



Trustee News

CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF EASTERN ONTARIO

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Todd Lalonde, Chair (Cornwall-Glengarry)
Ronald Eamer, Vice-Chair (Cornwall-Glengarry)
Nancy Kirby (Lanark)
Brent Laton (Grenville County and Elizabethtown-Kitley Township)

Karen McAllister (Stormont-Dundas)
Robin Reil (City of Brockville, Town of Smiths Falls, and Leeds County)
Sue Wilson (Prescott-Russell)
Andrew D'Alessio (Catholic Student Trustee)

Information and Communication Technology

The CDSBEO has invested heavily in capacity, reliability and equipment relating to Information and Communications Technology (ICT). CDSBEO has a strong partnership with Microsoft, and as such, ICT has established a solid infrastructure where students and teachers seamlessly integrate cloud tools in the classroom to help meet curriculum expectations. This infrastructure has allowed the Board to leverage many cloud technologies, including social media.

Over the past year, the ICT Department has been building capacity around the safe use of technology in CDSBEO schools and this campaign will continue into future years to ensure all Board users are aware of safe internet navigation.

Recent infrastructure changes have been implemented throughout the Board, including technology infrastructure safeguards and internet safety capacity building, including internet safety procedures and resources.

"On the infrastructure side, the Board has implemented a spam filter, and the current statistics indicate that about 50 to 60 per cent of email coming into Board accounts is spam. These authors of spam continually try to find ways to get through spam filters, so this software is very important. We also have virus protection on all systems, and advanced threat protection for email. As spammers get better, the tools continually need to improve and protect against emerging threats," explained CDSBEO Chief Information Officer, James Proulx.

Policies to educate users on how to use personal devices, and how to secure personal and confidential information have also been developed in recent years. The privacy commissioner of Ontario has created guidelines which have been distributed throughout the Board. In addition, the Board has created an ongoing awareness campaign, including posters and videos, to remind users of important "stay safe" information.

Chair Lalonde thanked Mr. Proulx for the update, "It is definitely a good reminder that we all must be very astute to what may be coming through emails, and on websites we browse. It is reassuring to see all of the security that has been put in place to keep Board data safe, and to ensure staff and students are conscientious users of technology."

Indigenous Education Program Update

Ongoing integration of Indigenous Education remains an integral part of the CDSBEO Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement. In order to continue the momentum that has been built in Indigenous Education, it is important to look critically at the work that has been done, and to use data to plan for the future.

"We have been called to action through recommendations set out by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. In

addition, the Ministry of Education has established goals which include: high levels of student achievement, reducing gaps in achievement, and maintaining high levels of public confidence for all students. My role is to look at these same goals through an Indigenous lens," began Indigenous Education Lead Marian Lawson MacDonald.

Part of the Ministry mandate is the formation of an Indigenous Education Advisory Committee, and the CDSBEO has a very proactive, involved committee that advises and guides decision making. Through the collection of data that informs the planning needs of students, the Indigenous Education Advisory Team works in partnership with the Special Education team, and the Board MISA lead.

"Report card data demonstrating a comparison between average marks of CDSBEO self-identified students versus non-identified students tells us that there is a minimal gap in achievement between the two groups. Provincially, this gap is quite large, so this data is something that we should be very proud of in the CDSBEO," noted Mrs. Lawson MacDonald.

In order to support struggling students, the Board has established the FNMI Student Support Initiative which provides tutors and targeted supports for Indigenous students based on individual student need. To further support Indigenous students and cultural learning for non-Indigenous students and staff, the Board has implemented many initiatives since the 2015-2016 school year. All of the initiatives are data driven, and based on educator and student voice, as well as student need. Educator efficacy in Indigenous Education is vital, be it through system wide professional development or professional development in schools.

"It is exciting to see the growth and success of this program, and the positive response from our school community, who have so enthusiastically embraced learning about Indigenous culture," indicated Chair Todd Lalonde.

Trustee Sue Wilson noted, "I would like to highlight that we had some very positive feedback from parents regarding the Summer Learning Program, where students were actively involved with the Kokum in the Classroom initiative. It was a very good experience for the students and it is my hope that this part of the Summer Learning Program will continue on."

Kokum in the Classroom is a CDSBEO initiative which brings Indigenous Grandmothers into the classroom to teach students about authentic Indigenous culture through experiential learning and story-telling.

Vice-Chair Ron Eamer expressed his support for the growth of the Indigenous Education program. "Marian, I would just like to congratulate everyone who is involved in this program. It is amazing to see the learning that is happening for both our students and staff. I am so impressed with the evolution of the program over the years, and how deeply the curriculum and initiatives have evolved to offer rich learning experiences."