



**ST. CLAIR CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**

Lighting the Way ~ Rejoicing in Our Journey

*DIRECTOR'S
ANNUAL
REPORT
2014*

A Message from the Director of Education



Dan Parr
Director of Education

I am pleased to share my annual report of the St. Clair Catholic District School Board. This is the first Annual Report issued since the development of *Lighting the Way, Rejoicing In Our Journey – Our Plan for Excellence in Our Catholic Schools, 2014 and Beyond*.

The Mission of the St. Clair Catholic District School Board is:

Walking together in Christ's light with parish and family, we are called to build a safe and inclusive Catholic learning community and to serve as partners in the formation of life-long learners by:

- ***Living our faith;***
- ***Promoting educational achievement and innovation;***
- ***Fostering stewardship, leadership and social justice.***

Our three strategic priorities of living our faith, promoting educational achievement and innovation and fostering stewardship, leadership, and social justice are taken directly from our Board's mission and represent the most important long-term goals, which we are pursuing. You will notice that this year's annual report devotes a section to each of these three strategic pillars, where you will find our progress to date for each of the goals.

We are placing special emphasis in this report on the priority *Living our Faith* (pages 2 to 4). We know the importance of this primary foundation to all supporters of Catholic education. Our faith is at the root of everything we do. We know that for more than 160 years, Catholic parents in Ontario have had the desire to have their children educated in schools that teach them about God, about Christ's love for us, and about His command to us to love and serve others. We celebrate these truths in our Church and we know that they are important lessons that are as vital to Catholic parents and students today as they were more than a century-and-a-half ago. In a world that seems to question and sometimes abandon the need for values, morals and standards of behaviour, our Catholic schools continue to guide our children on a path of Christian virtues and behaviour through Catholic education.

The schools of the St. Clair Catholic District School Board work with our parishes, our families and the Diocese of London, to educate our young people and invite them to be life-long learners and life-long followers of Jesus.

We are honoured to be entrusted with this responsibility.



**ST. CLAIR CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**

Lighting the Way -- Rejoicing in Our Journey

Living Our Faith



Ann Sutton
Superintendent of Education

The first pillar of the St. Clair Catholic District School Board Strategic Plan is *Living Our Faith*. In order to reach the long-term objectives established in this domain, five specific short-term targets have been established for the current school year.

Our community's commitment to Catholic Education and its confidence in the St. Clair Catholic District School Board is reflected in the decision of our Catholic families to entrust the education of their children to us. Thus, the retention of Catholic students in the St. Clair Catholic District School Board from Kindergarten to Grade 12 is an important indicator of our success in our mission of offering the best Catholic Education to all of our students.

Therefore, the first short-term goal under *Living Our Faith* concerns student retention.

The Catholic Faith Advisory Committee has been tasked with the review of current strategies and with the development of recommendations for the future. In pursuit of this goal, all schools are being invited to give input and the results will be analyzed. By early spring, a report with recommendations will be presented to senior administration.

As a second goal, a commitment has been made to support the implementation of the newly revised Religion program and to continue to support the implementation of the refreshed Family Life program resources. Funds have been set aside to purchase the Grade 1 and 4 religion materials that are to be published this year, under the guidance of the Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops (OCCB), through the Institute for Catholic Education (ICE). Additional Family Life resources will be purchased for schools. Training will be provided to assist teachers in implementing the revised religion curriculum and utilizing these wonderful new resources.

The third goal is to create rich new opportunities for staff to deepen their knowledge of and commitment to our Catholic faith traditions. A new Adult Faith Formation program has been developed and offered locally, in both Sarnia-Lambton and Chatham-Kent. By supporting staff in their own faith growth, their ability to lead our students to a deep and loving commitment to our Catholic faith will be enhanced.

The fourth and fifth goals are to ensure that all schools provide opportunities for students to engage in rich experiences of the liturgical calendar and in actions to develop their commitment to social justice. The experience of the students in our schools is reported on the next two pages.

Our Catholic schools are alive with our faith. It is our commitment to you that we will continue to support and enhance faith experiences for our students, as we *Light the Way* and *Rejoice in our Journey!*

Living Our Faith in Our Schools

For more than a century, the central mission of Catholic education has been to pass on to our young people a profound vision of life shaped by Gospel values. Our schools are inclusive learning environments, which bring excellent education programs and extra-curricular activities together with opportunities for spiritual growth and Christian service.

Living Our Faith is the first pillar in our Board mission statement. The information in the following pages gives just a few examples of how our students live out their faith every day!

Sacred Heart Catholic School, Sarnia — Everyday Heroes

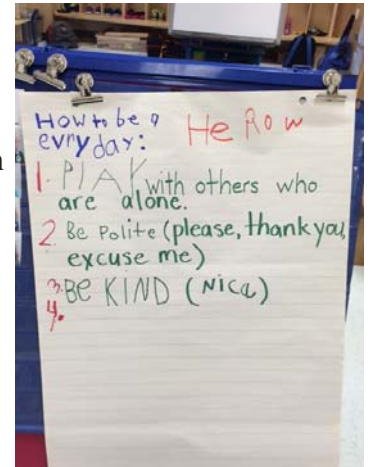
What would Sacred Heart school be like if everyone was an everyday hero? Through our actions and words, we will create a community of learners who care about the feelings of others and have a desire to do the right thing. The theme of *Everyday Hero* evolved from staff observations of how students treat each other on the yard and in the classroom; however, we want to build upon and go further than bullying prevention. We want to root our work in our faith and in Jesus' teachings.

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind. (Luke 10:27)

Love your neighbour as yourself. (Luke 10:28)

Act justly, love tenderly, and walk humbly with your God. (Micah 6:8)

Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. (Luke 10:25 - 37)



St. Joseph Catholic School, Corunna — Virtues Education

Our school community is committed to virtues education. We have a virtue bulletin board which is created by the students in the virtue club at the school. This board is changed monthly and it signifies the beliefs of all the students through classroom contributions. We also give monthly virtue awards to students from each class in the school, who demonstrate their understanding of the virtue through their treatment of others in the school community. The winners of this award is voted on by their classmates.

As a school community we support others both in our local community and around the world through Operation Christmas Tree, Operation Christmas Child and our commitment to sponsoring a child in a third world country. Operation Christmas Child gives our community a chance to help make Christmas special for other children around the world by donating boxes of Christmas gifts which are filled by the families in our community. Operation Christmas Tree is a local fund raiser in which students and their families donate hampers of canned goods and toys to needful families in the Corunna area. Our financial donation through Chalice to support a child and to purchase farm animals for a community in a third world country is collected through the White Elephant sale held at the school every year.

Holy Family Catholic School, Wallaceburg — Teaching and Modelling Social Justice



Our theme this past year has been *Reaching Out to Others*. Our students have written letters to soldiers and veterans; we have held school-wide collections for *Operation Christmas Child — Samaritan's Purse*; and we have held canned food drives and gift collections for families in our community, who are in need.

We have worked with our students to connect big ideas in content areas to a call for action — ways in which our students can connect, participate and make a difference in their school and in their community.

St. Anne Catholic School, Sarnia — The Living Rosary

For three years now, the St. Anne Catholic community in Sarnia has gathered every October to pray the living rosary.

In preparation for the living rosary, there is a more concentrated focus on preparing our students, by deepening their understanding of the rosary as a powerful prayer and part of our church history. While visiting classrooms that month, our parish priest talks to the children about the importance of the rosary.



Prayer is about developing our relationship with God and loving Him more, so it makes sense to get to know Him through the events of the life of Christ, on which we meditate during the rosary. We invite all those who participate, to bring in their rosaries and, through this experience, teach them how to use the rosary in prayer to bring them closer to God, rather than allowing it to become a keepsake or decoration.

By praying the rosary as a school, we honour God, we obey our heavenly Mother, we conform to the wishes of many popes and saints, we strengthen our faith as a school community, grow in spirit and, hopefully, benefit society at large.

Drive Away Hunger Campaign — Teaching and Modeling Social Justice

Students, staff and parents from several St. Clair Catholic elementary schools recently supported Farm Credit Canada's (FCC) *Drive Away Hunger* campaign. The annual food drive, which works in partnership with schools and community groups all across Ontario to gather non-perishable food items, supports food banks in the communities in which it was collected.



Participating schools this year include Good Shepherd, Thamesville; Christ The King, Wallaceburg; Our Lady of Fatima, Georges P. Vanier and St. Ursula, Chatham; and St. Philip, Petrolia. In total, the six schools collected more than 4,600 pounds of food.

FCC Drive Away Hunger is made possible through the support of FCC employees, provincial and local food banks and community partners, like our Catholic schools. School children and residents proudly contribute one food bag at a time and, working together with large organizations and agri-business, they help to make a difference in many lives.

St. Patrick's High School — New Approaches to Teaching Religion and Family Life

We have begun to have regular visits to our classrooms by the school's Chaplaincy Leader. This allows for more prayer to be incorporated into our pedagogy. It is also an excellent opportunity for the preaching of the original Good News and proclamation of God.

We have also made use of new resources this year, including Pope John Paul II's *Theology of the Body* and Mark Hart's *Teen Timeline*, which share how scripture can be used within our daily lives.

These resources have increased the opportunities for our teaching staff to apply the lessons of scripture to everyday life.

Irish Miracle and *Cyclone Aid* continue to be among our key social justice projects. Both events benefit many members of our community through the St. Vincent dePaul Christmas hampers and the Inn of the Good Shepherd food bank.



Promoting Educational Achievement and Innovation

K-12 Catholic Learning Services works collaboratively with educators and administrators to achieve our strategic priority of educational achievement and innovation. Our work is rooted in the St. Clair Catholic District School Board's Improvement Plan for Student Achievement 2014 -15 which identifies short-term targets and teaching and learning actions that are implemented and monitored at the board, school and classroom level.

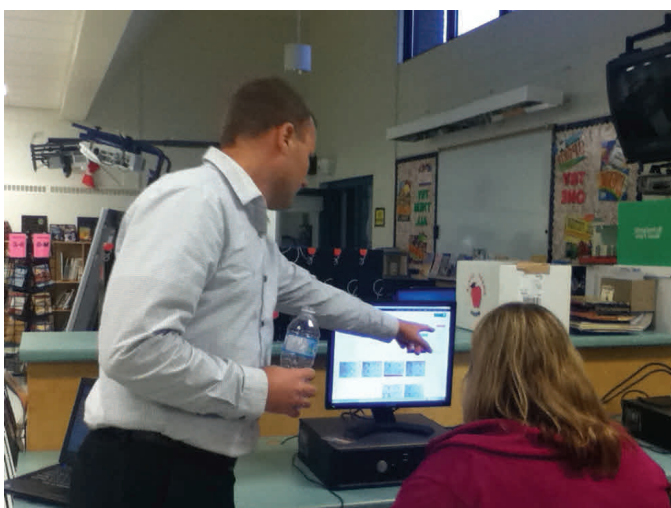


Deb Crawford
Superintendent of Education

Through the implementation of a framework for effective instruction and learning in literacy and mathematics, our students will achieve measurable improvement in academic achievement.

The [*Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement*](#), aligned with individual School Improvement Plans, provides targeted, research-based, best practice strategies for improved student achievement and professional

learning. Educators participate in collaborative, job-embedded professional learning that is responsive to student learning needs. Educational innovation is realized through the development of 21st Century learning skills as identified in our *Framework for 21st Century Learning*.



The “I.T.’s About Learning” online professional learning modules, with ongoing support provided by 21st Century Learning coaches and district literacy and numeracy teachers, builds knowledge and understanding of 21st Century teaching and learning across the system.

The expansion of blended learning and the documentation of student learning provide opportunities for responsive and innovative teaching and learning in our classrooms.

All of our programs are designed to help our students ultimately achieve the goals set out in the [*Ontario Catholic Graduate Expectations*](#), which is to become self-directed, responsible life-long learners and guided in their faith to be responsible, contributing members of our communities.

Our teachers and educational support staff are gifted and dedicated professionals, who are committed to the success of every student, every day. It is fundamental to our Board's mission and to the mission of Catholic education.

Early Learning FDK

As of September 2014, Full Day Early Learning Kindergarten is available in every publicly funded school in Ontario. At St. Clair Catholic our students and families are benefiting from this program in 56 classrooms across our district.



Building on the concept of play-based learning, full day kindergarten teachers and early childhood educators observe, document and plan instruction, which is based on the needs of the students. For children, this happens in play that evolves from the child's natural curiosity – active play that allows children to explore with their bodies, minds, and senses, stimulating them to ask questions, test theories, solve problems, engage in creative thinking to make meaning of the world around them and develop the capacity for higher-order thinking.

“Play expands intelligence, stimulates the imagination, encourages creative problem solving, and helps develop confidence, self-esteem, and a positive attitude toward learning.” — Dr. Fraser Mustard

Using the Full-Day Early Learning Kindergarten expectations, educators offer a child-centered, developmentally appropriate program with the foundations of belonging, well-being, expression, and engagement.

kinderSTART

kinderSTART is a special one day event that will be held in February at each of our schools, for parents to register their children for full day kindergarten. This exciting program was offered at seven school sites last year with great success! Through *kinderSTART*, children, their parents, and younger siblings (18 months to three-year-old siblings are also encouraged to attend) have an early opportunity to visit the school and meet staff in preparation for Full Day Kindergarten. Community agencies partner with us to offer helpful information about getting ready for school, development and healthy living for children.

Documentation

“Across Ontario, educators are exploring documentation as a way to learn more about how students think and learn. In school teams, learning communities and ministry programs, they are experimenting with innovative ways to observe student learning, study student work and gain greater insight into effective instruction.”

— Pedagogical Documentation Monograph, 2012

The St. Clair Catholic District School Board began our Documentation Network with a group of primary teachers in six schools in 2012. The project has expanded to include many staff members across all 28 schools in September 2014.

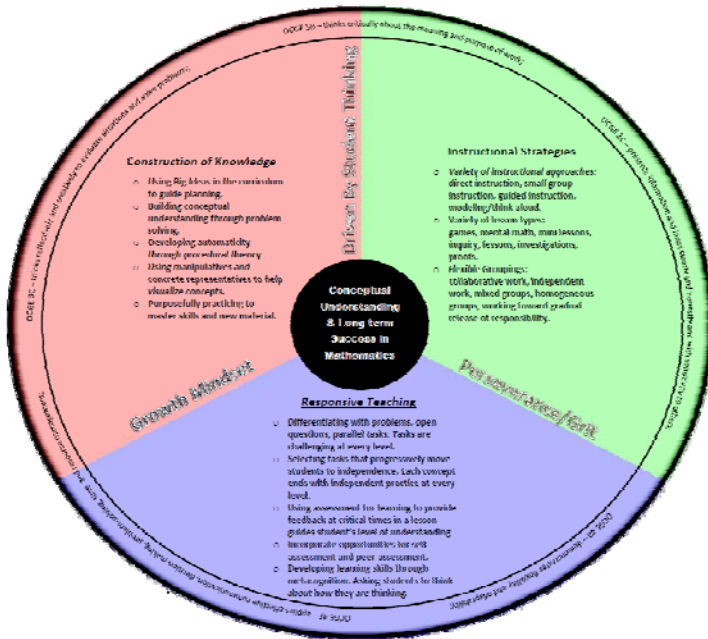
In this professional network, teachers, principals and ECEs capture and analyze student thinking individually, in small groups and as a network, in order to shape next steps for learning. A range of technology from i-pods to tablets is used to record student thinking through video, audio and photos. Variations of the same documentation can be used for different audiences and purposes. While a video may capture student learning for analysis to determine next steps with educators, a screen capture photo can be shared with the students to reflect on their learning and with parents as a communication tool.



Math Framework

“Recognizing that students need a solid conceptual foundation in mathematics in order to further develop and apply their knowledge effectively, teachers endeavour to create a classroom environment that engages students’ interests and helps them arrive at the understanding of mathematics that is critical to further learning.” — Ontario Mathematics Curriculum Grades 1-8, p.5

During the month of September, teachers were actively involved in creating a framework to help organize the thinking around the components of effective instruction in mathematics. Teachers used research-based evidence to organize effective instruction in mathematics into three main categories — construction of knowledge, instructional strategies and responsive teaching. The three components work together to bring students toward a deep conceptual understanding and long-term success in mathematics.



As part of the framework, teachers encourage students to work through challenging math problems to further develop the important skill of perseverance. Working through mistakes in order to learn from them is also interwoven throughout math instruction in order to encourage risk-taking and growth mindset.

The framework was presented to all Grade 1 to 8 teachers of the St. Clair Catholic District School Board at the October Professional Development Day. It will continue to be an important component in our work in the area of mathematics.

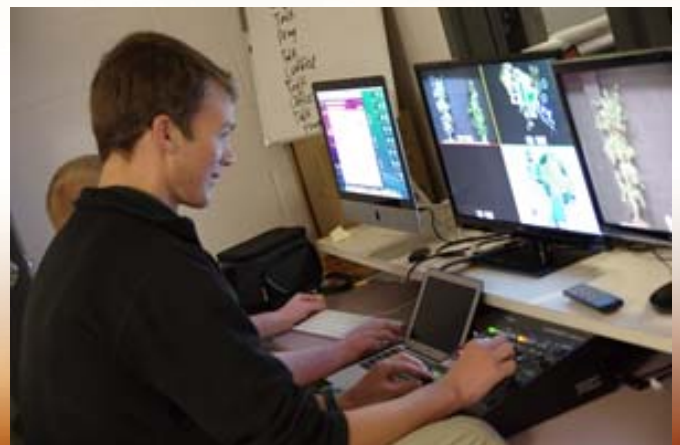
21st Century Learning Framework

In September 2014 a *21st Century Learning Steering Committee* was created to address the

next steps in our ongoing work in the effective integration of 21st Century skills and the use of technology in the classrooms. This committee, consisting of school and central office representatives, developed a set of goals and desired outcomes that aligned with those of our Strategic Plan. The 21st Century Learning Framework outlines the key components of our work in 2014-2015 and beyond — that we will:

- connect with stakeholders and community partners;
- foster collaborative and engaged learning for students, staff and parents;
- provide and support 21st Century learning environments in our schools.

These goals will direct our work for several years to come, ensuring that our students have the skills and tools needed for their active participation in a global digital world.



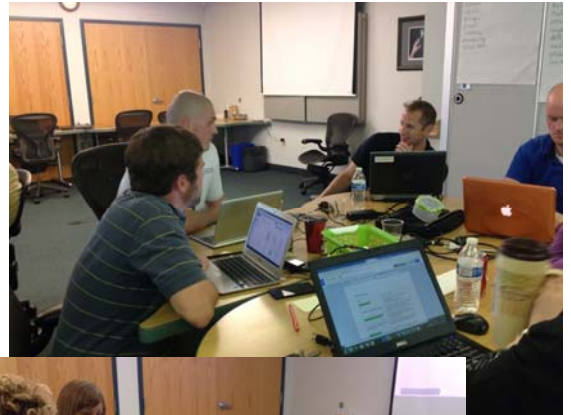
Online Learning Modules

To address a key goal in our 21st Century Learning Framework — fostering collaborative and engaged learning for our staff, we have supported a team of 40 teacher-writers, who created a series of online learning modules for teachers.

Each of the 14 modules, created in the *Desire2Learn* platform, addresses a key aspect of 21st Century learning identified by the team of writers. Teachers will access these modules, which include five mandatory and nine optional topics, at their own convenience and pace. Ongoing collaboration and sharing, which is part of each module, will take place in our *Google Apps for Education* online spaces.

Module topics include:

- Creating the 21st Century classroom;
- Digital Citizenship;
- BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) in the classroom;
- Engaging students in their faith;
- Learning for All — Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap;
- Why Use Student Portfolios?;
- Digital Numeracy;
- Making Student Thinking Visible—Documentation;
- Welcome to the Gamification Experience;
- Coaching Early Reading;
- 21st Century Learning in the FSL Classroom;
- Professional Learning Networks for Teachers;
- Assessment and 21st Century Learning; and
- Creating the Conditions for Inquiry.



Pathways — Individual Pathways Plan

To reach the Strategic Plan goal of innovative career-based opportunities, our students have access to numerous Dual Credits in our local colleges, a choice of 10 Specialist High Skills Major courses in our secondary schools and a wide variety of cooperative education opportunities.

Our November PD day focused on the non-university career pathways through teacher visits to our college programs and tours of local research projects, businesses and industries with a focus on the multiple careers available to students in these fields.

Partnerships are being expanded with local Workforce Development Boards, Chambers of Commerce, Junior Achievement and Business Development boards to ensure our secondary schools become hubs in the community for innovation and career opportunities.

Each year, every Grade 7-12 student will access *MyBlueprint.ca*, an online education planner, in order to explore, develop, or add to their Individual Pathways Plan.

They will set goals, explore career possibilities and identify the skills and knowledge needed to achieve their pathway to a successful career.



Autism Transitional Classroom

The *Autism Transitional Classroom* provides a specialized, short-term placement for students with a dual diagnosis — autism and a developmental disability. Students entering this program have unmet treatment needs, which are provided for in a clinically supervised program. Students in the *Autism Transitional Classroom* have uniquely designed treatment and educational programs based on Applied Behaviour Analysis, specifically Intensive Behaviour Intervention. While our goal is always to promote independence in our students, most of the students in the program require direct support for the majority of their day, especially during teaching table activities, personal care, life skills and data collection.



St. Clair Catholic staff presented at the Geneva Centre International Conference in Toronto and received praise from Dr. Temple Grandin, (centre) who is a professor at Colorado State University, a best-selling author and an autistic activist.

Teacher Learning and Leadership Project — iPads and iSkills

Students in the *Autism Transitional Classroom* are able to engage in active learning without direct teaching from adults. They are able to complete academic tasks independently, without adult supervision and stay engaged in these tasks for longer periods of time.

As part of the project, resource documents were created to assist teachers with writing Individual Education Plan goals and identifying developmentally appropriate apps for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder and other developmental disabilities. These documents have been shared with educators across the province through the *Teacher Learning and Leadership Program* and meetings with representatives from the Ministry of Education.

Positive Alternative to School Suspension — PASS Program

The PASS Program provides an alternative to home suspension for youth in Grades 7 to 10. The program provides academic support to students through one-on-one tutoring, supervised homework support and completion and access to resources, such as the internet.

The program also works with youth in the development of positive social and cognitive skills, such as communication, decision-making and conflict resolution. The student attends the program during the suspension and is supported in the re-entry to regular class.

Professional Learning Communities — Secondary

A number of secondary teachers are participating in professional learning through inquiries that are based on student learning needs. Teachers collaboratively examine students' work and determine next steps in the learning plan that address the needs of students. Teachers identify strategies that they will use in their classrooms and share the successes or challenges that result. These cycles of inquiry are aligned with school improvement plan goals of measurable improvement in literacy and numeracy.

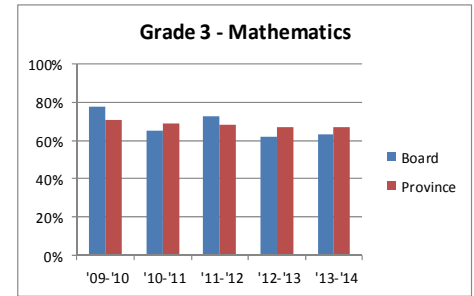
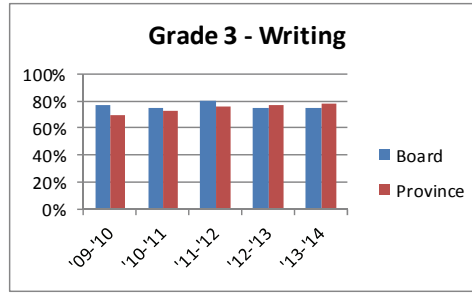
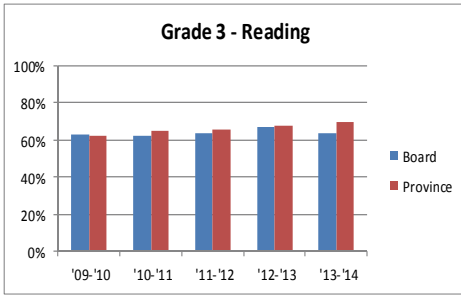
Preparation for EQAO Assessments — Secondary

Students in Grade 9 mathematics are provided with multiple opportunities to practice EQAO-type questions throughout the semester and are provided with feedback, based on their responses. Grade 9 students also participate in a practice Literacy test early in the fall of each year, in order to identify those who may have gaps in their literacy skills. Practice tests are also given to Grade 10 students in late winter.

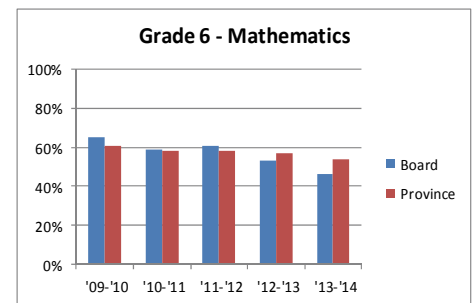
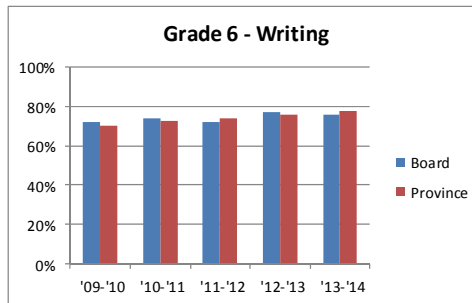
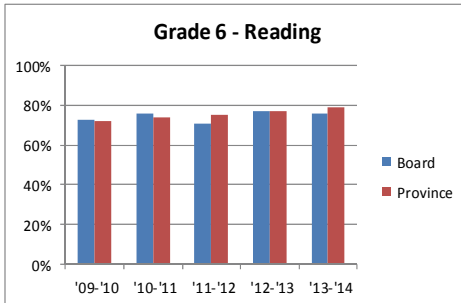
Both groups are also provided after-school literacy tutoring sessions, which target the specific skill gaps identified during the practice tests. Letters to parents for students who are unsuccessful on these practice tests are sent home so that they can ensure their children attend the sessions as needed.

EQAO Results: Monitoring Our Progress in Student Achievement

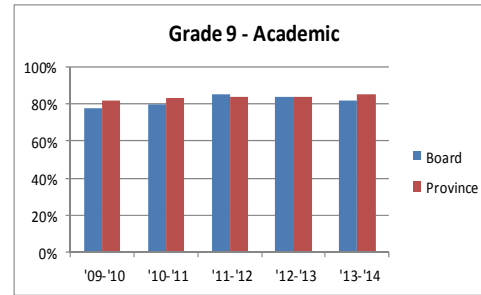
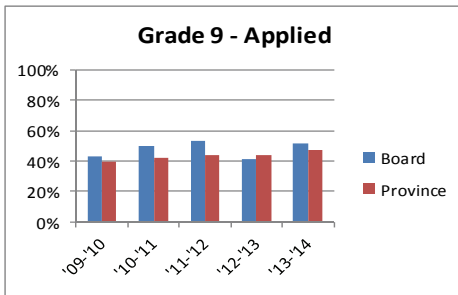
Grade 3



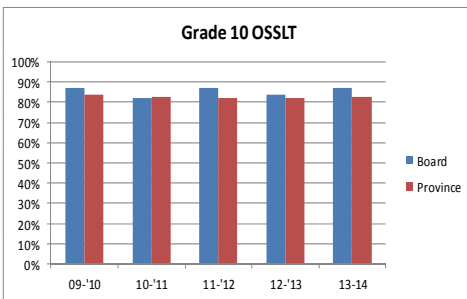
Grade 6



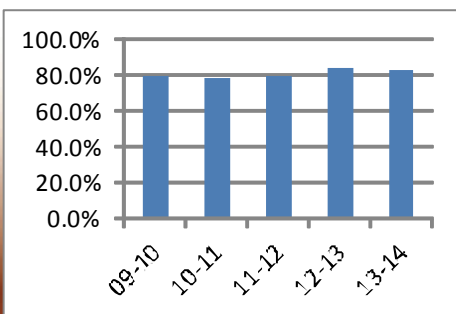
Grade 9 Mathematics



Grade 10 Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test



Credit Accumulation — 16 Credits By Age 16



High levels of achievement for all students is one of the three Strategic Priorities of our Board's Multi-Year Strategic Plan. We are pursuing this priority vigorously through our *Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement*. To view the plan, [click here](#).

Fostering Stewardship, Leadership and Social Justice

The St. Clair Catholic District School Board has given priority to stewardship and responsible resource management in its continued commitment to improve student achievement and nurture our Catholic community through inspired leadership, organizational values, and the responsible and effective use of human, financial, physical and natural resources.



Jim McKenzie
Associate Director —
Corporate Services

Fiscal responsibility, inclusion and communication will provide the framework for all of our resource management decisions. Significant steps will be taken to demonstrate leadership in environmental responsibility, energy use and ecological practice within the Board.

Senior administration has identified a series of short-term targets that will assist the Board in achieving its objectives. These include:

- the development of a five-year capital plan to guide the Board with future capital expenditure decisions;
- the development of a three-year financial plan to guide resource management decisions;
- the development of an implementation plan, including training, for the Broader Public Sector procurement initiative;
- the hiring of an Energy and Environmental Coordinator, in partnership with our coterminous board, to monitor and drive improvement in our ecological practices; and
- the investigation of partnerships with external organizations for our work on community initiatives.

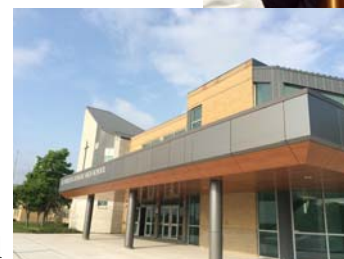
Senior administration, through its Executive Council meetings, will receive regular updates on the progress being made towards the achievement of these short-term targets.

A summative report on our progress in 2014-15 will be presented to the Board of Trustees, all administrators, Catholic Education Centre staff and the Board Advisory Council at various meetings occurring during the months of April and May 2015.

The New St. Patrick's Catholic High School

In October 2014, celebrations were held marking the Opening and Blessing of the new St. Patrick's Catholic High School. It was a tremendous community event, with Mass celebrated by Bishop Ronald Fabbro and attended by many members of the Catholic community, civic dignitaries and educational and community partners. In the evening, a community Open House welcomed parents and visitors, and included tours of the new facility.

The events were the final, finishing touches on a vision which began with a 2009 decision by the Board of Trustees that Sarnia's two Catholic high schools would be consolidated into one campus at the site on The Rapids Parkway. Construction began in the spring of 2013 and included a 60,000 square foot addition and extensive renovations throughout the building. The new St. Patrick's Catholic High School is a state-of-the-art campus, which combines nearly 80 years of tradition with 21st Century programs and pathways to success that will serve our students for many, many years to come!



Gregory A. Hogan Catholic School — Addition and Upgrades

Meanwhile, a \$2.9 million project got underway at Gregory A. Hogan Catholic School, to accommodate the growing needs of our French Immersion program in Sarnia-Lambton. The project included the construction of six new classrooms, a retrofit of four Full Day Kindergarten classrooms and a new library. In addition there were upgrades throughout the school and to the exterior of the building, including an expansion of the parking lot to accommodate designated bus lanes, which has alleviated traffic congestion at the beginning and end of the day. A special Opening and Blessing ceremony was held at the school in October.



In total, nearly \$20 million was invested in improvements to St. Clair Catholic schools across the district. See the chart below for details.

In the photo at left are (L-R) Trustee Linda Ward; Father Festus Komolafe; Dan Parr, Director of Education; Elena Pagotto, Principal and Liz Bujaki, Vice Principal; along with students, who participated in the Opening and Blessing ceremony at Gregory A. Hogan Catholic School.

School	Project Description	Budget	Actual Cost
St. Patrick's	Consolidation Project - Major Addition / Renovations	\$ 15,349,115	\$ 15,482,939
Gregory Hogan	Classroom (6) Addition / FDK Classroom (4) Retrofit	2,921,592	2,880,543
St. Joseph, Tilbury	Child Care Retrofit	749,163	712,702
Gregory Hogan	Parking Lot Improvements	363,575	343,783
Various Schools	FDK Classroom / Child Care Retrofits	443,860	446,507
Various Schools	Renewal Projects	96,519	94,904
		\$ 19,923,824	\$ 19,961,378

Percentage of Primary Class Sizes at 20 Students or Fewer — 90.6%

Enrolment as at October 31, 2014

	Head Count	Full-Time Equivalent
Elementary	6,254	6,254.00
Secondary	2,602	2,569.25
TOTAL	8,856	8,823.25



ST. CLAIR CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Lighting the Way — Beginning in Our Journey

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