



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

MEDIA RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, June 13, 2018

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

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

Chair of the Board
John Van Heck
519-627-5746

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

**Holy Rosary Catholic
School**
Margaret DeGurse
Principal
519-845-3471

Ontario EcoSchools
Melissa Benner
Communications Director
647-740-0803
mbenner@ontarioecoschools.org

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

HOLY ROSARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL IN WYOMING RECEIVES CERTIFICATION FROM ONTARIO ECOSCHOOLS

Holy Rosary Catholic School in Wyoming has certified with the Ontario EcoSchools program, joining a growing movement of over 1,900 certified schools across the province.

Ontario EcoSchools works with 58 school boards to nurture student leadership and foster environmental learning and action in schools. Certification is based on a provincial standard of excellence established over 13 years of benchmarking. Currently, the program certifies 39 per cent of all schools in Ontario and reaches one million students.

“St. Clair Catholic is proud to be part of this growing network and we celebrate the excellent work of Holy Rosary students and staff,” says Deb Crawford, Director of Education.

The school has embarked on several major initiatives as part of the certification process. Reducing waste has been a key focus for students. Through composting, recycling, reusing and repairing the school has cut its garbage output from seven bags a day to just one. Parents also report that their children are requesting changes in the home – including the purchase of reusable containers; rather than disposable sandwich bags.

Students from Kindergarten to Grade 8 are participating in the composting program, in which both traditional and vermicomposting methods are used. Students know and understand how composting works and its importance in the ecosystem. Even the youngest students have been overheard to say, “If you put plastic in the compost, you won’t have rich dirt!” Grade 1 and 2 students are the supervisors of the vermicomposter and have taught older students how to feed and care for the worms.

The EcoSchools program has also encouraged the school’s environmental outreach to the community. Holy Rosary is also a ‘We School’ and students have been collecting old used batteries as part of the *Teck Zinc Saves Lives Battery Recycling Campaign*. As a result, local residents and business owners have started to drop batteries off at the school, so that they won’t go to the local landfill. In just two months, the school has collected nearly 60 pounds of used batteries.

“Through this program, our students have learned that environmental stewardship is something that we need to do every day, not just during a special event once in a while,” says Margaret DeGurse, Principal of Holy Rosary Catholic School. “It’s a shift in attitude and we’ve already seen how these young ambassadors are influencing, not just what we do at school, but also at home and in our community.”

Holy Rosary became involved in the EcoSchools program through the St. Clair Catholic District School Board’s Chatham-Kent Lambton Administrative School Services (CLASS). With the support of CLASS, resources from the EcoSchools “Kickstart Program” and funding from the Council of Directors of Education (CODE) Holy Rosary’s drive towards certification was launched. The school officially received the EcoSchools certification in June.

Quotes

“Ontario EcoSchools certification provides a framework for environmental learning and action, and school communities bring it to life. The program allows schools and school boards to benchmark their progress and celebrate achievements year-over-year. We are so proud of the 1,900 schools and 58 school boards that participated in the program in 2017-18. This is a record number over our 13-year history.”

– Lindsay Bunce, Executive Director, Ontario EcoSchools

Quick Facts

- St. Clair Catholic is excited for the students at Holy Rosary to share what they have learned across the system, helping more students to grow in environmental leadership and more St. Clair Catholic schools to attain the EcoSchools certification.
- Ontario EcoSchools is an award-winning environmental education and certification program for grades K-12 that nurtures environmental leaders, reduces the ecological impact of schools, and builds environmentally responsible school communities. All publicly funded schools can access the EcoSchools program free of charge.
- Visit www.ontarioecoschools.org/media/ for more information.