

CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF EASTERN ONTARIO

DIRECTOR'S Annual Report 2020-2021



Director's Message

The 2020-2021 school year proved to be an immense challenge for many. While we did face many changes and obstacles, I was extremely proud of our teachers, administrative staff and all support staff who exemplified extraordinary flexibility, adaptability, and patience as we navigated distance learning for our students during the spring COVID-19 school closures.

Our endeavours each school year are defined by our strategic plan, and we were extremely pleased to launch a new multi-year Strategic Plan for 2020-2025. Many elements were drawn upon to develop the new plan, which is based on the Board's mission to educate the heart, mind, body and soul of all students. Several central elements and ideologies were pivotal in the creation of the plan, including the Catholic Graduate Expectations, a focus on how being holy and living a holy life means putting faith into action, and recognizing our Indigenous community partnerships. Anchored by four tenets: believing, protecting, learning, and nurturing, the plan collectively ensures that students, staff and CDSBEO partners in education, are supported in all ways.

Our commitment to our learners can be attested through all of our initiatives, and we aspire to ensure all students reach their potential through support from their peers, teachers, and support staff.

Yours in Catholic education,

John Cameron
Director of Education

The CDSBEO multi-year plan can be found at: www.cdsbeo.on.ca/strategic-plan/
To view the video version of this report please visit: www.youtube.com/CDSBEOVideo





Specialist High Skills Major

The CDSBEO Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) Program continues to thrive, with 26 programs across eight sectors. In 2020-2021, 221 grade 11 students participated in the first year of the two-year SHSM program. There were 261 grade 12 students enrolled, with 164 graduating with a Certificate of Distinction. CDSBEO partnered with Unearth Education, A Poetic Health, and Industrial and Construction Safety, to allow students the opportunity to complete the required sector certificates necessary to earn their SHSM seal when students moved to a virtual learning platform.

SHSM students were able to fulfill their SPE (sector-partnered experience) requirement by participating in the Student Leadership and Innovation Conference. This was a provincial virtual event put together by Fair Chance Learning, in collaboration with the Ontario Council for Technology Education. Students also took part in workshops designed by professionals from LinkedIn, Apple, Amazon, and CubicFarm Systems Corp. Despite the many challenges due to the pandemic, students persevered, overcame adversity and were excited to celebrate their many accomplishments throughout the year.



Equity & Inclusion

CDSBEO completed its third year working with Dr. Nicole West-Burns, a provincial leader on equity initiatives who helped school teams identify an equity-focused domain throughout CDSBEO schools with a goal to deepen the understanding of practices in culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy. Throughout 2020-2021 Dr. West-Burns continued her work answering the question, “What does it mean to belong?” Building on our previous work focused on the marginalization of students experiencing poverty, schools continued to reduce experiences of discrimination. Schools, in collaboration with the Equity and Inclusion Committee and Department of Religious Education and Family Life, worked to implement practices that provide all students with experiences where all feel welcome and connected.

On December 10, 2020, International Human Rights Day, CDSBEO adopted the International Decade for People of African Descent. On this day, a commemorative placard was mounted in all CDSBEO school foyers. Special announcements, prayers, photos, and focused readings highlighted this event. Each school received a copy of our tangible commitments which is included in the CDSBEO Equity Action Plan.

CDSBEO was honoured to be recognized by Black History Ottawa with the Every Child is Sacred - Safe, Child Friendly Community Builder Award in January, 2021. This award is offered to those who pledge to honour all “children of the maple leaf.”

Holocaust Awareness Day on January 27th, was honoured with live events with Holocaust survivor, Eva Olsson, and Lisa Hendey, author of “I’m a Saint in the Making.” All CDSBEO staff and students had the opportunity to attend one of the livestreamed events in their classrooms.



Mental Health

The mental health of all students, staff and families has most certainly been at the forefront of our work as we navigate the global pandemic. This year, CDSBEO partnered with Canadian Lung Health Foundation to educate parents, staff, and students about the dangers of vaping and cannabis use through webinars. The Quash App (an app to help youth quit vaping) was also created and shared with students.

The CDSBEO relies heavily on strong partnerships with various child and youth mental health community agencies to support our students and families, including Open Doors for Lanark Children and Youth, Children’s Mental Health of Leeds and Grenville, Cornwall Community Hospital, and Valoris. Through these partnerships, many presentations were provided to schools virtually including: CHEO and YouthNet’s StressLess and How to Help a Friend, Hopewell’s Celebrate Every Body presentation, and the UnEarth Education Summer Mental Health Certification course. Additionally, the board introduced a new Guide for Supporting Students Struggling with Mental Health and Substance Use, and mental health staff updated the board Suicide Prevention, Intervention and Risk Review Protocol.



Parent Involvement

Our Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) was very active throughout the 2020-2021 school year conducting meetings virtually and organizing online presentations for parents. PIC hosted a virtual presentation with Dr. Jean Clinton entitled “Parenting in a Pandemic,” the evening of February 17th. Dr. Clinton focused on exhausted parents, resilient children, social emotional learning and building relationships during COVID. On April 28th, PIC provided another evening for parents that focused on mental health with an overview of resources and services for parents led by CDSBEO Mental Health Lead, Michelle Neville, along with community partners Diane Oxborough, Program Manager at the Parents Lifeline (PLEO), and Emily Castle, public health nurse and lead of the Positive Parenting Program (Triple P).

New this year was the introduction of a parent newsletter and survey created by PIC Chair, Julie Marshall, that was sent electronically to all CDSBEO parents. Throughout the school year, Chair Marshall and Superintendent McDonald attended a five-part series of virtual meetings with the PIC Chairs and school board leads throughout the province. These meetings were hosted by the Inclusive Education Priorities and Engagement Branch of the Ontario Ministry of Education. Participants shared their local challenges, successes and promising practices related to supporting parents and students as pandemic conditions evolve.



Religious Education

The Religious Education and Family Life Department adapted online virtual supports for our CDSBEO students, families, and staff with the introduction of virtual chapels in our high schools, and virtual Rosary and Christian Meditation through the Teams platform. Links to local parishes, school activities and online resources provided an opportunity to continue faith development despite church closures caused by COVID-19. The new Religious Education Program, Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ, was implemented in grade 7 classes through the purchase of online resources and curriculum supports. This marked a departure from the traditional hard copy teachers’ guides and student texts. The CDSBEO also upgraded access to online resources for grade 1-6 students. The grade 9 Religion program was released on Brightspace, an online learning platform, and more online resources were provided for staff through a Catholic Educators Teams page.

The Umbrella Project, a teacher-led curriculum and school-based program created to help students, parents and staff reframe their perception of challenges and strengthen skills of positivity and well-being, was introduced in CDSBEO schools. Rainbows for All Children, a program that offers facilitated peer support and positive coping strategies for students who have experienced divorce, death, or other painful transition within their family, also supported CDSBEO students this year. All Ontario Catholic school boards were invited to share school environmental initiatives with OCSTA, as part of the Call to Care for our Common Home, marking the 5th anniversary of Pope Francis’ encyclical – Laudato Si – Care for our Common Home. The CDSBEO was proud to be recognized for its submission, which was featured in a provincial document entitled Together in Faith: Care for Our Common Home, shared with school boards in May.



Student Learning

CDSBEO educators have demonstrated creativity, resilience, and determination this year, and the pandemic has proven that collaboration continues to be the reason our students experience success system-wide. Staff from Curriculum, Student Success, Special Education, and Religious Education and Family Life, worked together to support school teams, as they developed, implemented, and monitored their short and long-term goals.

CDSBEO French as a Second Language educators diligently upheld and promoted the vision, goals, guiding principles, and strategic focus areas of the K-12 Framework for FSL. Through ongoing modelling and practice, students develop proficiency in the French language by engaging in meaningful conversations and are exposed to a range of authentic texts and learning experiences. Training our educators in the Neurolinguistic Approach to second language acquisition increases their understanding of second language pedagogy and provides the necessary tools for students to become lifelong language learners. Many CDSBEO students choose to study FSL past grade 9, and we continue to sustain a 100 per cent success rate for grade 12 students challenging the DELF exam.

Technology-enabled learning continues to develop confident and adaptable students who are ready to tackle the next challenge in an ever-changing world. We are proud to see the many ways students and educators continue to grow as digital learners and leaders through meaningful learning experiences. The CDSBEO is committed to ensuring that our students have a strong understanding of math fundamentals, as it prepares them for success, now and in the future. Using digital resources and manipulatives, our students develop an understanding of numbers and learn how to apply their knowledge to enhance their critical thinking and problem-solving skills.



Indigenous Education

The CDSBEO continues to support First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students in a culturally respectful way to ensure both academic success and student well-being. The theme for the 2020-2021 school year was Skyworld: We Come from the Stars. Its aim was to reflect Indigenous voices in decolonizing the night's sky. All staff and students were supported in deepening their understanding of Indigenous cultures through diverse educational experiences. This included culturally relevant pedagogy, opportunities to learn from community partners, and meaningful resources.

Supported by a group of Indigenous Elders, Leaders, and Knowledge Keepers, the Skyworld theme was delivered by way of the Traditional Teachings in the Classroom Initiative. To further support the theme, Wilfred Buck, Indigenous star-story expert, delivered a virtual keynote for the Annual Indigenous Education Day on May 5, 2021.

The pandemic allowed for creativity in a cross-curricular way through videos from Knowledge Keepers, virtual tutors for self-identified students, and virtual support via Teams for Indigenous Studies courses. The Board's introduction of myON, by Renaissance, also offered teachers a wealth of vetted Indigenous learning material. An Indigenous Student Counsellor was added to the CDSBEO team to support Transition Agreement students in conjunction with the Ahkwesàhsne Mohawk Board of Education.



Experiential Learning & OYAP

Experiential Learning funding provides programs for students to work with community partners and to deepen their learning by making connections outside the classroom. A key focus of Experiential Learning is the exploration of future pathways with an emphasis on the skilled trades and STEM. CDSBEO community partners provided virtual workshops to help students continue their learning. There were many innovative events that took place including a virtual Science Fair, coding workshops, and workshops with the River Institute. The board hosted a parent night with Job Talks and partnered with Algonquin College and St. Lawrence College to host connections activities as part of the School College Work Initiative.

The CDSBEO has, despite disruptions due to COVID-19, continued to engage students in post secondary pathways planning, focusing on skilled trades and apprenticeships through the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program. As in-school programs shuttered for in person learning, students on skilled trades related co-operative education placements were permitted to continue their training and learning. The strong partnerships established with employers and employer groups played a major role in assisting them in addressing their dire need to attract new workers. This resulted in numerous employment opportunities for students. Since its inception, the program has guided over 3,800 students toward a rewarding career in skilled trades through co-operative education placements within their school communities.



Special Education

The Special Education Department continues to provide individual supports to students who have been impacted by learning disruptions during COVID-19.

In order to build staff capacity and maximize support for students, various professional development opportunities were offered to staff, including such topics as Behaviour Management Systems, Trauma, Autism Spectrum Disorders, and the Alert program.

CDSBEO also continued the important work of educating school staff in the Science of Reading, which included professional development topics such as Thinking in Sounds, Phonemic Awareness: Beyond the Basics, High Frequency Words, and The Ins and Outs of Sound Walls. Our Speech and Language Pathologists modeled the use of sound walls in classrooms, and virtually when appropriate. Students are making great gains in reading as a result of this board-wide focus.

In addition to the various trainings offered, all CDSBEO vice-principals completed the Special Education for Administrators Additional Qualification Course where they learned about the importance of their roles in supporting students with Special Education needs and the impact their advocacy can have on positive outcomes for our most vulnerable learners.

Once again this summer, we were blessed to have educational assistants supporting the Summer Learning program. This additional support ensured a learning lift for students and allowed them to achieve their learning goals. Many students with special education needs also benefited from being able to participate in the end of summer transition program, where they had the opportunity to connect with school staff and re-familiarize themselves with their learning environment and school routine.



The Early Years

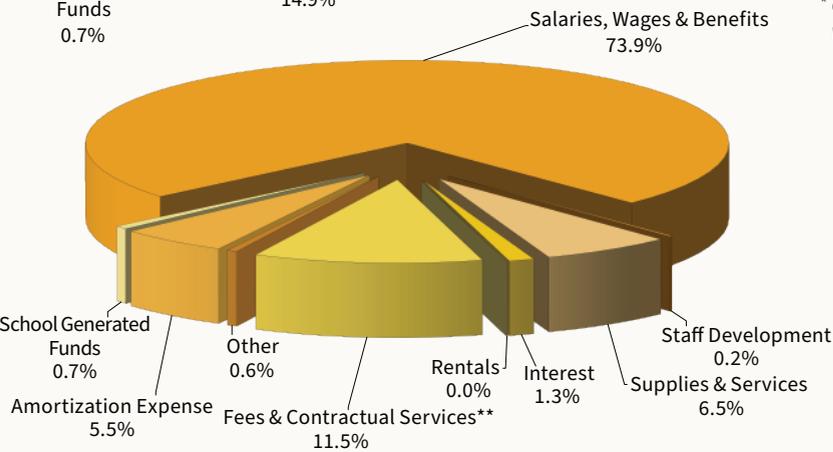
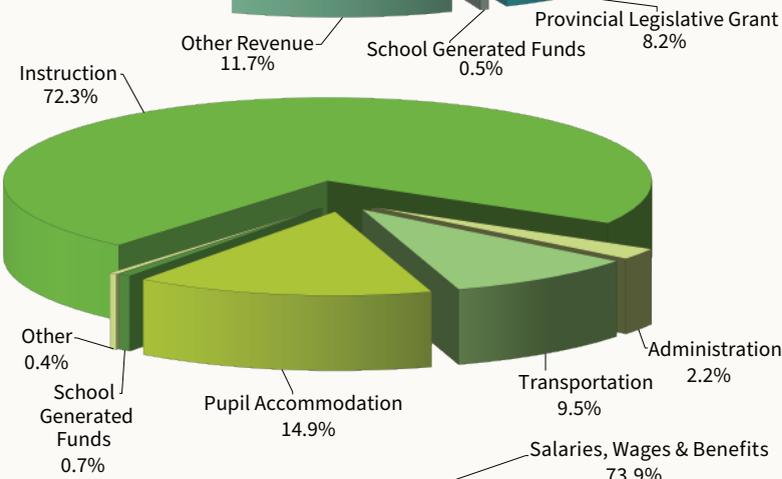
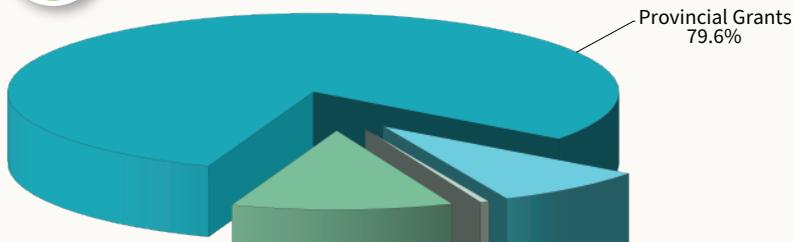
In light of COVID restrictions and provincial shutdowns, many CDSBEO elementary schools found creative ways to host annual Welcome to Kindergarten events. Drive-through events, informative videos with school tours, and virtual events where parents and students could meet staff, were some of the methods used to help our youngest learners prepare for their first school year.

The newly developed Building Our Understanding information series was created to support play-based learning in the virtual setting. This resource supports Kindergarten teachers to incorporate a playful pedagogy of teaching and learning when engaged in mathematics and literacy instruction virtually. Our CDSBEO Care for Kids program was also updated and delivered to teachers through the Religious Education and Family Life Department.

We continue to be proud of our community partnerships with childcare providers, Consolidated Municipal Service Managers, and the Ministry of Education Early Years and Child Care Programs and Service Integration Branch. The new EarlyON Child and Family Centre run by the Corporation of the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, and Thousand Islands Daycare for infant, toddler and preschool children recently completed at St. Joseph Catholic School in Gananoque, is another wonderful example of the work being completed by the Ministry of Education's Capital Priorities Program and the School-based Early Years Capital Program.



Financials



Revenues

Category	Amount	Percentage
Provincial Grants	\$164,427,100	79.6%
Provincial Legislative Grant	16,973,326	8.2%
School Generated Funds	959,795	0.5%
Other Revenue	24,164,603	11.7%
TOTAL	\$206,524,824	100.0%

Expenditures by Category

Category	Amount	Percentage
Instruction	\$142,554,135	72.3%
Administration	4,400,435	2.2%
Transportation	18,824,012	9.5%
Pupil Accommodation	29,307,284	14.9%
School Generated Funds	1,286,198	0.7%
Other	799,817	0.4%
TOTAL	\$197,171,881	100.0%

Annual Surplus*	\$9,352,943
Increase in Externally Appropriated	(1,786,784)
Increase in Internally Appropriated	(4,084,099)
In-year Operating Surplus	\$3,482,060

* One of the contributing factors to the CDSBEO operating surplus was the provincial school closures from April 19 to June 30, 2021.

Expenditures by Object

Category	Amount	Percentage
Salaries, Wages & Benefits	\$145,644,796	73.9%
Staff Development	331,404	0.2%
Supplies & Services	12,880,724	6.5%
Interest	2,496,123	1.3%
Rentals	55,124	0.0%
Fees & Contractual Services**	22,618,305	11.5%
Other	1,011,515	0.6%
Amortization Expense	10,847,692	5.5%
School Generated Funds	1,286,198	0.7%
TOTAL	\$197,171,881	100.0%

** Primarily includes transportation contracts.

Trustees



LEFT TO RIGHT TOP ROW: Todd Lalonde, Chair (City of Cornwall & Glengarry County); Sue Wilson, Vice-Chair (Prescott County & Russell County); Jennifer Cooney (Lanark County); Ronald Eamer (City of Cornwall & Glengarry County)
LEFT TO RIGHT BOTTOM ROW: Paula Hart (City of Brockville, Town of Smiths Falls & Leeds County); Brent Laton (Grenville County & Elizabethtown-Kitley Township); Karen McAllister (Dundas County & Stormont County)

Executive Council



LEFT TO RIGHT TOP ROW: John Cameron, Director of Education; Bonnie Norton, Associate Director of Education; Brent Bovaird, Superintendent of School Effectiveness
LEFT TO RIGHT BOTTOM ROW: Natalie Cameron, Superintendent of School Effectiveness; Heather Gerber, Superintendent of School Effectiveness; Norma McDonald, Superintendent of School Effectiveness.



School Board Profile

The CDSBEO operates 39 schools that provide quality Catholic education to over 13,200 students. The Board employs 896 full-time equivalent elementary and secondary teachers, as well as 622 support staff, including principals, educational assistants, student support workers, early childhood educators, school office support, custodial and maintenance staff, board administration, chaplaincy leaders, computer and library technicians, and other professional staff employees. The CDSBEO works diligently to implement inclusive practices for staff recruitment and hiring, and to prevent systemic bias and barriers through equity training programs.



Student Senate

As Catholic Student Trustee for 2020-2021, Kennah Delage represented the more than 13,200 students across the Board. The school year was one with many obstacles and challenges but the Board theme of "Be Holy - Joy Springs from a Loving Heart" was evident in the many events the Student Senate helped support including CDSBEO Week, various mental health initiatives, Orange Shirt Day, and CDSBEO Indigenous Education Day, all while inspiring faith, empathy, and sense of community.

The Student Trustee and the Associate Student Trustee for the 2021-2022 school year are Julia Vo from Holy Trinity Catholic Secondary School and Ella Scott from St. Mary Catholic High School. In their role, they will lead the Student Senate, which is made up of representatives from all CDSBEO secondary schools.

