



ST. CLAIR CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
Lighting the Way ~ Rejoicing in Our Journey

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Catholic Education Centre
420 Creek Street
Wallaceburg, ON N8A 4C4
Telephone: 519-627-6762
Facsimile: 519-627-8230
Website: www.st-clair.net

Chair of the Board
John Van Heck
519-627-2908

*For further information regarding
this release, please contact:*

Director of Education
Dan Parr
519-627-6762, ext. 10241
E-mail: media@st-clair.net

**Superintendent of
Education**
Laura Callaghan
519-627-6762, ext. 10282

St. Michael Catholic School
Julie Knight, Principal
519-674-3475

**Supervisor –
Communications and
Community Relations**
Todd Lozon
519-627-6762 Ext. 10243
E-mail:
todd.lozon@st-clair.net

CLASS PROJECT AT ST. MICHAEL CATHOLIC SCHOOL IN RIDGETOWN RECEIVES WORLD-WIDE RECOGNITION

A student learning experience developed by a teacher at St. Michael Catholic School in Ridgetown has been recognized by the global partnership *New Pedagogies for Deep Learning* (NPDL), a world-wide collaborative initiative led by Dr. Michael Fullan, the former Dean of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

In 2015-2016, six schools of the St. Clair Catholic District School Board entered into the collaborative inquiry. Grade 7/8 teacher Andrea DeBruyn at St. Michael supported her students to delve deeply into a learning task entitled *What Can We Do to Help Refugees?* It enabled students to research, write, produce and perform a play intended to educate other students, families and the community about the refugee crisis. The project also included fundraising, through ticket sales, which helped support a refugee family locating in Ridgetown.

“Through drama, the students communicated the complexity of the refugee crisis, as they examined it through the perspective of a family and explored the challenges faced by refugees as they seek to improve their lives,” says Julie Knight, Principal of St. Michael Catholic School.

Recently, Ms. DeBruyn was informed in a letter from Dr. Fullan and his team that her exemplar had been selected as providing a rich description of deep learning and that it had “...contributed to our collective learning and understanding of deep learning and how it can support students world-wide.” It will be shared on the international Deep Learning Hub, where teachers world-wide can collaborate and share strategies.

“We are very proud of the work of Ms. DeBruyn and the tremendous journey of learning and discovery that led her students and their families to a new understanding of this important issue,” says Dan Parr, Director of Education. “This is precisely the kind of innovative learning that we strive for as part of our strategic goals for students.”

Although this project has received tremendous recognition, it is representative of the kind of learning that takes place in St. Clair Catholic schools every day. Every school has a team of educators and principals involved in professional learning to explore the role of teachers as “activators of learning,” who design learning experiences which build on learner strengths, needs and interests, using real-life, authentic connections.

“If we understand and implement the foundations and conditions for innovative learning, then all students will develop 21st century competencies, which will improve their achievement in literacy and numeracy,” says Laura Callaghan, Superintendent of Education.