



## Bishop Macdonell Catholic School – Fostering Hope, Resilience and Kindness

Bishop Macdonell Catholic School, located in Cornwall, provides a myriad of programs to educate and support some of the most vulnerable students in the CDSBEO. Superintendent of School Effectiveness, Natalie Cameron, introduced Principal Walter MacDonald and Vice-Principal Trudi Chafee, who provided insight to the exceptional programs offered at Bishop Macdonell.

“We have Principal MacDonald and Vice-Principal Chafee here this evening to provide a comprehensive overview of what Bishop Macdonell is all about,” began Cameron. “I am extremely proud of this school and its staff. The administration is incredible, and they do incredible things with some of the most vulnerable students in our Board.”

The school currently has an enrolment of 354 students with 43 staff members and 20 classrooms. The school’s enrolment has grown consistently over the last several years, including a 13 per cent and 12 per cent growth rate respectively over the last two years. The school serves a large population of students from within central Cornwall.

Building hope is a major focus in the pillars and philosophies established in the school. The staff aspires to provide an environment where every student feels respected and welcome, and where students can be part of a safe, consistent and caring school environment. Specialized programming plays a significant part, along with strong partnerships with community agencies, and dedicated, compassionate and highly trained staff.

“We also work very hard to create an inclusive and welcoming environment for parents, so that we can mutually support both students and parents,” noted Chafee.

Bishop Macdonell prides itself on providing various specialized programs that meet the needs of every learner. The staff is highly trained to modify and accommodate whenever the need arises. Destigmatizing student learning accommodations by making them available to all learners, regardless of learning needs, is standard practice.

“The laptops, special rocking chair, the quiet zone, and the hundreds of other things that are listed in the IEPs are available to all learners to de-stigmatize the special education needs of students,” explained MacDonald. “What’s good for one is always good for all!”

A great many community partners help support the growth of students. The work is never done alone, and MacDonald notes that having partners come into the school is far more efficient, providing continuity for the students, and ensuring that they are accessing the services they require with less disruption.

Other valuable programs are provided to engage students including Fun Friday’s, Good News Assemblies, Kindness Awards and daily “Shout Outs” for anyone who does something kind or



thoughtful, weekly student success meetings, ongoing educator professional learning, multi-level tracking of at-risk students, and complete wrap-around care for children and families.

"Every week we ask teachers to submit names of students who have made a special effort, and we make phone calls to five families every Saturday morning to provide positive feedback," noted MacDonald. "It's all about being positive and encouraging."

The school also boasts a robust EcoSchools program with platinum level certification. Outdoor gardens provide vegetables for the school's snack program, and a new greenhouse and indoor growing wall also provide additional opportunities for student learning. Composting programs, rainwater collection and recent applications for solar panels to power greenhouses, rounds out a well-established EcoSchools program.

"When you see these kids, all aspiring to do their best, it makes you realize they are truly in the safest and happiest place they can be," noted Vice-Chair Eamer. "It is honestly amazing, and I would like to say thanks to all of the staff because this truly is a special place."

"We truly appreciate all of the extra effort that staff members put into helping these students, going above and beyond to provide these exceptional supports," concluded Chair Lalonde.

## OCSTA Video Contest Submissions

This year, six CDSBEO schools submitted entries into the Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association Igniting Hope Short Video Contest. The Board is extremely proud of Bishop Macdonell Catholic School, who was named as a semi-finalist in the elementary category.

"We feel that our school entries were certainly wonderful submissions and we are very proud to showcase our students' work," noted Superintendent of School Effectiveness Norma McDonald.

Over 90 submissions were received at the provincial level, with ten semi-finalists named for the elementary and secondary categories. Schools were asked to create a two-minute video to showcase how hope is brought to life in Catholic schools. Last year, Iona Academy Catholic School placed first in the elementary category.

## First Interim Financial Report 2019-2020

Manager of Finance, Ashley Hutchinson, provided the interim financial report covering the period from September 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019 with comparative figures for 2018. Ms. Hutchinson shared a summary of the financial results, including a description of key variances along with details of accumulated surplus. The report also highlighted the non-financial indicators, including summary of enrolment and summary of staffing. Enrolment changes indicate total board enrolment increased by 1.4 per cent over the original budget estimates,



# CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF EASTERN ONTARIO

Board Meeting Highlights  
From the meeting held February 4, 2020



and an overall enrolment increase of 295 FTE from the 2018-2019 actual enrolment. In addition, the revised budget includes a 7.96 FTE increase in teachers, and an additional 17.8 FTE in other school staff including educational assistants, early childhood educators, consultants, and other CUPE local priorities.