



Board meeting report from Catholic Student Trustee, Andrew D'Alessio

Student Trustee Report - February 6, 2018

With exams and final assignments complete, secondary students are looking forward to new adventures in Semester 2.

Councils have been planning their events and special treats for Valentine's Day. What's in the works? We have heart grams, dances, ski trips and the sale of roses and chocolates. All kinds of initiatives are taking place to ensure that everyone feels special. I know from personal experience that these events add spirit and enthusiasm during a month that many people struggle with. Our student councils are also getting ready for the next student senate meeting taking place on February 13th. I am hard at work creating an informative agenda for our board leaders. During these meetings, great conversations take place. Many of our senate leaders leave with a bag full of new tricks on how to motivate, inspire and energize our Catholic students.

Our secondary schools have been receiving visits from their feeder schools as elementary students get ready to join us in the fall. This is a big step for our young students. I know they are all very nervous about leaving their old schools. Our schools are so welcoming to new students. Our visitors are quickly made to feel like part of a bigger family when they first arrive. They will be looking at the various programs the schools have to offer, course selections, and future opportunities such as OYAP, SHSM and Dual credit programs. It's always great to see the new students coming into our schools ready to participate in everything that high school has to offer. They are given a wonderful taste of what high school is all about and often leave chanting a few new school cheers!

In our elementary school February promises to be a busy month. In many of our schools, students will participate in a Winter Carnival, Black History Month and prepare for various sports tournaments. Holy Name of Mary in Almonte is having their Winter Carnival on February 7, with lots of outdoor activities planned. Family Literacy Day was on January 27, and events were held at many of our schools. Students and teachers dressed up as their favourite book character and invited parents to join the activities. And of course, with the beginning of the 2018 Winter Olympics this week, schools are holding events and their own school Olympics to coincide with the festivities.

Student Trustee Report - February 20, 2018

Thirteen days ago, our student senate came together to talk about many things; we discussed some of the key initiatives taking place in our schools, as well as the upcoming student trustee election in the spring. Student Senate enjoyed the opportunity to learn more about the role of a student trustee. All of student senate members were encouraged to share this information with their student councils. Posters have been delivered to all schools. It's incredible to me to see that the year is flying by so fast as I complete the last leg of my term as Student Trustee.

We also had a board consultant present the "Sit With Us" app. This app is widely used in the United States by students. The app was created to help communicate with students in a school population who was having lunch, where and what they would be talking about. This allows students who are alone for lunch to find groups to join. This creates a positive culture within the school. No one ever eats lunch alone. Student Senate was excited to take it back to their school and share it with others. We also had Andrew Lovett come in and explain the Office 365 movement that the board is following. He highlighted many useful tools that we can use as students to support our learning. Mr. Lovett also introduced us to the CDSBEO digital library Overdrive. Everyone was excited to have this tool as their disposal. We see all CDSBEO students benefiting from this tool.

Student councils have just finished up their Valentine activities and are now moving on to other activities such as Bishop Cup! School mission teams have completed their fundraising and have been or are currently in Guatemala. This rich experience will most definitely impact them on how they view the world. We are excited to hear more in the coming months.

Schools have enjoyed taking part in Shrove Tuesday, with pancakes prepared by some of our important partners such as the CWL and the Knights of Columbus, as well as Ash Wednesday liturgies. Receiving the ashes is a rich tradition that we are lucky to experience and take part in every year. The next few weeks will be busy ones for our schools, as the second semester is now in full gear. I would like to wish everyone a warmer month of March as we head toward spring.