



## Virtual Summer Learning Program 2021

CDSBEO has had the opportunity to offer the Summer Learning Program across the Board for the past eleven years. This program, funded by the Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE), has been an integral part of building literacy and numeracy skills, as well as developing students' STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) and coding experience. Due to COVID-19 and school closures, this year's Summer Learning Program was once again hosted virtually for all students from Kindergarten through to Grade 8, running from July 5 to 23. The program focused on gap closing in numeracy and literacy, with daily programming that included two hours of synchronous learning, physical activity, art programming, virtual field trips, Indigenous perspectives, and many other rich learning opportunities for students.

Principal of Curriculum, Tracy O'Brien, shared highlights of the CDSBEO Virtual Summer Learning Program, which focused on delivering targeted instruction in literacy and numeracy. The program was staffed with exceptional educators who worked continuously and creatively to ensure that students felt connected, cared for, and engaged through the virtual learning experience.

"We had a wonderful group of educators that continued to collaborate and share best practices each day through our network on Microsoft Teams," noted Principal O'Brien.

"Registration for the CDSBEO Summer Learning Program was at an all-time high, with 420 students, from Kindergarten to grade 8, participating. Each of our classes had one teacher and one half-time educational assistant assigned to their room each day. To ensure its success, a program of this magnitude also requires the support of many others. Support to the Summer Learning Program was given by the Principal of Curriculum, consultants from Special Education, Curriculum, Religion, and Indigenous Education, as well as our Board Mental Health Board Lead."

"The Curriculum Department supported programming for our educators to draw from by providing exemplars of daily schedules and recommended digital resources and learning activities. Our faith was an important part of the program, and all classes started the day with prayer, and integrated faith into daily lessons," explained Principal O'Brien.

To provide a baseline standard to measure individual learner needs and growth in Numeracy and Literacy, each student completed a pre-diagnostic assessment in week one and a post-diagnostic assessment in week three. A significant increase in student learning was observed, as well as indicators of closing the achievement gap in literacy and numeracy through these assessments. Programming offered rich digital platforms and resources that allowed teachers to access data highlighting student usage, student engagement, areas of strength, and areas of need, as they continued to customize the learning experience for each student.



The MyON Digital Library, which was available to all learners, provided access to over 6,000 individual books. Access to the *Under One Sun* and *Circle of Life* print resources provided students the opportunity to read Indigenous stories and learn about traditional practices that are an important part of Indigenous culture.

"These texts are beautifully written and are accompanied by lovely graphics and images, and so can be used at all grade levels," noted O'Brien. "Different EOCCC resources, such as *Called to Learn, Act, and Reflect*, *It's a Way of Life*, and *Learning in the Great Outdoors*, supported teachers in presenting outdoor learning ideas, mathematics concepts, and literacy through the lens of Indigenous teachings and pedagogy."

"All parents and guardians received a progress report of the areas of growth and areas for improvement for their child," noted O'Brien. "This report was also shared with the child's home school teacher to support the transition back to school."

"It looks like this year's Summer Learning Program offered some very exciting learning opportunities for our students," concluded Chair Lalonde. "We appreciate all of the creativity and innovation that went into offering this program to our students in a virtual environment."

## 2021-2022 School Re-Entry Plan & September Professional Development Days

The 2020-2021 School Re-Entry Plan has been reviewed and updated for the 2021-2022 school year, and the plan has been posted to the CDSBEO website for parents and community members to access. Updates to the plan include the latest guidance from the Ministry of Education, including planning for the 2021-2022 school year, health, safety and operational guidance for schools, and guidance on school case, contact, and outbreak management. Additionally, the first three professional development days on September 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, have been aligned with the updated re-entry plan for September 2021 and Ministry of Education professional development requirements, to ensure the appropriate training and support for all CDSBEO staff for the start of school on Tuesday, September 7, 2021.

Associate Director Bonnie Norton provided an update on the re-entry plan to the Board of Trustees. The plan builds on the re-entry plan from the last school year and has been thoroughly reviewed to ensure all information is updated in preparation for the 2021-2022 school year. The plan is a living document that will be updated throughout the year to align with provincial public health recommendations, the expectations of the Ministry of Education, the Eastern Ontario Health Unit and the Leeds, Grenville, and Lanark District Health Unit.

"The preparation of staff to ensure safety, re-engagement and mental health support for all students is a priority for CDSBEO. The alignment of appropriate training around this plan



through professional development days taking place on September 1, 2, and 3, will ensure a smooth and successful transition back to school for all learners,” noted Associate Director Norton.

“We did publicize our first version on August 25th, based on initial operational guidance from the Ministry of Education, and subsequent updates from the ministry, and we have also received further guidance from local public health units in recent days.”

“Based on the re-entry plan, the majority of students will be attending in person instruction. The board acknowledges that in certain situations, some students/families may need to consider an alternative learning method for health and safety reasons. In order to accommodate exceptional circumstances, the board will provide access to virtual learning at the elementary and secondary level, at least for the first half of the school year. We currently have significantly lower enrolment in our virtual elementary school, which is positive news, and speaks to the importance and focus on getting students back to in-person learning, in support of their mental health, well-being and student success. We know that the best place for students is in the classroom.”

Students attending a secondary school will have the full 300 minutes of instruction in school, as opposed to having some synchronous learning from home like they did in 2020-21. The board will be adopting the quadmestering model, with a slightly different timetable, with period one and two, lunch, followed by a repeat of period one and two in the afternoon. Access to remote learning for students in grades 9 through 12 will be coordinated through the school guidance department, should the student require this mode of learning.

The plan also details many specifics on self-screening requirements, cleaning and disinfecting protocols, PPE requirements, vaccination attestation, cohorting and outbreak management.

“Daily self-screening is still in place. One of the latest changes is that mandatory confirmation of self-screening for all staff and students must be done for the first two weeks of school. All essential visitors will be required to self-screen and confirm self-screening prior to accessing the school. Essential visitors must also wear a medical mask on school property and they will be subject to the vaccination attestation. Non-essential visitors are strongly discouraged. Masking must be maintained while using the gym, change rooms, and indoor phys. ed., as well as outdoors if distancing cannot be maintained between cohorts. Staff will have PPE available to them, and educators in the JK/SK classrooms must wear a medical mask as well as eye protection, as these cohorts are generally not being masked. Staff are required to wear masks outdoors, particularly where distancing is not an option,” added Associate Director Norton.

Assemblies and large gatherings will not be allowed at this time, but this may be revised once case counts have a sustained decline.

Superintendent Cameron also provided an overview of the professional development that staff received to ensure a safe return to school, which includes topics such as health and safety



# CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF EASTERN ONTARIO

## Board Meeting Highlights

From the meeting held August 31, 2021



protocols, mental health and well-being, the new CDSBEO board theme, safe schools, duty to report, and provincial priorities around learning and curriculum.

"I am very impressed and happy with the work we are doing to keep our schools safe, and also with the work that is being done in collaboration with our local public health units. Thank you, Associate Director Norton and Superintendent Cameron for providing us with this overview of our re-entry plan and professional development opportunities for staff," concluded Chair Lalonde.

To view a copy of the CDSBEO School Re-entry Plan 2021, please visit:

<https://www.cdsbeo.on.ca/students-parents/novel-coronavirus/cdsbeo-re-entry-plan/>