

Welcome everyone to the new school year of 2015-2016. At this time of the year, I can't help but reflect that the "real and practical" New Year is the beginning of school in early September! Summer and all the good times and nice weather is beginning to recede; new and familiar surroundings and routines begin.

There are many items and initiatives going on always at our Board and within our schools both elementary and secondary. I am going to primarily focus on one which I think is current, fluid and can only be best achieved with input from all parents, ratepayers, parishes and community partners and other educational stakeholders. Gathering information and input from everyone involved in our schools and especially you the parents and ratepayers.

The board is mandated by the Ministry of Education to have a 5 year strategic plan. HCDSB has begun the process to develop our new strategic plan. Because everything is always about the best interest and outcomes for our students, this strategic plan **must** have input from all parents, ratepayers and stakeholders - parishes and community partners.

Here are but some of the number of ways and dates in which everyone can have access and have input into this important document.

- October 7th at Jean Vanier Secondary School in Milton we are holding a district-wide (all Halton communities) town hall meeting.
- October 14th the HCDSB will hold a telephone town hall. If you have a phone you can participate from any environment that is comfortable for you!

- Trustees will be available with appropriate sheets to receive and record information and input at all upcoming calendar events, e.g. October 3 & 4 - Track and Field meet; outreach to all parishes via announcements at parish weekend masses and sleeves with information and contact information for the parish bulletin and many more ways.

Please visit the [HCDSB website](#) and go to the links provided to make contact and input. I cannot stress enough how crucial it is for parents, ratepayers, parishes and all community partners and other educational stakeholders to be involved and provide information, feedback, thoughts and ideas. This is the time and the opportunity to have your say and be heard.

Good to know going forward is that our multi-year strategic plan will be continuously revised, implemented, weighted and examined throughout the remaining 4 years.

I do hope every one of our students has had a good start to the New Year of school! Please again I say to all; get involved, give us your thoughts and your input. Go to HCDSB website and work those links.

Blessings!