point for the strategic plan is our Vision, which proclaims “*The Halton Catholic District School Board is a model learning community, widely recognized as distinctively Catholic, providing exceptional education, while nurturing the call to love and to serve.*” As an organization, we will best accomplish this Vision by focusing on achieving, believing and belonging. We will focus on **Achieving**, because as a publically funded school system, student achievement is our primary mandate. We will focus on **Believing**, because as a Catholic school Board, our mission is grounded in the gospel, our vision in the person of Jesus Christ who calls us to serve, and our particular mandate is to support and encourage our students to grow in their personal faith. We understand that involvement and engagement are important and so we will focus on **Belonging** because we define ourselves as a Catholic learning community, and true community both requires and creates a sense of belonging.

Fulfilling the Promise sets out the HCDSB’s priorities for the next 5 years. Developed with input from trustees, staff, parents, students and community members, the strategic commitments reflect key areas of focus related to student achievement, faith formation, student, staff and parent engagement, and processes and procedures which ensure effective services to support learning.

A key understanding that has emerged through the strategic planning and renewal process and which cuts across these areas is a recognition that underlying **Conditions for Success** serve as a foundation for organizational effectiveness and efficacy in all areas, and that organizational focus on enhancing these conditions for success will enhance our outcomes. We will commit to the creation of optimal conditions for success by:

- establishing comprehensive principles of practice,
- committing to clear and consistent communication,
- focusing on results,
- strengthening governance and accountability,
- embracing innovation and continuous improvement.

The Board's priorities and commitments provide guidelines for the detailed planning processes which staff undertake to develop annual system priorities, operational plans, our Board Improvement Plan, and School Improvement Plans.

Although our three broad areas, Achieving, Believing, Belonging, will be presented and detailed separately, it is understood that all are connected, and interdependent. Of even greater significance, it is understood that our Catholic identity is the foundation upon which our faith-based education system is built, and as such, is embedded in all of the Board's strategic directions and priorities.

The first report focuses on **Believing**.

WE FOCUS ON *Believing*

OUR PRIORITY: Strengthening the Distinctively Catholic Character of our Schools and Programs

"As a Catholic School Board, our mission is grounded in the gospels, our vision in the person of Jesus Christ who calls us to serve, support and encourage our students to grow in their personal faith."

HCDSB is committed to being a model learning community, widely recognized as distinctively Catholic. The distinctiveness of Catholic Education is a reflection of the distinctive characteristic of Catholicism itself, and these characteristics must be reflected in the whole of the curriculum of Catholic schools: the content taught, the process of teaching, and the environment at the school.

OUR DESIRED OUTCOMES:

- students know the foundations/teachings of the Catholic faith,
- staff and students model the faith and their actions reflect a Catholic world view
- schools and communities reflect a culture that encourages students to make vocational decisions that celebrate an approach to life and work that is shaped by Gospel values.

OUR 5 STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS:

We will:

1. Define and Celebrate Our Catholic Identity
2. Support Faith Formation initiatives
3. Emphasize Catholic Graduate Expectations
4. Emphasize the Catholic Social Teachings
5. Nurture Home/School/Parish Partnership

1. Define and Celebrate Our Catholic Identity

We will ensure deep understandings of Catholic identity for all partners, through the development of a framework and process to support ongoing reflection and review of Catholic culture in our schools and work places.

Current and Ongoing Initiatives:

○ *Ambassadors of Catholic Education*

The mandate of this project is:

- to engage the Catholic community in the work to promote and protect Catholic education;
- to endorse publically-funded Catholic education and broaden the endorsement across the Catholic community;
- to engage broad participation and support by developing activities, resources, events;
- to articulate the value of Catholic education within the broader community

○ *Focus on Faith Steering Committee*

The mandate for the Focus on Faith Steering Committee is to ensure that faith is intentionally reflected in our learning environment and is infused in every aspect of both content and process as we develop and

support plans for staff development, curriculum development and implementation, and our approach to instruction and assessment.

Sub committees include:

- Home, School, Parish Partnership
 - Leadership Faith Development
 - Adult Faith Formation
 - Focus on Faith Promotional materials
 - Curriculum Connections
 - Youth Rally & Walk With Jesus
 - Culture of Life
 - Social Justice/Outreach
- *Theological Theme 2009-2012: “Hear the Word of the Lord...Learn to do Good...Seek Justice”*
This theme was selected based on the book of Isaiah in the Old Testament which proclaimed a strong message to hear God’s word, to learn to love, and to act with justice.

2011-2012:

- *Develop a new Theological Theme for 2012-2015*
Develop promotional materials and resources to support schools in infusing the theme in all aspects of school life and curriculum.
- *Introduce and encourage a framework for review at the classroom, school, and system level.*

2. Faith Formation

We will create, enhance, and provide opportunities for all staff, students, and members of the extended community to know and live their faith, to engage in personal faith formation, and to grow in their desire to serve others.

Current and Ongoing Initiatives:

- *Theological Education for Leaders (TEL)*
This is a Leadership Faith Development program for Principals and Vice Principals. Sessions offer a focus on knowledge and theology and personal faith formation.
- *Community Adult Faith Formation*
- all School Improvement Plans (SIP) include Community Adult Faith Formation;
 - each school has been provided with funds to support Adult Faith Formation initiatives in their school;
 - includes Faith Formation optional sessions for any staff member to attend;
 - Leadership candidates participate;
 - NTIP sessions included;
 - Chaplaincy Leaders/Pastoral Animators partnership with St. Michael’s College – Masters Courses/Blue Card Program
- *System Faith Day*
This system-wide Faith Day allows for staffs at their sites to gather together for a day of community building and personal faith development.
- *System Student Faith Formation Initiatives*
- *Youth Rally (Grade 8)*
Partnership with Mary Mother of God Parish to provide a Youth Rally for intermediate students for Faith Formation
 - *Chastity Talks (Grades 9- 10)*
Grade 9 and 10 students are invited to hear a chastity speaker at their schools each Fall

- *Walk with Jesus (Grades 6 – 12)*
This event takes place during Catholic Education Week. The purpose for this event is to raise awareness and monies for three charities system-wide. Charities will represent a balance of local, national and global, and will be determined through the Social Justice Outreach Committee.
 - *Religious Vocations Fair (Grade 11)*
Students attend a Religious Vocations Fair as part of the Grade 11 Religion Courses. Students participate in preparatory activities in class, the Fair itself, and follow up reflections in class. This is designed to enhance the Grade 11 Religion curriculum and ground students in an understanding of religious vocations in the Catholic tradition.
- *Various Student Faith Formation Initiatives at the School Level:*
 - student retreats
 - sacramental preparation

2011-2012:

- *Faith Formation*
Add sessions for Faith Formation available to Catholic School Council members/trustees/SEAC
- *Student Forum*
Discussion with students who have participated in System Faith Formation initiatives to evaluate and plan next steps/activities that are meaningful for students. (May 2011)

3. Emphasize Catholic Graduate Expectations

We will consistently use the lens of Catholic Graduate Expectations to ensure students, staff, and parents understand and are supported in the expectation that Catholic values and world view are infused into all aspects of curriculum.

Current and Ongoing Initiatives:

- *Develop and Implement Assessment Framework for Religious Education in Grade 7*
The graduate is expected to be “a discerning believer formed in the Catholic faith.” As such, priority is given to effective assessment practices in Religious Education to support student learning and guide teacher instruction.
- *Best Practices Document*
Creation of Best Practices Document for schools demonstrating how to bring the Theological Theme to life in the schools and how to bring to life the Catholic Social Justice teachings and essential questions in classrooms and schools. This document will provide links to SEF indicators and school improvement planning for SIP teams.

2011-2012:

- *Assessment Framework for Religious Education*
Currently in the process of being developed for Grade 2 and Grade 4 for implementation September 2011. Future grades to be determined pending the completion of the Elementary Curriculum document for Religious Education currently being developed by I.C.E.
- *Emphasizing Catholic Graduate Expectations Posters and Teaching Package*
 - Posters being developed for use in all schools that link the Catholic Graduate Expectations to Catholic Social Teachings. Posters will be followed by a teaching package to go with the posters.
 - Develop resource for teachers to link Catholic Graduate Expectations with learning skills and report card comments. (Look at work EOCC completed “Planting the Seeds for Success: Exploring Learning Skills and Work Habits from a Catholic Perspective (Grades 1 – 8)”).

4. Emphasize the Catholic Social Teachings

We will promote and support students, staff, and community opportunities to engage in Social Justice issues and activities as an expression of faith in action.

Current and Ongoing Initiatives:

- *Infusion of Catholic Curriculum with the Focus on Faith Theological theme and grade level Catholic Social Justice Themes and Essential Questions across the Curriculum.*
Review and update the Catholic Curriculum Maps
- *School supports provided by system itinerant teachers whose responsibilities include:*
 - To assist teachers to apply effective assessment strategies to Religious Education program
 - To assist in effective use of Fully Alive resource
 - To assist in the use of grade level Catholic themes and essential questions throughout the curriculum
 - To support the continued development and implementation of assessment frameworks in Religious Education
- *Walk with Jesus Pilgrimage*
This event takes place during Catholic Education Week. The purpose for this event is to raise awareness and monies for three charities system-wide. Charities to be determined by the Social Justice Outreach Committee.
- *Culture of Life*
The Culture of Life Halton Group meets throughout the year with a focus on core life issues: abortion, euthanasia, embryonic stem cell research and cloning. Various events and initiatives come out of this group.
- *Kingdom Project (Secondary Schools)*
This is a student driven, staff guided initiative that is to model the parable of the Seven Talents and is to be implemented keeping in mind our mission of servant leadership. The goal of initiative is to “Do Good” throughout the greater community found within the Halton Catholic District School Board and where possible generating revenue in order to allow the Kingdom Project to be sustainable for future years.
- *Me-to-We/ Take Action Youth Leadership Training Program*
Take Action is an innovative and dynamic youth leadership training program that engages students in meaningful local and global citizenship. Catholic teachers make connections to Catholic social teachings. Currently 12 elementary schools, and 5 secondary schools are participating in this program.

2011-2012:

- *Implement and support the revised Catholic Curriculum Maps*
- *In-service Me-to-We schools, Speak Up! Project coordinators and Kingdom Project reps to highlight Catholic connections*
- *Develop School Resource for Ethical Fundraising Practices*
Resource to include:
 - protocol around choices for support, balance of local, national and global support initiatives,
 - connections to Catholic Social Justice teachings,
 - list of approved charities,
 - tracking of funds guidelines
- *Review of three charities to be supported and to include local, national and global.*
- *Reactivate the Board's charitable foundation to champion equity of opportunity in our local community.*
- *Continue to expand project, fund project to continue for next year as well as to pass long seed money to next board in line.*

5. Home, School, Parish Partners

We will enhance, promote and support strong and positive partnerships between home, school and parish.

Current and Ongoing Initiatives:

- *Home, School, Parish Partnership Day*
This day brings together staff, parents and parish team members with the purpose of strengthening the relationship between home, school and parish.
- *Relationship with Halton Deanery*
The Halton Deanery meets three times a year. Representatives participate in Deanery meetings to provide updates on activities and receive information regarding new initiatives.
- *Eucharistic Minister Training*
This training is provided annually for secondary students in conjunction with a host parish. Students are trained and led by Chaplaincy Leaders.
- *Home, School, Parish Partnership Connections Committee*

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS WILL BE DEMONSTRATED WHEN:

- Students will self-report higher levels of spiritual engagement as measured by the Halton Catholic Youth Survey
- Parents will report that staff reflect a Catholic World view, as measured by the Halton Catholic Parent Survey
- Community Adult Faith Formation is embraced across all schools in the system
- Increased staff and student participation in peer leadership and social justice advocacy
- Home-School-Parish action plans promote and support student leadership
- Increased student and staff participation in locally provided Faith Formation/Leadership activities
- Evident positive correlation between student achievement and students who report high spiritual engagement
- Parents report their child's school reflects a commitment to its religious purpose and provides a religious curriculum and resource materials that respect the teachings and traditions of the Catholic Church, as measured by the Halton Catholic Parent Survey
- Staff report their work environment reflects Catholic values and beliefs and that they are provided with a variety of opportunities to participate in Faith Formation, as measured by the State of the System Survey
- Generalized adoption of Assessment Framework across all grade 7 classrooms
- Introduction of grade 7 year-end religion assessment Board-wide
- Increased teacher understanding of the value of the Assessment Framework as a tool for effective instruction
- Class visits will reveal students can articulate faith connections, especially those relating to Catholic Social Justice teachings across the curriculum
- Ethical guidelines are considered before engaging in school fundraising.
- School communities can articulate, from a Catholic perspective, how social justice initiatives reflect Catholic teaching (e.g. Ecoschools, Me-to-We).
- Religious Education is given priority when setting the school timetable
- Teachers regularly avail themselves of the support offered by itinerant Religious Education Teachers

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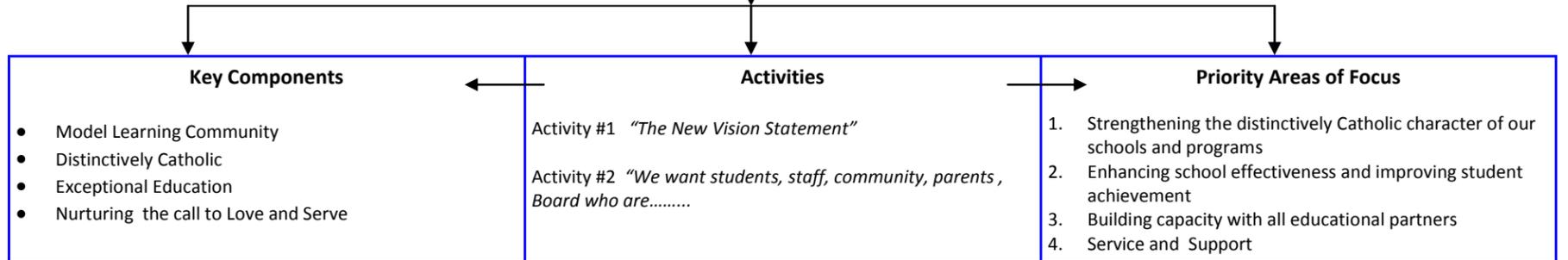


**SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS
2010-2015**

FOCUS ON FAITH— OUR THEOLOGICAL THEME
Catholic Social Teaching / Catholic Graduate Expectations
(Actions Rooted in Gospel Values)

GOVERNING VALUES/MISSION (Purpose)
The Halton Catholic District School Board in partnership with home and Church, is dedicated to providing excellence in Catholic education by developing Christ-centred individuals enabled to transform society.

VISION (Direction)
The Halton Catholic District School Board is a **model learning community**, widely recognized as **distinctively Catholic**, providing **exceptional education**, while **nurturing the call to love and serve** as a people of faith, living out God's plan.



Achieving success and excellence
Believing in our Faith and modeling it daily
Belonging to an active Catholic learning community

Achieving		Believing		Belonging	
DESIRED OUTCOME	PRIORITIES	DESIRED OUTCOME	PRIORITIES	DESIRED OUTCOME	PRIORITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remain at top of EQAO scores Responsive to needs of all students Increased elementary to secondary retention Schools are innovative 21st century-learning environments Committed to excellence 	Enhancing School Effectiveness Strategic Commitments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment & Instruction Innovation & Technology Leadership Professional Learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students know the foundations/teachings of the Catholic faith Staff and students model the faith and their actions reflect a Catholic world view 	Strengthening the distinctively Catholic character of our schools and programs Strategic Commitments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define and celebrate Catholic identity Faith Formation Emphasize Catholic Graduate Expectations Emphasize Catholic Social Teachings Home, School, Parish Partnership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A culture that nurtures staff engagement within and between all employee groups Parents are actively and purposefully engaged in their child's school A culture that nurtures religious vocations 	Building Capacity with all Educational Partners Strategic Commitments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student Voice Parent Engagement Equity and Inclusion Safe Schools



CREATING CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS

PRIORITIES: IMPROVING LEVELS OF SERVICE AND SUPPORT TO SCHOOLS STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS:

- ESTABLISH PRINCIPLES OF PRACTICE
- COMMUNICATE WITH CLARITY
- FOCUS ON RESULTS
- STENGTHEN GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

