

Council of Chairs, Wednesday, October 17, 2018

Location: St. Christopher Catholic Elementary School, Burlington

Thank you for attending the first Halton Catholic Council of Chairs meeting for the 2018-2019 School Year. The Catholic Parent Involvement Committee (CPIC) hosts these meetings 3 times per school year to provide School Council Chairs and Co-Chairs opportunities to network, share ideas and best practices, and to disperse consistent and relevant information to Halton's Catholic School communities. These meetings are attended by Senior Board Administration, Board Trustees, Principals and Vice Principals and their School Council Chairs. The information that follows provides a summary from the Council of Chairs meeting that took place on October 17, 2018. Each school should maintain a copy of this report within their School Council records and share the information with the parent community.

Welcome and Introductions: Careen Thompson, Co-Chair CPIC 2018

Catholic School Council representatives were welcomed and members of the Catholic Parent Involvement Committee (CPIC) were introduced.

Board Welcome: Diane Rabenda, Chair of the Board

Trustees and elections were described. There are 9 trustees to be elected. Some of the duties include approving the budget which must be balanced, forming the strategic plan, preserving, protecting and promoting Catholic education, hiring the director, communicate with constituents, upholding decisions made by the board.

The first trustees were present in 1826 at Glengarry Catholic school. Catholic school trustees are the only elected officials dealing with education. The vision is Christ centered.

The Halton Catholic District School Board has 4,500 employees, 35,000 students, 45 elementary schools, 9 secondary schools and 3 continuing education schools.

Director's Welcome: Patrick Daly, Director of Education

Pat Daly is the new Director of Education for the Halton Catholic District School Board. He worked for HCDSB for 25 years at many different levels. He moved Brant Haldimand for 3 years and has returned HCDSB as Director of Education. Input from all stakeholders is welcomed.

Halton Catholic Children's Foundation: Marc Clare & Fred Sweeney

The next Bishop's dinner is on November 7, 2018. A short video about the Halton Catholic Children's Foundation was presented. The foundation was founded in 2012 and partners with the school board to help the students and their families. Students at 50 elementary and secondary schools have been helped. The foundation helps with basic necessities such as food and clothing., as well as with all aspects of school life including school trips. 10.5% of Halton live with low income which includes 3600 students at HCDSB. 767 students have been helped since 2012.

Fundraising includes a golf tournament usually in June, the Bishop's Dinner in November, and events such as The 24 Hour Fast held during lent, which will take place the first week in March 2019. Donations come from individuals, companies, students and staff. The foundation also applies for Grants that might fit the cause.

The Council of Chairs and parents can help by building awareness, corporate connections for donations and prizes, and donate a percentage of school generated funds. Schools can help by identifying students or families in need. The foundation's Board of Directors has an allocations committee which reviews each case and decides the help to be given. The schools provide a follow up report to the board of directors. Secondary students can earn volunteer hours for helping at the Bishop's dinner and other events.

Guest Speaker

Distinctive Catholic Schools: John Kostoff, Executive Director OCSOA

John Kostoff is an educator with over 40 years' experience and past Director of Education with Dufferin Peel Catholic School Board and currently the CEO of OCSOA. Simply put, the history of Catholic Education is that parents wanted Catholic Education. Step back and look at what we are doing and why. 75 to 80% of Catholic stakeholders have no children in the system. How do you reach people with no children in the system? How do you get them involved? It is still important. Just as we recognize

Indigenous and French rights, so Catholic rights are the same constitutional rights. Don't look back. Best days are ahead.

Jesus says "the future is ahead of you".

The judicial system will support Catholic education that is different. Not the same as the public boards.

Catholic Education is different in 3 distinct ways.

- 1) Students learn and understand the doctrine of the Trinity.
- 2) Students learn and understand incarnation.
- 3) Following the pattern of the Eucharist makes Catholic schools distinct.

Students graduate from Catholic schools with a different perspective. What are school councils doing this month to promote Catholic education? School and Parish have to get along. Catholic schools need to sow the seeds as in the parable of the sower.

Schools should open doors to seniors on Remembrance Day, Christmas, Easter, or just for a coffee after morning Mass to visit a class. Meet with all MPPs in the area to make sure they support Catholic Education. Don't take it for granted.

Catholic Education belongs to the community.

Renewing the Promise: Lorrie Naar, Superintendent of Education

The Renewing the Promise document can be found online and all schools have copies. Time was given to participants to read and discuss pages 6 and 7. Throughout the school year, parents, staff and respective committees will be asked to reflect on aspects of the document.

The Role of SEAC: Brenda Agnew, SEAC Chair

All boards must have a Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC). Parents were encouraged to become members.

Members are voted to the committee by their parent group. There are 15 members on the committee including representatives from (ABC) Association for Bright Children, (LDAO) Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario, Autism Ontario, Halton Down Syndrome Association, VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children, Easter Seals, and 4 trustees and 2 at-large representatives.

The committee reviews programs, budget and services.

For example, SEAC reviewed the suitability of naturalized playgrounds for students with special needs and noted if they were accessible and made recommendations.

SEAC is a good resource for parents who have questions. SEAC also gives out the Spirit of Inclusion awards, one for elementary and one for secondary each year.

OAPCE Commissioning Ceremony: Denice Garrell-Teti, OAPCE Director Halton

Catholic School Councils include an Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education (OAPCE) representative. The representatives were thanked for their services in this important role. OAPCE newsletters will be available for the representatives to share with their school councils. The OAPCE representatives were led in the commissioning ceremony.

Upcoming Council of Chairs meeting dates:

Wednesday, February 27, 2019, St. Joan of Arc CES, Oakville

Wednesday, May 22, 2019, St. Scholastica CES, Milton