

Early Learning Program: Offering Opportunity and Flexibility

The Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario is preparing four sites for the new Early Learning Program, which will debut this September.

Superintendent of Education, Jane McMillan, presented to Trustees an outline of the new initiative. The Ministry of Education announced the first phase of the plan for a province-wide program which will offer full-day, every day learning for four and five year-olds.

The Early Learning Program offers students a learning environment designed to help them develop the foundational social, emotional, academic and physical skills necessary to succeed in school and in life. Teachers and early childhood educators will work together to offer students the opportunity to learn, play, and grow in faith as they begin their personal Catholic education journey.

The CDSBEO believes that an early childhood education, rooted in the Gospel values of faith, hope and love, is key to a successful education. This program allows our Board to further nurture our students in an education based on the Catholic virtues.

The program also offers more flexibility for parents by offering a fee-based extended hours program led by the same early childhood educators who share the day with our Kindergarten teachers.

The Board will offer the program at four sites: Holy Name of Mary Catholic School, Almonte; St. Francis Xavier Catholic School, Brockville; St. Joseph Catholic School, Gananoque; and Immaculate Conception Catholic School, Cornwall.

Mrs. McMillan told the Board that a number of factors aided in deciding which schools would be included in Phase One of the project. Each school site had to have appropriate space and equipment to handle the program. The benefits of the program to each community were also considered. In addition, the Board consulted with the coterminous board and local municipalities.

Board Chair, Ronald Eamer, believes the program will benefit all students. "We're pleased to be able to offer this program. These young students will no doubt excel during their entire academic careers, thanks in part to the Early Learning Program and the strong foundation it provides for their education."

Director of Education, Wm. J. Gartland stated, "We are looking forward to developing the Early Learning Program in the coming months and years. The full-day, every day program provides an outstanding opportunity for our Catholic communities, and will ultimately help to strengthen the bond between home and school."

Help for Haiti: CDSBEO Schools Respond to Tragedy

CDSBEO schools have taken action in response to the devastating earthquake that struck Haiti on January 12, 2010. In less than a week, schools have raised more than \$12,000 to help the people of the country.

Among many things, schools are holding dress down days, coin drives, and bake sales. Some schools are facilitating donations to many organizations, including the Canadian Red Cross.

In reporting her school's efforts, St. Francis Xavier Catholic School Teacher, Laura Deeves, referenced how students are

learning a new meaning of the Board theme, *We walk in good company!* "Our staff has encouraged the students to remember that, in this case, we are the good company that those in need can walk with."

The Board's website (www.cdsbeo.on.ca) now includes a link to the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace for those who wish to help the recovery efforts.

New Business Initiatives Outlined

Associate Director of Education, Gordon Greffe, presented a number of new initiatives being undertaken by the Board's Business Department. Mr. Greffe reviewed a large number of initiatives including: new methods for budget reporting, capital funding, audit procedures and purchasing.

Mr. Greffe outlined both Board initiated projects, and those that have been mandated by the provincial government. "For example," said Mr. Greffe, "We must prepare for the new harmonized sales tax, and the effects it will have on our day-to-day operations."

The Transportation Department was also highlighted in the report. The Board will be participating in a newly created Transportation Consortium administration and governance committee, and will be preparing for revised Ministry directives on student transportation contracting practices.

"We will also be launching a number of environmental initiatives as part of our roles as stewards of the Earth," said Mr. Greffe. "It is our mandate to remain fiscally responsible as we move forward with these new projects."

We walk in



good company!

Jan. 27, 2010 - Special Education Advisory Committee

Jan. 27 - Feb. 2, 2010 - Secondary Exams

Feb. 3, 2010 - P.A. Day

For more information contact 613-258-7757 or 1-800-443-4562, ext. 206.

Visit us online at www.cdsbeo.on.ca.

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Next Board Meeting

February 2, 2010

Kemptville Board

Office

7:00 p.m.