



Trustee News

CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF EASTERN ONTARIO

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Ronald Eamer, Chair (Cornwall-Glengarry)

Brent Laton, Vice-Chair (Grenville County and Elizabethtown-Kitley Township)

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Robin Reil (City of Brockville, Town of Smiths Falls, and Leeds County)

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Sarah Norton (Catholic Student Trustee)

Advocacy for Youth Mental Health

The Coalition for Children and Youth Mental Health has developed a Mental Health and Well Being Charter of Rights. The Charter was developed in response to a Summit which was held in June, to identify and share the difficulties, experiences, and mental health struggles of youth. Ontario school boards are being encouraged to adopt the charter, which aims to help find equitable and timely access to the full continuum of mental health services and supports for children and youth in Ontario. The CDSBEO supports this initiative wholly, and is in the process of developing a vision to provide opportunities for dialogue, and the development of strategies and actions to guide the Board's ongoing work in this area.

Assistive Technology in the Classroom

Assistive technology in the classroom is providing dramatic results for students with special education needs. The CDSBEO Special Education Department has implemented an extensive assistive technology training plan. Through the initiative, students and staff requiring Assistive Technology are receiving the support they need to achieve academic success.

Students' ability to access curriculum and to communicate effectively is critical for the success of our exceptional learners. Assistive technology and adaptive equipment provide the tools for students at all grade levels to acquire and process information, to empower students to succeed, and to demonstrate their learning. The Board has focused on embedded assistive technology to enhance teaching and learning in the classroom. Students have been using interactive white boards, ELMO digital projectors, and tablet computers, among other forms of technology, to attain success. Computers with voice recognition software help students to write, while text readers help to access print. Specific programs are also being used by students to organize and convey thinking.

This initiative has been paramount in realizing the vision of the Special Education Department, *what is necessary for some, is good for all*, and in the successful results that have been shared by our schools. The Board looks forward to improved results for all learners thanks to the programs, and support implementation.

FSL Program Strategies Get Recognition

The CDSBEO's French as a Second Language (FSL) programs continue to produce positive results for our students. Currently, the Intensive French program is offered at eight schools throughout the Board's jurisdiction. Students in the program demonstrate an ability to communicate spontaneously by initiating and maintaining a conversation about real-life situations. These research-based practices have classroom teachers favouring topics of authenticity and relevance, focusing on questioning and critical thinking. Students also use vocabulary and sentence structures that are beyond the basic needs.

A professional learning DVD was created by Nelson Education Publishers, and features the exemplary practices of the CDSBEO's FSL Curriculum Consultant, FSL Coach, French Teachers, and students. The DVD demonstrates how to implement key literacy practices within oral language lessons to provide models and initiate dialogue among teachers of FSL. The DVD is being distributed to schools across the country.

Kindergarten Classroom Renos for 2012

The CDSBEO's youngest learners are going to start their Catholic education in a state of the art learning environment, thanks to funding for full-day Kindergarten programs. The CDSBEO's Plant and Maintenance Department has a mandate to provide students with the best possible learning environment in which to receive their Catholic education. Their goal is to provide consistency across our Board by standardizing Kindergarten classrooms. Each room will be about 250 square feet larger than a typical classroom and will share common design features such as: a large instructional area with natural daylight, an in-class bathroom, a large work area for arts and crafts, a large storage closet, 30 cubbies and coat lockers for students, and a student work centre wired for computers and internet access.

Renovation plans are underway for Sacred Heart Catholic School in Lanark, St. James Catholic School in Smiths Falls, St. John Catholic School in Perth, and St. Peter Catholic School in Cornwall. Construction on the new rooms will be complete to welcome students in September 2012.

Board Meeting Dates: December 6, 2011 @ 7:00 p.m., Kemptville Board Office
December 20, 2011 @ 7:00 p.m., Kemptville Board Office

Visit our website at www.cdsbeo.on.ca for information, news on school events, bus cancellation updates, Board Meeting Highlights, or to visit our Trustee section under *Board Information*.