



ST. CLAIR CATHOLIC  
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

*Lighting the Way ~ Rejoicing in Our Journey*

## ST. CLAIR CATHOLIC DISTRICT BOARD ADVISORY COUNCIL

### MINUTES

Monday, January 24, 2011, at 7:00 p.m.

**Location: Boardroom, Catholic Education Centre  
420 Creek Street, Wallaceburg**

#### **Board Advisory Council Members Present:**

Michelle Jardin – Christ the King Catholic School  
Cam Bennett & Dana Goodall - Georges P. Vanier Catholic School  
Jen DeBruyne - Good Shepherd Catholic School  
Teresa Luarshin - Gregory A. Hogan Catholic School  
Christine deNijs- Holy Family Catholic School  
M. Gerrits – Holy Rosary Catholic School  
Sandra Kameka - Holy Trinity Catholic School  
Loretta Vince - Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School  
Marian Dunn - Sacred Heart Catholic School, Sarnia  
Renata Palmateer - St. Anne Catholic School, Blenheim  
Carol Turner - St. Elizabeth Catholic School  
Nancy Geniole - St. Joseph Catholic School, Chatham  
Michael Vandeviene - St. Joseph Catholic School, Corunna  
Janet Buston & Julie Buston- St. Joseph Catholic School, Tilbury  
Deb Hoen & Diana Suglio- St. Michael Catholic School, Bright's Grove  
Wendy Vercauteren - St. Michael Catholic School, Turnerville  
Anne Marie Ryan - St. Ursula Catholic School  
Dianne Hooker & Gary Everitt- St. Vincent Catholic School  
Michelle Gerrits - St. Christopher Catholic Secondary School  
Tracey Perks-Whitson - St. Patrick Catholic High School  
Christine Canniff - Ursuline College Chatham Catholic Secondary School

#### **Absent:**

Jane McLaughlin - Principal - Gregory Hogan Catholic School  
Jeanne Boessma & Heather Heyboer - St. Michael Catholic School, Ridgetown  
Karen Blain - Monsignor Uyen Catholic School  
Tracey Jardine - Sacred Heart Catholic School, Port Lambton  
St. Agnes Catholic School  
Diane McCahill – St. Anne Catholic School, Sarnia  
Janice Morrision - St. John Fisher Catholic School  
St. Matthew Catholic School  
Dana Stevens - St. Peter Canisius Catholic School  
Jennifer Chalmers – St. Philip Catholic School

#### **Trustees and Administration Present:**

Carol Bryden  
Michelle Parks  
John Van Heck

**Chair:** Paul Wubben  
**Recorder:** Cathy Calvert

**1. Director of Education opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.**

- The Agenda for the evening was explained.

**2. Opening Prayer**

**- Cindy Waddick,  
Elementary Chaplaincy Leader**

- Cindy Waddick opened the meeting with prayer.
- The Director thanked everyone for attending and introduced Ed Freeburn and Jeff Phaneuf, teachers from U.C.C. as well as Ashley Gialelem, this evening's key note speaker. The topic of their presentation was the Muskoka Woods Experience.

**3. Information/Discussion Items**

**a) Muskoka Woods Experience**

**- Jeff Phaneuf & Ed Freeburn, Teacher and  
Ashley Gialelem, Student**

- Jeff and Ed explained how the Chatham area schools have been involved in this venture for the past 4 years and how excited they are that the Muskoka Woods experience will now be available to the Sarnia schools
- In the Chatham area there are 120 secondary students involved and all of the grade 7 students of the feeder schools for UCC.
- Muskoka Woods is located on Lake Rosseau between Huntsville and Parry Sound.
- The activities which the students participate in are all activities which they cannot do in this area.
- The goal is to develop leadership skills in all the students.
- All activities are done as a school based group.
- The daily activities are scheduled from 6 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. with lights out at 11 p.m.
- Motto: "You don't have to be the best . . . you just have to do your best!"
- Ashley noted that not only are students changed by this experience but teachers and EA's are also changed by the Muskoka experience.
- The investment of time and money in this program is the best thing you can do for the students to prepare them for life.
- The Director noted that a key person in getting this experience available to our student has been Gerri Brown, Principal at UCC. Gerri has been the passionate advocate for this program from the beginning.

**b) School Year Calendar**

**- Deb Crawford, Superintendent of Education**

- The proposed school year calendar for 2011-12 was presented.
- School year will begin after Labour Day on Tuesday, September 6, 2011.
- The PA days were discussed – and it was explained that the June 11<sup>th</sup> PA day was put in place as the requirement for a second report card day for elementary teachers.
- The Ministry's proposed calendar has the Christmas break from December 19<sup>th</sup> and to return to class on January 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- Our board has determined that it would be preferred, by most groups involved i.e. unions, senior administration and parents to have students in school until December 23<sup>rd</sup> and then to return to school on January 9<sup>th</sup>.
- Discussion followed with most parents stating they were very pleased with the board's draft calendar. Questions followed as to why the break could not start on the Wednesday before Christmas and end on the Wednesday after January 1<sup>st</sup>. It was explained that in the case of the secondary schools students would be reluctant to

attend school for the 3 days prior to the break and would not attend for the 2 days when the break ended. Also, that would disrupt the flow of teaching/learning as we are used to teaching/learning 5 days in a row.

- Deb Crawford explained that once this calendar is approved by the Board of Trustees then it will be presented to the Ministry as a modified school year calendar for their approval.
- It is the practice of the Ministry that they approve a modified calendar.
- It is understood that most of the school boards in the province are planning to submit this type of modified calendar

**c) Teen Suicide**

**- Paul Wubben, Director of Education**

- The Director showed a video on mental health and suicide – “*Mental Health First Aid - Youth Course*”
- Mental health first aid is to recognize the signs and symptoms of mental illness; just as physical first aid is to recognize the signs and symptoms of physical illness or injury.
- More information can be found at [www.TheJackProject.org](http://www.TheJackProject.org) or at [www.cmha.ca](http://www.cmha.ca)
- Suicide prevention curriculum will be implemented in our board next year in grade 7 and the following year in grade 8
- The curriculum which will be used will be part of the Family Life course and has been developed by the Catholic Curriculum Cooperative [www.catholiccurriculumcorp.org](http://www.catholiccurriculumcorp.org) grade 7 Family Life unit on suicide, and will be taught in a Catholic context.
- On April 14, 2011 there will a panel discussion with suicide experts, clergymen, medical officers of health coming in to discuss suicide.
- The Director asked for the support of the Catholic Community Councils on this issue
- Parents will be notified when this program is being introduced in their schools.
- Discussion needs to occur at the school level as to how the school community can support families; and families need to learn that they should be informing the school of issues that are affecting their students
- Some of the discussion items were:
  - Why begin this program in grade 7? The Director of Education noted that at this point there has only been curriculum written for Grade 7, 8 and 9.
  - Will our faith be part of this program? The Director responded by saying yes, he has had discussions with the priests of the diocese and they are in agreement with this program.
- There was consensus that this is a wonderful program and parents were enthusiastic about its inception.
- Parents are the primary educators and they need to talk to their kids. This curriculum will open an avenue of discussion of this issue for parents
- School Councils need to talk about this issue as well.

**d) Food and Beverage Policy**

**- Paul Wubben, Director of Education**

- The board is setting up community information sessions for the Sarnia, Wallaceburg, and Chatham areas.

**4. The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m. with prayer.**