

# DIRECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT 2023



**St. Clair Catholic**  
District School Board

Catholic  
Education  
Future  
Ready



# St. Clair Catholic

## District School Board

## Table of contents

Message from the Director of Education & Chair	4
Learning & Innovation	6
Faith & Well-Being	24
Partnerships	32
Catholic Citizenship	40
Milestones	48
Investing in Catholic Education	52
St. Clair Catholic by the Numbers	62
Board of Trustees & Senior Administration	64

# Message from the Director of Education

I am pleased to present my Director's Annual Report 2023, which is a comprehensive review of the educational programs, initiatives and social justice projects undertaken by our students and our schools during the 2022-2023 school year. What an impressive list of accomplishments it is!

I know that as you review the document, like me, you will be struck by the tremendous work achieved by our students and our staff over the past year. Together, we have accomplished great things.

Student achievement has rebounded following the pandemic. With the dedicated support of our staff, students have made tremendous gains in the Board's EQAO scores over the previous year. In 2023, student scores advanced in seven out of the eight provincial assessment categories. In elementary math, we have learned that targeted support yields real results. At six schools identified for support from the math team, the percentage of students achieving Level 3 or above improved 15 percentage points in Grade 3 and 17 percentage points in Grade 6. These are results worth celebrating!

With strong community partnerships, we are working to help students to find their pathways to a bright future, whether through college, cooperative education, university, or the world of work. Special thanks to our many partners, who join us in this important work, including the municipalities, LiUNA, the Lambton College Enactus Program and the Canadian Tooling & Machining Association. You are helping our students aspire to successful careers, both around the world and right here at home.

In addition to the remarkable work in academics and student success, our students and our schools are mindful of their Baptismal call to be the Hands and Feet of Christ. I am astounded by the many acts of charity that are carried out each year by the St. Clair Catholic family, which support people in need, both in our own communities and around the world.

Thanks to the great work of our dedicated Facility Services staff and the Board's wise investment of Ministry of Education funding, our students come together every day in top-notch learning environments – schools that are well-maintained, clean, safe and equipped with the latest technology. We look forward with excitement to next year, when we will conclude two major building projects – new state-of-the-art Catholic elementary schools in Sarnia and Chatham. The new Gregory A. Hogan Catholic School will open in March 2024; and the new St. Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School will open to students in September 2024.

Our faith and our spirit are alive at St. Clair Catholic! You will see it reflected in the pages of this report. I want to thank every student and staff member, every family, our parishes and all of our partners, who join with us, as we live our mission, Learning together today, transforming tomorrow.

Sincerely,  
**Scott Johnson**  
Director of Education



# Message from the Chair of the Board

It's always important that we keep our eyes fixed on the future. That's how we measure our progress through life and achieve our goals. But it's also good from time to time to look back at what we've accomplished. That's how I like to view the Director's Annual Report. It's a chance to see how far we've come; so that we can know we are headed in the right direction – and we are!

In the pages of this report, you will see the great work of St. Clair Catholic and the many opportunities that make it possible for our students to succeed. There is learning excellence in academics, the trades and the world of work; there is great success and a team spirit in our gyms and on the sports fields; and there is tremendous compassion and empathy, as we live Christ's example to help those in need, both in our communities and around the world.

I am indeed proud of the work of our St. Clair family – a family built on the Catholic education foundational triad of home, school and parish. We, all of us, are partners in our success. I especially want to thank our staff, the dedicated and faith-filled women and men, who are committed every day to helping to make our students successful, so that they may have a bright and fulfilling future, formed in the Catholic faith and living as disciples of Jesus Christ. That is the mission of Catholic education.

I know that as you read through this report, you will agree that 2022-2023 was a year filled with many successes; and we look forward to even greater things in 2023-2024.

God's blessings to you and your family.

Yours in Catholic Education,  
**John Van Heck**  
Chair of the Board







## Learning & Innovation

*Teaching transferable skills, critical thinking and creativity*







## SECONDARY Literacy

**During the 2022-2023 school year, Literacy Leads participated in several professional development opportunities, to further examine structured literacy for secondary students.**

The Orton Gillingham Training, Reading for the Love of It conference and Wilson Reading Systems introductory training all helped to build confidence and help staff to develop learning opportunities for students. These opportunities will help staff to infuse the ENG1L curriculum with Wilson Reading Systems to create a positive and successful learning environment.

In a new format, the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) for Grade 10 students was split over two days. This change resulted in many positive experiences for staff and students alike. Additional preparatory work done by staff and students leading up to the test led to a better success rate than in past years. The end of the school year brought the announcement of a new Grade 9 English curriculum. We look forward to reviewing this more culturally relevant material with our English departments and introducing to students in the 2023-2024 school year.

## SECONDARY Numeracy

**The focus throughout the year was support for the Grade 9 de-streamed program.**

In addition, Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) practice sessions were offered in both semesters to help prepare students for the types of questions they may encounter and to give them experience with the platform used for the online test.

After-school math help was offered to Grades 9-11, as well as a focus on getting students in Grade 9 signed up for TVO Mathify online help. This will allow them access right up until Grade 12. Afternoons were reserved for math drop-ins for students who required extra support and for co-planning/co-teaching when requested. New Grade 9 resources were explored, which support planning and teaching (Knowledgehook, MathUp, etc.).

Numeracy teachers took an in-depth look at the Grade 10 academic course, to ease the transition for students coming from a now de-streamed Grade 9. The sequence of the course was modified and implemented.

An outcomes based assessment was developed for the de-streamed Grade 9 course, to assess what changes might be needed for the future.

## Cooperative Education & Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP)

More than 230 students were enrolled in cooperative education classes in 2022-2023. Ninety-two of those placements were in skilled trades, with students registered as OYAP participants.

Several new partnerships were developed, including Handy Brothers, Chatham; and the Carpenters' Union Local 1256 in Sarnia. The carpenters' union provided free certifications and training as well as summer cooperative opportunities. One student took Level 1 Welding (300 hours) at Lambton College.

New this year were eleven skilled trades bursaries of \$1,000 each, provided by the Ministry of Education to Grade 11 students.

## Dual Credits & School Within a College (SWAC) Programs

In 2022-2023, students completed 250 dual credits open to secondary and SWAC students. In the SWAC program, there were 30 graduates from UCC and 11 students from St. Patrick's who completed their Ontario Secondary School Diploma.

## Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) Programs

More than 170 students were enrolled in 11 (SHSM) programs across the Board. Upwards of \$35,000 in training and \$45,000 in classroom resources were added to the schools due to SHSM funding. Field trips were provided to career fairs and several post-secondary institutions. The Board is expecting these programs to produce 70 Red Seal grads.

## Summer E-Learning & Travel For Credit

During the summer E-learning program, a total of 375 students enthusiastically engaged in a variety of courses. One notable highlight was the St. Clair Catholic District School Board's groundbreaking decision to reintroduce the "Travel For Credit" option for students enrolled in Grade 10 Careers and Civics, a course that had 62 students participating in asynchronous learning. In an exciting twist, these students were not limited to the confines of their screens, as they embarked on an unforgettable educational journey to Ottawa, Montreal and New York, broadening their horizons and gaining a real-world perspective on their studies. This immersive experience represented a transformative moment in the post-COVID era, giving students an opportunity to combine education and exploration in a unique and enriching way.



## De-streaming in Secondary Schools

In 2021, the Ontario government announced that secondary programming would be de-streamed. Previous to that, Ontario was the only Canadian province that separated students into academic and non-academic streams as early as Grade 9, a practice which forced students to make life-altering decisions about their educational and career pathways when they were too young to do so – only 13 and 14 years old. Racialized and lower-income students were disproportionately encouraged to pursue non-academic paths.

### Some of the steps St. Clair Catholic has taken with respect to de-streaming in secondary schools include:

- Collaborated with De-streaming Consultants Committee of Ontario in monthly virtual meetings to collaborate and share resources;
- Delivered teacher capacity-building sessions around Assessment and Evaluation, including topics such as “Giving Descriptive Feedback” and “Universal Design and Special Education Supports”;
- Worked with department heads, and more specifically the Science Department, to learn collaboratively in a Professional Learning Community (PLC) to re-examine and reflect on the summative assessments for the Grade 9 de-streamed course;
- Worked with the Special Education Department and the Student Success teacher to visit classes and offer extra support to students struggling to finish course work or prepare for projects or exams for the last month of each semester;
- In collaboration with Student Success, surveyed 264 Grade 9 students at the beginning of second semester, asking them to reflect on and share their thinking around assessment and evaluation, streaming in Grade 10, and advice about navigating high school;
- Created a Google resource for Culturally Responsive Pedagogy for Department Heads and teachers to access inclusive and culturally responsive resources;
- De-Streaming Support Teacher ran four sessions on inclusive teaching practices, including low floor | high ceiling activities, equitable practices in assessment and evaluation and effective feedback strategies for students;
- Teachers from various departments participated in PLCs to develop teaching strategies and common assessments for de-streamed courses;
- Exam preparation sessions were held for Grade 9 Science students in preparation for their first high school exams. One third of all Grade 9 Science students attended these preparation sessions in the first semester.

## First-Ever Interscholastic Student Debate Held at Catholic Education Centre

Students from Ursuline College in Chatham and St. Patrick’s Catholic High School in Sarnia met for an interscholastic debate at the Catholic Education Centre in Wallaceburg – the first such event ever held.

### Each school fielded two teams, both of which debated two topics:

- This house believes that stricter restrictions should be placed on the books allowed in our schools; and
- This house believes that students should be streamed based on academic achievement.

The debate coaches for St. Patrick’s were Payton Jacklin and Natalie Gouveia, with debaters Eleanne Crone, Joey Kielt, Pavi Padmananthan, Madison Pickard, Annabelle Rayson and Hudson Thomas. Team Ursuline College was coached by Mark Broadbent, with debaters Aidan Runnalls, Shelby Marcovich, Jackson Bourdeau, Alexander Campbell and Christina John.

The art of debate gives students another opportunity to develop their oral skills. Debate is one of many activities that can help students deepen critical thinking and build confidence in communication.

### Special thanks to the judges for the day:

**Renee Van Damme Marcus, Chris St. Amand and Robert Walicki.**



URSULINE COLLEGE DEBATE TEAM



ST. PATRICK'S DEBATE TEAM





## UCC Community Celebrates with Ursuline Legacy Mural & Kaleidoscope of the Arts

Students, parents, staff and representatives of St. Clair Catholic's Board of Trustees and senior administration gathered at Ursuline College Chatham Catholic Secondary School on June 1st, to honour the Ursuline Sisters, with a celebration of the arts.

Dubbed 'roots and wings' the evening commemorated the school's history, by honouring the heritage of the Ursuline Sisters with the unveiling and blessing of the Ursuline Legacy Mural. The occasion was accompanied by various arts-based performances and installations by current UCC students.



**Front Row (L-R):** Sr. Theresa Mahoney, Sr. Anne Denomy, Sr. Pauline Maheux and Sr. Bernadette LaPorte; **Back Row (L-R)** John Van Heck, Chair of the Board; David Argenti, Vice Chair of the Board; Chris Kehoe, Superintendent of Education; and Scott Johnson, Director of Education.

**As generations came together, the community acknowledged the school's past and welcomed the future, with joy, grace and God!**



## ELEMENTARY Literacy

**A Right to Read cross-departmental team was created, which resulted in a five-year structured literacy and implementation plan.**

A scope and sequence plan was created to support the implementation of structured literacy across the primary grades in all English schools. Literacy team members partnered with classroom educators to co-assess, co-plan, co-teach and monitor primary literacy skills. Structured literacy was formally included as a goal on the Board Improvement Plan and support materials, including Heggerty Phonemic Awareness and Flyleaf decodable series and manuals, which were provided for all primary classrooms.



*Staff developed and began a collaborative inquiry for Grade 1 structured literacy in French Immersion at Christ The King and St. Anne Blenheim.*

## ELEMENTARY Tutoring

**St. Clair Catholic hired 29 post-secondary students, who began with a two-day training course in June, to assist them in their roles as tutors at 17 schools across the district.**

It was the second year of the tutoring program, which was made possible by funding from the Ministry of Education.

Tutoring offers these young adults an opportunity to gain valuable experience in a school setting, which will help them to discern their own future pathway. Many of them were headed for, or were already in, Faculty of Education programs at university.

Catholic Curriculum staff for the Board trained the tutors over two days, providing strategies to guide their work, as they helped students with one-on-one support in literacy and math. The tutors were a tremendous asset to our school communities.



**(L-R):** Nolan Cogghe, Tutor; Laura Callaghan, Superintendent of Education; Scott Johnson, Director of Education; Kim Fitzmorris, Elementary Curriculum Consultant and Project Lead; and Georgia Blackshaw, Tutor.







## ELEMENTARY Mathematics

A St. Clair Catholic math scope and sequence aligned with the Ontario Mathematics curriculum was developed to intentionally build consistency and content knowledge that is differentiated and multimodal. The scope and sequence provides a tool for collaboration among teaching colleagues and administrators.

Teachers were invited to join virtual interactive lessons intended to build problem-solving skills and familiarity with the EQAO assessment format. Thirty Grade 3 classrooms and 25 Grade 6 classrooms joined these sessions.



### Math Team Support in Classrooms

Grade 2-7 classrooms in six schools partnered with our math team to focus on building content knowledge around fractions.

The model of support from last year tells us that schools that receive targeted support improve. The percentage of students achieving Level 3 or above in our six focus schools from 2021-2022 improved an average of 15 percentage points in Grade 3 and 17 percentage points in Grade 6.



## Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Pilot School Project

Using a modified Collaborative Inquiry model, the goal was to find effective and efficient ways to integrate SEL into daily classroom instructions and activities. Schools were selected using a situational review that was done in all 25 schools during October and November. Thirty-three elementary teachers and 10 secondary teachers were involved in the pilot.

### Goals included:

- Developing adult understanding of their own SEL;
- Thinking about how to use explicit instruction with students for SEL with a specific focus on self-awareness;
- Developing supportive classroom environments;
- Create intentionality in the use and delivery of SEL in classrooms by educators;
- Deliver trauma-informed SEL training to educators, led by Child & Youth Workers (CYWs)







## ELEMENTARY Outdoor Education and Learning

- In 2022-2023 there were more than 50 K-12 outdoor experiential learning opportunities across the system involving 4702 students;
- Co-teaching outdoor learning lessons across all subjects of the curriculum;
- Grade 8 leadership outdoor experiential learning opportunities to Adventureworks (658 students, or approximately 98% of Grade 8s in the system);
- Outdoor weekly lessons were posted to our Learning Hub for educators.



## PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS

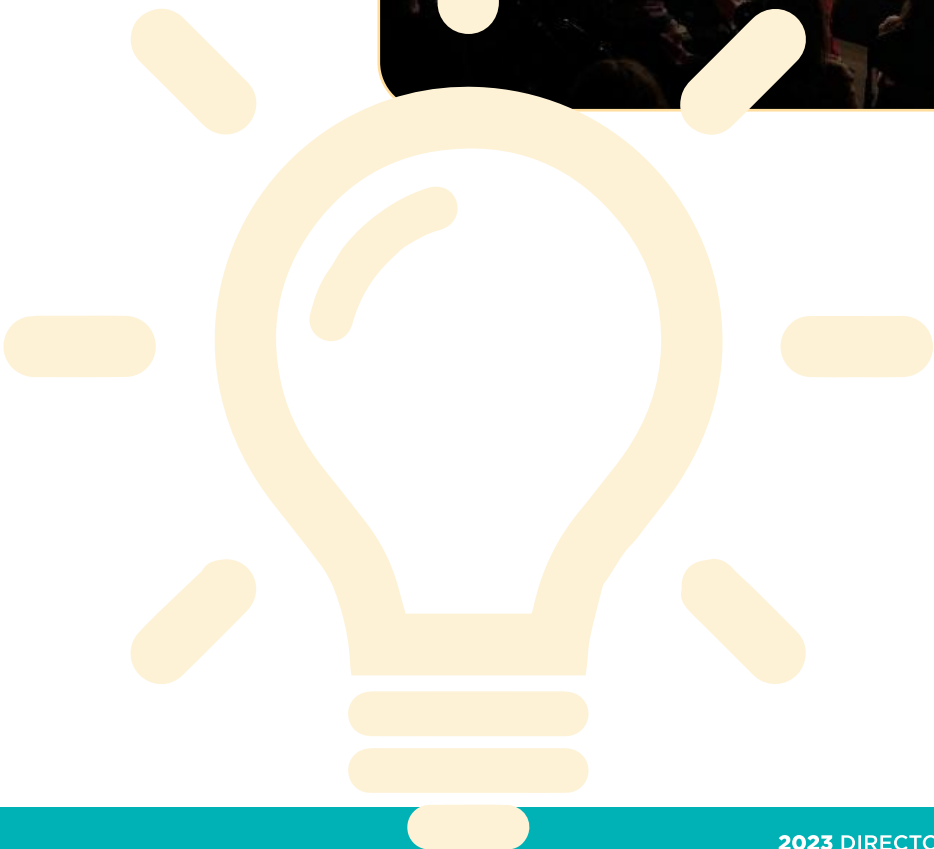


### CK Employers Roundtable

Representatives from various geographic and economic regions of Chatham-Kent connected virtually with all Chatham-Kent intermediate classes to discuss opportunities for employment and living in Chatham-Kent.

### Sarnia-Lambton Youth Vision Event

Representatives from various local career paths gathered, or joined online, at St Patrick's Catholic High School for a blended live/virtual event to discuss local career opportunities and advice for students on following their pathway.







## New Partnerships with Bkejwanong Elementary School

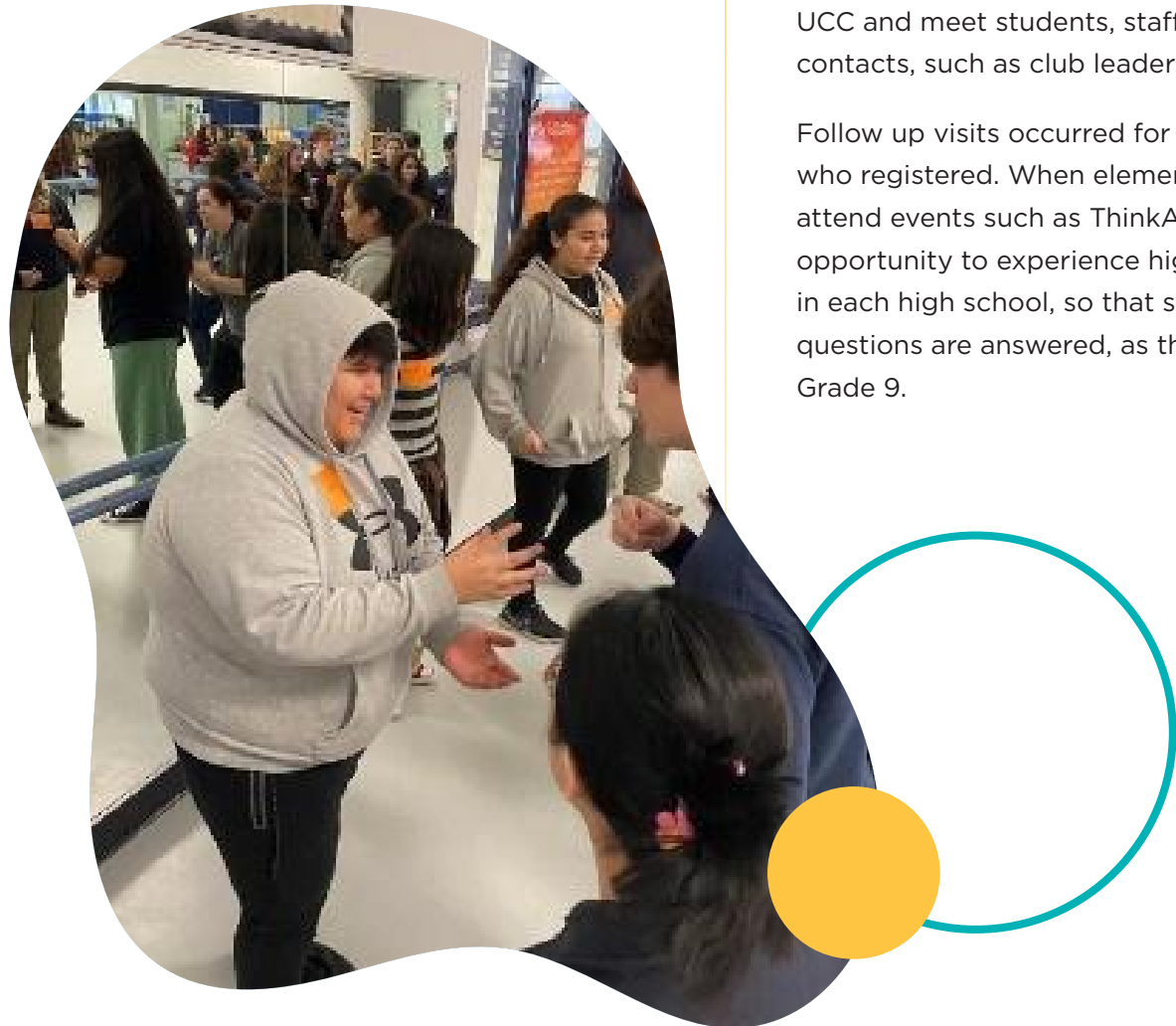
The Pathways to Success team, in partnership with the Indigenous Education Lead, has begun a partnership with Bkejwanong (Walpole Island) Elementary School. Intermediate students travelled to UCC on multiple occasions to tour and gain familiarity with the school, the staff and the students. Pathways to Success Teachers also travelled to Bkejwanong to meet in small groups with students, teachers, and parents/guardians to help ease the transition to high school, as well as build relationships for future years.

## Additional Pathways Education and Support for Students

In addition to the traditional days for intermediate students to visit their local Catholic high school, staff worked to build connections between the elementary and secondary schools, so that targeted and localized students can have opportunities to explore and gain confidence at UCC or St. Patrick's.

For example, French Immersion (FI) students have been able to connect with FI senior students and staff to see the opportunities they will have in high school. For the first time, students from Bkejwanong Elementary School were able to have an interactive guided tour of UCC and meet students, staff and extracurricular contacts, such as club leaders, coaches, etc.

Follow up visits occurred for the students who registered. When elementary students attend events such as ThinkAg, they have the opportunity to experience high interest locations in each high school, so that some of their questions are answered, as they prepare for Grade 9.



## KinderSTART

KinderSTART is a face-to-face interactive registration event, which was held after school for the first time. It is an opportunity to welcome families and new students to the St. Clair Catholic District School Board, as they engage in an initial positive experience, which fosters partnerships between families and schools. KinderSTART is an enhanced and supportive registration process for all families and schools, which also helps to build the parish home and school partnership.

The school-based events connect new students and their parents/guardians to school staff and provide an opportunity to further support the growth and development of the new student. Every family leaves with a SWAG bag with some tools for school and a t-shirt. In 2023, 431 KinderSTARs were registered!



## Summer Learning

Approximately 140 Grade 1 & 2 students at four school locations (St Angela Merici Chatham, Holy Family Wallaceburg, St. Joseph Corunna, Holy Trinity Sarnia) were registered for summer learning in 2023. In addition to building capacity in literacy and numeracy, students learned to understand and name their emotions through self-awareness, working directly with staff from St. Clair Catholic's Student Support and Wellbeing Team. Campers also took part in daily prayer and Christian meditation.

Community partners, including members of the local Indigenous communities, also participated in the learning experiences for our students. Fun trips and activities were planned in the communities, such as blueberry picking and bowling.

A special word of appreciation to our friends at Noelle's Gift to Children and the Chatham-Kent Ontario Student Nutrition Program, for the funding to provide healthy and nutritious snacks at each of our camp locations!





## Outdoor Education and Structured Literacy Focus of Special Event at St. Anne Blenheim

In a tremendous response from the community, more than 120 parents attended a special evening event recently at St. Anne Catholic School in Blenheim.

The staff team did a great job of providing parents a glimpse into the wonderful work that is happening every day at St. Anne, in social emotional learning, outdoor education and structured literacy.

In addition to several school and Board-level staff, several student helpers also contributed to the success of the evening.



## Holy Family Catholic School Hosts E-Sports Day for Wallaceburg Area Catholic Schools

Ninety Grade 7 and 8 students from St. Elizabeth, Christ The King and Sacred Heart Port Lambton Catholic schools attended an e-sports competition and learning event, hosted by the Grade 5/6 students of Holy Family Catholic School.

Students participated in three, one-hour workshops, where they learned about game design (also known as coding), emotional and physical wellbeing associated with gaming, and e-sports mechanics. In the afternoon, students participated in a single-elimination tournament featuring the game Rocket League.

Students in our Grade 5/6 class did all of the work in organizing and running the event. They prepared and delivered workshops on coding, emotional regulation in gaming and physical training in hand-eye coordination, as well as technical set up of all the matches.

Students also had the opportunity to experience an immersive and responsive state-of-the-art iRacing motion simulator, graciously provided by *Fast Factor Sim Racing Studios* in Chatham. Congratulations to the *Blue Knights* team from Sacred Heart Port Lambton, who won the tournament, defeating the *Wild Ducks* from Christ The King.

**This event was funded through an experiential learning grant. Special thanks to Mr. Dan Rolo for helping the students to organize it!**

## INDIGENOUS EDUCATION Truth & Reconciliation Week

Former NHL pro hockey player Jason Simon, of the Aamjiwnaang First Nation, connected with youth from six schools across the St. Clair Catholic district as part of several learning sessions.

Jason brings his story of being an intergenerational residential school survivor and inspires youth to reach their goals. He brings a message of resilience and determination in a relatable way, that inspires young people to keep focused on their goals, as they work to achieve them!



*Jason Simon pictured with Kidwin Zhingwaak (Voice of the Pines) Indigenous Youth Leadership Group at UCC.*

## Ursuline Sisters Join UCC Students in Support of National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

Members of the Ursuline Sisters made a special pilgrimage to Ursuline College on Friday, September 30th, to share in some important events in recognition of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation – an annual observance, which commemorates the tragic and painful history and ongoing impacts of Canada's residential schools.

Students and the Ursuline Sisters tied orange ribbons to the fence along Grand Avenue, as a public demonstration of support for the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

In the afternoon, students and staff at Ursuline College observed a moment of silence to honour residential school survivors, the children who never returned home and their families.



## Great Lakes Woodland Dance Troupe Performs at St. Clair Catholic Schools

In March, dancers, singers and drummers from Bkejwanong Territory and Aamjiwnaang First Nation performed at the UCC theatre.

Through drumming, songs and dance, they taught students about pow wow celebrations and the meaning of different regalia and drum songs. The group also performed at St. Patrick's Catholic High School in Sarnia, followed by a number of elementary schools across the system.

"This is a great way for students to build understanding together," says White Lightning Strikes Clark of the Aamjiwnaang First Nation. "When we know more about one another's culture, we are better together."







### Land-Based Learning in Grade 9 Science & Across Elementary School Gardens

About 160 secondary science students participated in two days of land-based learning in Bkejwanong Territory with Dean Jacobs, Walpole Island First Nation; Biindigaygizhig, Chippewas of the Thames First Nation; and Montana Riley, Walpole Island First Nation. Students engaged in hands-on learning as they focused sustainable practices, the impacts of climate change, and the diverse ecosystems of Bkejwanong.

Students at Good Shepherd and St. Elizabeth Catholic schools joined with members of the Bkejwanong Territory this week, as they celebrated the planting of a variety of traditional medicines in their school gardens, including sage, cedar, tobacco and sweetgrass.

Cedric, Sandra and Leigh Ann Isaac also talked about the many health benefits of other common plants, including dandelions and strawberries.

After planting the gardens, the Isaac family led the staff and students in celebrations of prayer and song, in gratitude for the gifts of the earth, with music and dancing.



(L-R): Cedric, Leigh Ann and Sandra Isaac, Walpole Island First Nation

### Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) Results

The Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) released the school, board and provincial results for the 2022-2023 Grade 3 and 6 assessments for reading, writing and mathematics, Grade 9 math and the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test.

St. Clair Catholic students made significant gains in the EQAO assessments. These upward trends show that the Board’s pedagogies are sound and that our staff is committed to helping our students achieve their very best.

The most significant gain at the elementary level was the Grade 6 math result, which was eight percentage points above the previous assessment. Grade 3 math also showed a substantial increase of five percentage points. At the secondary level, students scored seven percentage points higher on the OSSLT, achieving a success rate of 88 percent, which is three points above the provincial average. The Grade 9 math rate was slightly above the previous assessment, with a gain of one percentage point.

St. Clair Catholic students advanced in seven out of the eight provincial assessment categories.

These improvements are a direct result of the Board’s strategic priorities and the Board and school improvement plans that are developed annually, following each EQAO assessment. As always, Board staff will review the data in detail, as we begin to develop our student achievement plans for the future.

#### Grade 3 Results for St. Clair Catholic Students:

Reading: 72% (+2%)  
Writing: 63% (+2%)  
Math: 59% (+5%)

#### Grade 6 Results for St. Clair Catholic Students:

Reading: 85% (-1%)  
Writing: 85% (+3%)  
Math: 47% (+8%)

#### Grade 9 Mathematics Results:

Students achieving at grade level 3 and above: 47% (+1%)

#### Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) Result:

St. Clair Catholic student success rate: 88% (+7%)





## Faith & Well-Being

*Living Catholic values to foster caring, inclusive and safe spaces*





# Board Pastoral Plan 2022 | 2023

## We live our values every day...



**Respect  
rooted in love**  
By this everyone  
will know that you  
are my disciples, if  
you have love for  
one another

*John 13:35*



**Excellence  
for all**  
I can do all things  
through Christ who  
strengthens me;

*Philippians 4:13*



**Accountability to  
God, self & others**  
Truly I tell you, just  
as you did it to one  
of the least of these  
who are members  
of my family, you  
did it to me.

*Matthew 25:40*



**Engagement in  
our work**  
Whatever your  
task, put yourselves  
into it, as done  
for the Lord

*Colossians 3:23*



**Called to serve  
our world**  
God saw everything  
that He has made,  
and behold it was  
very good

*Genesis 1:31*

## As each of us becomes...



## Walking Together Prayer

**Let us encounter one another...**  
Gracious Creator;  
Help us to embrace the fullness of *human kinship*,  
which includes all people and renders everyone equal.  
May we increase our ability and willingness to  
acknowledge, appreciate and love each person.

**Let us listen to one another...**  
Holy Spirit;  
Help us to dream as a single family,  
caring for each other and our common home.  
May we be encouraged to bring the richness  
of our beliefs to one another, in our own voices.

**Let us discern together...**  
Loving Christ;  
Help us to create a community that strengthens  
everyone to become more fully themselves.  
May we continue looking ahead  
walking together.

Amen

*Inspired by Fratelli Tutti and The Synod on Synodality*



## 2022/2023 Key Actions

**As we walk together, we will come to know we are well and:**

- Practice faith and wellness in the classroom daily by employing words and deeds that each person has inherent dignity as a child of God.

**As we walk together, we will come to know each learner and:**

- Encourage learners to listen to God's call to use their gifts in a vocation.

**As we walk together, we will come to know they are critical thinkers and:**

- Connect real life community and world events to Catholic Faith tradition and practice to cultivate a call to Christian action;
- Create conditions that build supportive relationships to guide students in their learning, prayerful discernment and moral development;
- Support students to organize their own thinking and compare to varying point of view including the Catechism of the Catholic Church, Holy Scripture and tradition, Growing in Faith/Growing in Christ program Grades 1-8.





## Deanery Meetings

The Catholic community gathered at special meetings of the Sarnia and Kent Deaneries in January. This was an opportunity for our schools to showcase their important work in social justice initiatives, in alignment with the Board's Pastoral Plan.

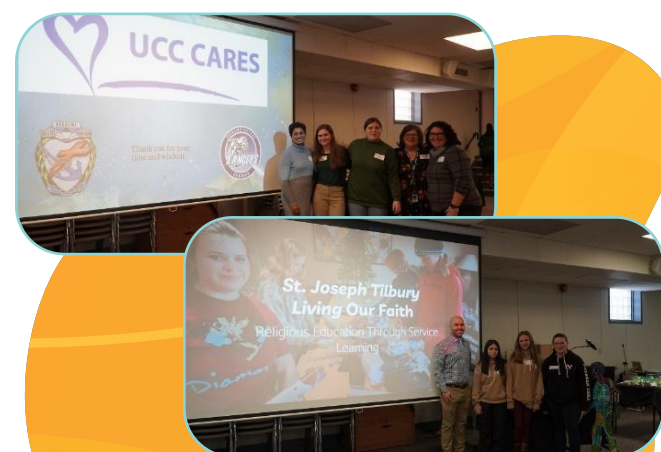


## Sarnia/Lambton – St. Joseph School Corunna & St. Patrick's High School

- Students from St. Joseph spoke about a school-wide project to develop a pollinator garden at the school, to attract bees, butterflies, moths and hummingbirds, as an act of caring for God's creation.
- Students from the St. Patrick's Catholic High School Social Justice Club presented on a number of issues, including water justice for all, which included a successful petition to ban the selling of bottled water at the school. The group has also focussed on poverty awareness and food insecurity. One of the social justice club's goals is to 'think globally and act locally.'

## Chatham-Kent/St. Joseph Tilbury & Ursuline College

- Students from St. Joseph Catholic School in Tilbury gave a passionate presentation about their experiences at Ashley's Place, a not-for-profit coffee and ice cream shop in the community, which is run by volunteers. It also includes a kitchen where volunteers make meals for the homeless. Through their support for Ashley's Place, the students are living the mission of Catholic education and the goals of the Board's pastoral plan.
- The UCC Cares Club is a social justice outreach that focuses on global and local initiatives. Students talked about their mission, which is to Serve Like Christ, by being servant leaders, who live out the virtues of faith, hope and charity. Events have included a clean up of the Erieau Beach, the Lancers Scare Hunger food drive, a community Christmas outreach dinner, a ban the plastic water bottle campaign and furniture donations to schools in Angola through the Canadian Food For Children CK.



## System Mass Celebrates the Beginning of the 2022-2023 School Year

The St. Clair Catholic family gathered for the first time in three years to celebrate the beginning of a new school year. A system-wide Mass at Our Lady Help of Christians Church in Wallaceburg included principals, students, Catholic Education Centre staff, Trustees and senior administration.

The annual September Mass was cancelled in 2020 and 2021 due to COVID.

Last year, Pope Francis opened a two-year Synod of Bishops, challenging them to 'encounter, listen and discern.'

"Celebrating a Synod means walking on the same road, walking together," the Holy Father said.

The Board's theme for 2022-2023 was Walking Together – Encounter, Listen and Discern. Following Mass, students were presented with posters depicting the theme to take back to their schools.

Students and principals also took back to their schools bibles, which were presented to all new employees from 2020 through 2022. They received them at school liturgies or prayer services.

Mass was celebrated by Father Chris Gillespie, Pastor of the Kent Lambton Roman Catholic Family of Parishes and Board Chaplain.



*Pictured with a student from Holy Family Catholic School are (L-R): John Van Heck, Chair of the Board; Colleen Cogghe, Principal, Holy Family Catholic School; and Scott Johnson, Director of Education.*







### Let Kindness Grow Initiative at Ursuline College

In March, the Student Support and Wellbeing Team at Ursuline College held a wellness conference, at which students participated in social emotional learning activities. Based on data from the 2021 school climate survey, they created an action plan to focus on wellbeing concerns, including pressure to do well in school, anxiety/fear and lack of respect.

The students collaborated to create both short- and long-term goals to address the issues. They also participated in a kindness activity, with a drop-in session for students outside the cafeteria.

Students were encouraged to share acts of kindness that they had witnessed or experienced themselves. The experiences were recorded in print on the leaves of a paper tree, which stood as a visual reminder of how UCC is ‘letting kindness grow’ as students share their thoughtfulness with each other every day.



### Loved One Day Celebrated at Christ The King Catholic School

The Catholic Graduate Expectation of Living as Joyful Disciples was demonstrated at Christ The King Catholic School, as students and staff celebrated ‘Loved One Day.’ Each student invited one parent/guardian or grandparent to join them for a school-wide game of Bingo.

Loved ones give our lives fuel and keep us grounded. Students are always excited to invite parents and grandparents to visit them at school and join them for fun games and activities.

### Holy Trinity Students Develop ‘Mindful Messages’ in Support of Catholic Education Week and Mental Health Week

Students at Holy Trinity Catholic School in Sarnia prepared uplifting and inspiring messages of hope and encouragement, which were broadcast on Blackburn radio throughout Catholic Education Week and Mental Health Week, in May.

The theme for Catholic Education Week 2023 was We Are Many, We Are One, which aligns with the St. Clair Catholic District School Board’s focus on inclusion and equity for all. During Mental Health Week, we also recognize the challenges to personal and spiritual well-being, which have been aggravated by the global pandemic. Throughout the year, our students explored various ways to support their own mental health, while also looking to inspire others to keep a positive, healthy attitude in their daily lives.

As a school community, students from Kindergarten to Grade 8 worked collaboratively to create the messages with the understanding that they have the capacity to have an impact on others in our school and beyond.

Branded as ‘mindful messages’ the public service announcements were recorded by the students and produced by Blackburn Radio.

Special thanks to George Hayes and the great staff at Blackburn Media for helping us to share these positive messages with the community. It was a tremendous partnership, which provided students with an opportunity to extend their learning beyond the classroom.

### Flying the Rainbow Flag at St. Clair Catholic

The rainbow flag was raised at all elementary and secondary schools and the Catholic Education Centre for the month of June, as a symbol of welcoming and inclusive school communities at St. Clair Catholic. June is designated as PRIDE month in communities across Ontario. During this month, and every month of the year, our schools are committed to nurturing inclusive Catholic learning environments, where every student and every member of the community is welcomed, safe, valued and respected.

As Catholics, we believe that everyone is wonderfully made in the image and likeness of God, who created us and loves us unconditionally. We are called to love one another, just as God loves each one of us. At St. Clair Catholic, we work to end all forms of bullying and discrimination, as we honour the inherent dignity in each of us by treating one another with care, compassion, and respect.

This does not mean that St. Clair Catholic is diverging from the tenets of the Catholic faith. As a Catholic school system, we continue to teach the religion curriculum through the Fully Alive and Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ programs, which are approved and supported by the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario.

The Church recognizes and defends the human rights of each person, principles that are further enshrined in law through the Ontario Human Rights Code. As educators and caring adults, we have a duty to protect and accompany every student, especially the most marginalized.







## Partnerships

*Engaging families, parish  
and community*







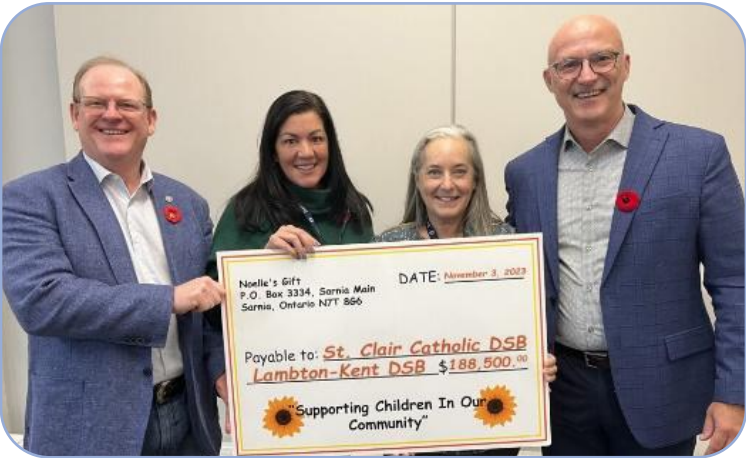
# St. Clair Catholic & Lambton Kent District School Boards Share \$188,500 in Donations for 2023 from Noelle’s Gift to Children Charity

In 2023, Noelle’s Gift to Children donated more than \$188,500 to the St. Clair Catholic and Lambton Kent district school boards to support students and families in need. The total in 2022 was \$158,000.

For 10 years now, Noelle’s Gift to Children, with guidance and care from the Paquette family, has provided tremendous support for students and families who need help. What a tremendous gift to our communities; and an awesome legacy for Noelle, who was a much-loved daughter, sister, friend and teacher.

Donations from Noelle’s Gift to Children are shared among the St. Clair Catholic and Lambton Kent district school boards to purchase eyeglasses, clothing, food, medicine and medical equipment. The funds are dispersed independently by the two boards. Teachers are able to access up to \$200 for children in need. Requests in excess of \$200 are made by the principal and are processed quickly, to get help to families as soon as possible.

The Noelle’s Gift to Children charitable fund was established in memory of Noelle Paquette, a former Kindergarten teacher with St. Clair Catholic, who passed away in January 2013.



*(L-R): John Howitt, Director of Education, Lambton-Kent District School Board; Nicole Paquette and Lynn Paquette, Noelle’s Gift to Children; and Scott Johnson, Director of Education, St. Clair Catholic.*



*In the photo with volunteer student helpers from St. Michael Catholic School in Bright’s Grove are (left) Steve DeGurse, Principal of St. Michael Catholic School and (far right) Mark Renaud, retired principal and volunteer with the Noelle’s Gift to Children organization.*

## Noelle’s Gift to Children Donates Water Bottles to All Grade 1 Students

The Noelle’s Gift to Children organization donated water bottles to all students in Grade 1, including Grade 1/2 and SK/Grade 1 split classes. This was the third year the charity has gifted the primary students with water bottles, as an encouragement to use water filling stations to promote drinking water as a healthy habit.

With the help of students at St. Michael Catholic School in Bright’s Grove, retired principal Mark Renaud, who is also a Noelle’s Gift to Children volunteer, organized the packing and delivery of the water bottles to Catholic elementary schools across the district.

More than a thousand water bottles were distributed to students at St. Clair Catholic schools.

## Handy Bros. Heroes Serve Healthy Snacks at St. Ursula

Members of the staff from Handy Bros. Home Comfort regularly give back in Chatham... and in April, they were helping give back at St. Ursula Catholic School.

The *Handy Bros. Heroes* purchased a week’s supply of healthy snacks for the school (about a thousand dollars in groceries) then came to the school to help prep and deliver the snacks to classrooms.

The St. Ursula staff works in partnership with the Ontario Student Nutrition Program to make sure healthy snack options are always readily available for ALL students. School principal Liz Gibson says it was great to have additional support from their friends at Handy Bros.



We couldn’t have been more eager to hop on board with this project and have the Handy Bros. Heroes do what they do best...give back to the community. We loved working with the staff and students at St. Ursula.

-MITCH WHITE  
CEO, HANDY BROS.  
HOME COMFORT





## St. Clair Catholic Partners with Chatham Goodfellows to Provide ‘Toy Barn’ for 2022 Christmas Campaign



*(L-R): Scott Johnson, Director of Education with Chatham Goodfellows volunteers Barb Smith, Tim Haskell, Kevin Shaw and Craig Williston.*

The St. Clair Catholic District School Board provided space in the former Monsignor Uyen Catholic School building on Lark Street to the Chatham Goodfellows, for use as the organization’s ‘toy barn’ for its 2022 Christmas campaign. It was the Chatham Goodfellows’ 68th year of ensuring there is ‘no child without a Christmas.’

St. Clair Catholic was pleased to make this vacant school space available for such a worthy organization in our community, as a support for the great work of the Goodfellows on behalf of the children and families in Chatham-Kent.

“Each year it is the goal of the Goodfellows to provide Christmas dinner and toys to families who need help, to ensure a happy Christmas for all,” says Tim Haskell, Past President of the Chatham Goodfellows. “We thank the St. Clair Catholic District School Board for helping us to make this happen again this year by making this space available to us.”

The school closed in 2021, when the Monsignor Uyen Catholic School community moved to the newly refurbished site on Baldoon Road. The temporary use of the building as the Goodfellows Toy Barn aligned with the mission of Catholic education and the Board’s priorities and values. In August 2023, the Lark Street property was sold.

## UCC Foods Class Students Support Women’s Shelter with Warm Thoughts and Cookies!

In May, students in the Grade 11 foods class at Ursuline College showed their thoughtful support for residents of the Chatham-Kent Women’s Shelter.

They baked and decorated sugar cookies, then tagged them with uplifting and inspirational messages and delivered them to the shelter.

The Chatham-Kent Women’s Centre provides emergency shelter to women, with or without children.



## Ursuline College Receives \$80,000 in Grants from Canadian Tooling & Machining Association & Ontario Council for Technology Education

In November 2022, Ursuline College Chatham Catholic Secondary School received \$80,000 in grants for the purchase of machinery and tools. The grant was funded through the Canadian Tooling & Machining Association (CMTA) and the Ontario Council for Technology Education (OCTE) in partnership with 22 school boards across Ontario. Through this initiative, new high-tech equipment was delivered to 40 high schools throughout the province.

UCC received a CNC router, two vertical drilling machines and a metal lathe at a cost of \$75,000. In addition, the school received \$5,000 in tools, including class sets of micrometers, calipers, metal rulers, a vise and drill set.

“Our goal is to expose high school students to technology at an earlier age to engage their interest for a career within our industry,” says Robert Cattle, CTMA executive director. “Not only does this expose students to newer technology at an earlier age, but also gives teachers up-to-date equipment to implement in their classrooms.”

The program also provides experiential work placements for high school co-op students, with a focus in the precision metal cutting sector. Each student is paid an hourly rate while earning cooperative education credits.

The Career-Ready with CTMA: Expanding Opportunities program is funded in part by the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario.



## St. Clair Catholic Employees Donate \$17,000 to Women’s Shelters in Chatham-Kent & Sarnia-Lambton

Led by the Ontario English Catholic Teachers’ Association (OECTA) all employees of the St. Clair Catholic District School Board participated in a week-long ‘dress down event’ in November, in exchange for a donation to two local women’s shelters.

Thanks to the generous staff at St. Clair Catholic \$17,000 was raised. The donations included a \$1,000 contribution from the local Catholic Principals’ Council of Ontario.

The Chatham-Kent Women’s Centre and the Women’s Interval Home of Sarnia-Lambton provided staff representatives with a list of needs for the women and children they serve. OECTA shoppers then hit the stores for several weeks, to ensure that every purchase was perfectly matched to the requested item.

Special thanks to Wayne Bechard, Chad Coene and their Executive Members for their compassion in once again taking the lead on this important initiative; and for giving all of us an opportunity to be the hands and feet of Christ, as we lift up those in need in our communities.







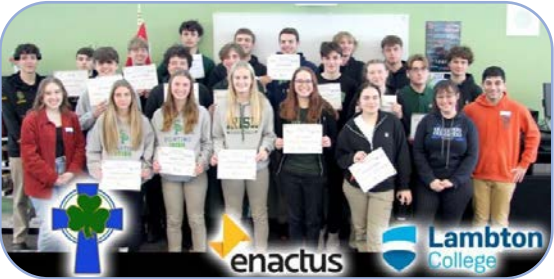
# St. Patrick’s Business Leadership Class Enactus Project Focuses on Kindness

In December, the Grade 12 Business Leadership class at St. Patrick’s Catholic High School presented the results of its *Kindness Week Initiative*. The presentation was a journey through the class initiative to promote kindness at the school and an examination of what was achieved as a result of the projects.

The Kindness Project report was the culmination of the students’ work with the Lambton College Enactus Program.

Activities included a Kindness Bingo, with a chance to win prizes; a treat relay; a good sportsmanship video; and a burrito draw. The student presentation reviewed each of the activities along with an analysis to determine each of the events’ strengths and weaknesses.

Enactus Lambton is part of an international non-profit organization that brings together student leaders to create a better, more sustainable world through the positive power of business.



# St. Clair Catholic & Pathways Health Centre for Children Launch Entry to School Program at Holy Trinity Catholic School for Children with Autism



A school readiness program for children with autism was launched in March at Holy Trinity Catholic School in Sarnia, thanks to a unique partnership between Pathways Health Centre for Children and the St. Clair Catholic District School Board. This initiative, part of the Ontario Autism Program, is for children aged 3 to 5, who are entering school for the first time in Kindergarten or Grade 1.

The program begins with a six-month group-based skill-building focus, followed by six months of transition supports as students enter their home school. Families and educators will have access to targeted consultation to support a successful school transition.

**Key elements of the Entry to School Program focus on building a child’s skills and strengths within six domains:**

- Communication
- Play
- Social Interaction
- Functional Routines
- Behavioural Self-Management
- Pre-Academics, Learning and Attention

Children eligible for the program will be 3 to 5 years of age with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder, registered in the Ontario Autism Program and entering school for the first time, in either Kindergarten or Grade 1.

# St. Clair Catholic Schools in Forest & Bright’s Grove Partner with Lambton Public Health & St. Clair Conservation Authority to Plant Trees

Seventeen new trees were planed on Catholic school yards in Forest and Bright’s Grove in 2023. The trees were courtesy of Lambton Public Health and the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority, through funding from the TD Friends of the Environment Foundation.

At St. John Fisher in Forest, nine new trees were planted, including three red maples, two silver maples, two skyline honey-locusts and two bur oaks. The project was led by the school’s Earth Club.

At St. Michael Catholic School in Bright’s Grove, eight trees were planted under the leadership of the school’s Grade 7 and 8 Wellness Team.

As a side note, while digging holes to plant the trees, students at St. John Fisher unearthed a Bank of Upper Canada coin. After a bit of research, the students found it to be a one penny token from the year 1852!



# St. Anne Catholic School in Sarnia Donates Water Filtration System to Chippewas of the Thames School

In June, the Social Justice and Wellbeing Club at St. Anne Catholic School, Sarnia led a water awareness and conservation campaign. During research, students discovered that in Ontario there are 23 Indigenous communities, which are under boil water advisories. Students partnered with Ms. Barbato’s Grade 2/3 class to brainstorm ways in which St. Anne Catholic School could help.

The school applied for and received a \$500 grant from Learning for a Sustainable Future, which was used to buy water bottles. The water bottles were sold in a school-wide fundraiser, the proceeds of which were used to purchase a free-standing water filtration system.

The school contacted Principal Steve Styers at the Chippewas of the Thames School and he accepted their donation of the water filtration system. The Social Justice and Wellbeing Club and the Grade 2/3 class were invited guests at the Chippewas of the Thames School Pow Wow on June 23.





## Catholic Citizenship

*Inspiring ethical,  
responsible stewardship*







# St. Anne Catholic School Sarnia Tops \$166,000 in 26 Years of Terry Fox Runs

St. Anne Catholic School in Sarnia finished its 26th annual Terry Fox Run in September 2022. In the two-and-a-half decades since the first run, the school has raised more than \$166,000 for the Terry Fox Foundation.

The theme for 2022 was I'm Not a Quitter! It's a concept that is embraced by Grade 3 student Leah March. At a young age, Lea was diagnosed with osteosarcoma, the same form of cancer that Terry Fox had. In Leah's case, amputation was not required. During a 16-hour surgery, a bone in her right upper arm was replaced with a bone from her left leg. Following lengthy treatment, Leah is back running and walking with her friends... and participating in the school's Terry Fox Run.



Meeting Grade 3 student Leah March at St. Anne Catholic School's 26th Annual Terry Fox Run.

# St. Clair Catholic Donates Surplus Furniture to West African Schools

Surplus furniture from the former Monsignor Uyen Catholic School on Lark Street, and other schools across the district, was donated to schools in Sierra Leone.

In October, the desks, tables and chairs were loaded onto a transport truck by volunteers from Canadian Food For Children - Chatham-Kent (CFFC-CK). It was shipped to the organization's warehouse in Mississauga, and from there it was loaded onto a container ship headed for the west African nation.

Any furniture remaining, was loaded aboard another container ship set to sail for Angola in South Africa the following week.

"We are so very grateful to St. Clair Catholic for this donation," says Cindy Waddick, President of CFFC-CK. "It is a tremendous gift, that will be welcomed by students and teachers at schools in parts of the world where classrooms are not well-equipped."

Earlier in 2022, surplus furniture from Ursuline College was shipped to Angola. The photos below show the arrival of the chairs and tables and students who will be using them.

"We are so very grateful to St. Clair Catholic for this donation. It is a tremendous gift, that will be welcomed by students and teachers at schools in parts of the world where classrooms are not well-equipped."

**-CINDY WADDICK**  
PRESIDENT OF CFFC-CK



# Another Successful 'Lancers Scare Hunger' Halloween Food Drive at UCC

With an army of 65 parent drivers, 200 students and 15 staff, the UCC Cares Club hauled in another whopping donation of non-perishable food items for Chatham Outreach for Hunger.

Each street in Chatham was covered by student volunteers, with donated non-perishable food items being brought back to the school. The mountain of donated items were piled in the main foyer and down the hallway.

The next day, volunteers from the staff at Handy Bros. Home Comfort helped to haul the food away and deliver it to Chatham Outreach for Hunger.

The Halloween food drive at UCC began about 15 years ago but was interrupted for the past two years by the COVID-19 pandemic.



(L-R): Victoria Iaccino, Procurement Officer; Scott Johnson, Director of Education; Cindy Waddick, President, Canadian Food For Children - CK; Mike Bonvarlez, CFFC-CK Volunteer; and Marc St. Pierre.





# 500 Volunteers are the Hands & Feet of Christ as St. Patrick's Achieves Another Successful Irish Miracle!

The St. Patrick's Catholic High School community rallied together in December for another successful *Irish Miracle* non-perishable food drive in support of the St. Vincent de Paul Food Bank.

About 350 student volunteers and at least 112 parent drivers, along with children of staff and other volunteers made up the more than 500 people, who helped to make this miracle happen.

Special thanks to the Knights of Columbus, who served more than 500 delicious breakfasts to the army of volunteers.



*Pictured with students and Principal Liz Gibson are Bonnie Roth (far left) and Jennifer Doran (far right) of the Municipality of Chatham-Kent's Homes For Youth Program.*

# Advent Community Outreach Project at St. Ursula Collects Items for Youth in Homeless Prevention Program

Students and staff at St. Ursula Catholic School donated much need items to the Homes for Youth Program (H4Y) in Chatham-Kent.

Items included warm socks, mittens, gloves, toques and toiletries.

H4Y provides qualifying youth, ages 16 to 25, with a permanent home in the community and the supports needed to maintain housing and become self-sufficient, by helping them find long-term stable housing.

# Cyclone Aid 2023 a Huge Success!

The St. Patrick's Catholic High School community celebrated another successful *Cyclone Aid* food drive, which was held on Saturday, April 1st.

A large portion of neighborhoods in the City of Sarnia were canvassed for non-perishable food items, in support of the Inn of the Good Shepherd. Students, staff and community volunteers remained at the school throughout the day to help sort the hundreds of donated items.

The generosity of the community is overwhelming and the school is grateful each year, on behalf of the Inn of the Good Shepherd, for the tremendous support.



# Students Send Valentine's Wishes of Love & Encouragement to Seniors in Wallaceburg & on Walpole Island

Residents of seniors' residences in Wallaceburg and on Walpole Island received Valentine's messages and a carnation, thanks to Westbrook's Flower Shoppe in Wallaceburg and several area schools.

Westbrook's threw out an invitation to students at schools across Chatham-Kent to provide greeting cards with Valentine's messages of love and encouragement and as a result shopping bags filled with cards arrived at the schools, along with bunches of carnations from Westbrook's!"

Students at both St. Elizabeth and Holy Family Catholic schools volunteered to assemble the cards and the carnations into gift packages, to be shipped to the seniors' residences.



**Special thanks to Westbrook's Flower Shoppe and the many students from schools across Chatham-Kent who participated.**



# Catholic Teachers' Association Raises Nearly \$9,000 to Purchase Bikes and Helmets for Deserving Students Across the District

A big 'thank you' goes out once again to the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA), for leading an annual Board-wide fundraising initiative to purchase bicycles for deserving students.

Nearly \$9,000 was raised this year – enough to purchase 44 bikes, helmets and bicycle locks, which were distributed to students, who do not own a bicycle.

Thank you once again to our OECTA partners for taking the lead, and to all our staff for their amazing support of this great initiative. What a tremendous gift and a great way to encourage physical activity and wellness among some very deserving students!

The bikes were delivered to students in May.



*Students in Mr. Zangolli's Grade 5/6 class, who participated in the Meaning of Home writing contest for Habitat for Humanity Sarnia-Lambton. With the students, in the back row, are (L-R) Trevor Taylor, Habitat for Humanity Media Coordinator; Mr. Zangolli; Scott Johnson, Director of Education, St. Clair Catholic DSB; and Angela Kirkland, Habitat for Humanity Fund Development Manager.*



*Angela Kirkland, Fund Development Manager for Habitat for Humanity Sarnia-Lambton speaks to students in Mr. Zangolli's Grade 5/6 class about the importance of safe and affordable housing.*

# St. Michael Bright's Grove Students Participate in Habitat for Humanity 'Meaning of Home' Writing Contest

Grade 5/6 students at St. Michael Catholic School in Bright's Grove participated in the *Habitat for Humanity* 'Meaning of Home' writing contest. Each year, *Habitat for Humanity* invites submissions from Grade 4, 5 and 6 students, to express what home means to them. The organization says the contest is a way to teach young people about the importance of safe and affordable housing.

Angela Kirkland and Trevor Taylor of *Habitat for Humanity Sarnia-Lambton* recently visited the classroom, to thank the students for their essays. This year, 119 entries were submitted by students in schools across Lambton County, which has resulted in \$1,190 dollars in funds for *Habitat for Humanity Sarnia-Lambton*.

Here are some of the students' thoughts about home, expressed in their writing:

“A house is called a house because it's empty, a home is called a home because it's filled with love. I know other people deserve love too.”

“...home isn't a place, it's the memories and the people that are always with you...”

“What makes a house a HOME is the love shown by friends and family. It gives you a feeling of warmth. It's the only place that's ever felt like HOME.”

“I love my home. Not because of the decorations or rooms, but because of what's inside. In my home you can find: love, hope and family. My family loves each other and that's what matters.”





## Milestones

*Celebrations and  
Accomplishments*







*(L-R): Father Chris Gillespie, Board Chaplain; Carol Bryden; and John Van Heck, Chair of the Board.*

### Carol Bryden Steps Down After 16 Years as a Catholic Trustee

After 16 years as a member of the Board of Trustees for St. Clair Catholic, the November 2022 Regular Meeting was Carol Bryden's last. She stepped down after choosing not to run in the 2022 school board election.

Carol first became a Trustee in 2006. She had previously retired from the Board after 34 years as an educator. Carol devoted a lifetime of service to Catholic education. During her 16 years as a dedicated Trustee, she also served as Chair and Vice Chair of the Board. Her steadfast commitment to our students, families and staff will be missed at the Board table.

Carol was thanked for her service by the Board of Trustees and senior administration at a brief ceremony, where she was presented with a plaque honouring her years of service and a framed letter from Bishop Ronald Fabbro, of the Diocese of London.

"I have a heavy but joyful heart as we say goodbye to Carol Bryden," said John Van Heck, Chair of the Board. "Carol has been a dedicated Trustee for 16 years and her experience as an educator has been such an asset. She will be missed."



### UCC Student Awarded Canada's Largest Undergraduate Scholarship

UCC student Elliott Vince was selected to receive a \$100,000 Schulich Leader Scholarship, to study Computing at Queens University. The prestigious entrance scholarships are awarded to 100 high school graduates enrolling in science, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM) undergraduate programs at 20 partner universities in Canada. Each academic year, high schools across Canada are permitted to submit one Schulich Leader nomination, based on academic excellence in STEM, entrepreneurial leadership and financial need.

Elliott Vince has upheld a high standard of academic excellence, maintaining final averages of 95% or higher every year, while balancing part-time employment and many extracurricular activities. He consistently demonstrated an outstanding work ethic, time management and organizational skills throughout his years at UCC.

He was selected from among other outstanding candidates to represent the school, as this year's Schulich Leader Scholarship nominee.

### UCC Lancer Boys AAA Basketball Team Wins Silver at OFSAA

The Ursuline College Chatham Lancers made history on Wednesday, March 8, as the Senior Boys AAA basketball team won the silver medal at the all-Ontario OFSAA tournament in Sarnia. With an overall record of 43-6 over the course of the season, the senior Lancers basketball team definitely created a buzz in Chatham-Kent and across Ontario.

The Lancers' dominant offense and pressure 'man-to-man' defense propelled them throughout the season and into their OFSAA run. The team is led by two Grade 9 students, one in Grade 10, three Grade 11s and one Grade 12 student. The entire team will return next season.

The crowd size was unprecedented for spectator attendance at OFSSA events. Officials were looking into the attendance history at gold medal games, with UCC has likely setting an OFSSA record.

### St. Patrick's Catholic High School Student Wins Stefanko Awards Bursary

St. Patrick's Catholic High School student Tyler Hopwood was the male student winner of the 2023 Stefanko Awards Bursary.

The purpose of the award is to honour athletic achievement and ability. It is also expected that candidates possess sound academic skills with an average of approximately 80 percent.

Tyler excelled at football and soccer throughout his high school career. The Grade 12 graduate has accepted a football scholarship to the University of Windsor.

*(L-R): Tyler Hopwood and Steve Stefanko.*



### UCC Student Helps Bring Home Gold as Member of Team Canada Women's World Championship Team

Abby Stonehouse, a Grade 11 student at Ursuline College, was a member of Team Canada's women's world championship team. Team Canada won the gold medal game by a score of 10 - 0 in Sweden.

It's the second consecutive year Team Canada has won the gold medal at the IIHF under-18 women's world championship.





## Investing in Catholic Education

*Responsible, Ethical & Wise Use  
of Taxpayer Dollars*







# St. Clair District Catholic Education Foundation Launches Four 50/50 Draws to Support Strategic Goals

In 2022-2023, the St. Clair District Catholic Education Foundation's paid out \$21,985 in prizes, through the Rafflebox 50/50 online fundraising tool. After fees and advertising, the Board netted nearly \$14,000 in revenue.

The draws are administered by the Foundation, which is a registered charity. Funds raised are used to support the strategic goals of the St. Clair Catholic District School Board, for initiatives not covered by Ministry of Education funding and are accessed by schools desiring to develop environmental initiatives that provide experiential learning for students, in alignment with the Board's Pastoral Plan, Caring for Our Common Home.

Participants must be 18 years of age. Foundation Committee members, directors and accounting staff are not eligible.



# Board of Trustees Approves Sale of Former Monsignor Uyen Catholic School

In August, the Board of Trustees approved the sale of the former Monsignor Uyen Catholic School, 255 Lark Street, Chatham for \$1,610,000. The sale was approved at a Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees on Thursday, August 10, 2023, which was held electronically via TEAMS.

The school building and property were declared surplus to the needs of the Board in 2019 and offered for sale to a list of preferred public sector agents at fair market value, as directed by Ontario Regulation 444/98. As there were no expressions of interest from the preferred agents, in November 2021 the Board issued a Request for Offers (RFO) to the general public. The RFO closed in December 2021 with three offers. Trustees opted not to accept any of the offers at that time.

The Board engaged Buckingham Realty (Windsor) Ltd. to list the property for sale. In July 2023 the property was again placed on the market with a list price of \$750,000. Two open houses were held in July with a closing date of August 1, 2023. Six offers were received with the highest bid from J. Robert Myers in Trust at \$1,610,000.

In September 2021, the Monsignor Uyen Catholic School community moved from the Lark Street property to the newly refurbished school at 545 Baldoon Road, the site the former Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School. Our Lady of Fatima closed in June 2020, with the Fatima community relocating to the new St. Angela Merici Catholic School in September 2020, along with students from the former St. Agnes and St. Vincent Catholic school communities.







# Blessing the Ground Ceremonies Held at Building Sites of New Catholic Schools in Chatham and Sarnia

In October, members of the St. Clair Catholic family gathered at the building sites of two new schools – the south Chatham Catholic elementary school and the new Gregory A. Hogan Catholic School – to ask God’s blessing on the ground. The ceremonies were held in Chatham and Sarnia on Wednesday, October 5, 2022. Indigenous partners from the Kettle and Stony Point and Walpole Island First Nations were invited to perform smudging ceremonies.

In Chatham, Trevor Jones, Chatham-Kent – Leamington MPP, brought greetings from the Government of Ontario; while in Sarnia, Bob Bailey, MPP for Sarnia-Lambton spoke on behalf of the government.

In Chatham, the \$19,538,014 project to build a new 564-pupil place elementary school includes \$2,083,114 in funding for a three-room child care centre. Additional capital funds from the Ministry in the amount of \$1,048,675 for Full Day Kindergarten and a further \$2,007,440 in Board funds, are also included.



The new Gregory A. Hogan Catholic School in Sarnia is an investment of \$21,833,171 and includes a new 659-pupil place elementary school, with \$4,589,154 in funding for a five-room child care centre. Also included in the funding is a \$200,000 donation from the Hogan Family, to support an expanded 900 square foot community room in the new school.

The Board expressed its great appreciation, on behalf of the Board of Trustees and the entire St. Clair Catholic system, to the Government of Ontario and the Ministry of Education, for the significant funding that makes these projects possible.

Students from the Gregory A. Hogan school community in Sarnia, and the St. Ursula, Georges P. Vanier and former St. Joseph communities in Chatham, attended the blessing ceremonies and provided beautiful and moving songs of worship. The ceremonies were led by Father John Jassica of the Chatham Catholic Family of Parishes and Father Paul Kim of the Sarnia Bluewater Roman Catholic Family of Parishes.

Throughout the year, St. Clair Catholic’s student Action News Team kept school communities up-to-date with construction progress. Their reports are published on the Board website.



Students from Gregory A. Hogan Catholic School participate in the blessing ceremony.



(L-R): Chatham-Kent – Leamington MPP Trevor Jones; Lisa Demers, Superintendent of Education; and Scott Johnson, Director of Education.



Leigh Ann and Cedric Isaac lead a smudging ceremony at the ground blessings.



Father John Jassica, Chatham Catholic Family of Parishes blesses the ground at the site of the new South Chatham Catholic elementary school.



(L-R): Erica and Barry Hogan; Sarnia-Lambton MPP Bob Bailey; Laura Callaghan, Superintendent of Education; and Scott Johnson, Director of Education.



Students from Georges P. Vanier, St. Ursula and the former St. Joseph Catholic Schools lead singing for the program.



Father Paul Kim, Sarnia-Bluewater Roman Catholic Family of Parishes blesses the ground at the site of the new Gregory A. Hogan Catholic School.





## \$8.2 Million in Capital Projects Identified for 2022-2023

Each year, the St. Clair Catholic District School Board identifies priority capital projects, to upgrade, renew and maintain school facilities. The Ministry of Education provides annual funding allocations to support these expenditures.

School Condition Improvement (SCI) is a capital renewal program, which allows school boards to revitalize and renew aged building components that have exceeded, or will exceed, their life cycle.

The Ministry provides an additional School Renewal Allocation (SRA), which allows school boards to revitalize and renew aged building systems and components, including roof replacements, HVAC systems, building automation systems, air-conditioning systems and maintenance requirements, such as painting, roof patching and pavement/parking lot repairs.

The Board budgeted \$6,956,336 under SCI and SRA allocations for the following projects. The Board of Trustees approved these capital expenditures, as required due to the value of the projects, under Sec. B. Policy – Purchasing. All work was completed throughout the remainder of the 2022-2023 school year.

RENOVATIONS & ALTERATIONS	
LOCATION	PROJECT
Catholic Education Centre	Board Room Acoustic Correction
St. Joseph, Corunna	Universal Washroom Upgrade
Ursuline College	Gymnasium Renovations

MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL PROJECTS	
LOCATION	PROJECT
Good Shepherd, Holy Family, St. Anne, Blenheim, Holy Rosary, St. Joseph, Tilbury and St. Anne, Sarnia	PA System Upgrades
St. John Fisher	Roof Top Unit Replacement
St. John Fisher	Structural Steel Reinforcement

BUILDING ENVELOPE PROJECTS	
LOCATION	PROJECT
St. Joseph, Tilbury	Window Replacement & Gym Envelope Upgrade
St. Philip	Partial Roof Renovations (1973, 1999 and 2006 Additions)

SITE IMPROVEMENTS	
LOCATION	PROJECT
Christ the King	School Yard Improvements
St. Anne, Blenheim	Parking Lot Upgrade

An additional \$1.29 million in capital projects has been identified and will be allocated to the projects listed below. Capital spending for these projects falls beneath the requirements of Sec. B Policy – Purchasing and does not require approval of the Board of Trustees.

RENOVATIONS & ALTERATIONS	
LOCATION	PROJECT
Christ the King	Staff Room Renovation
St. Angela Merici	Community Room Alterations
St. Michael, Bright’s Grove	Child Care Upgrades

MECHANICAL & ELECTRICAL PROJECTS	
LOCATION	PROJECT
Catholic Education Centre	Elevator Replacement
Christ the King	Exterior Lighting
St. Anne, Sarnia	Sink Replacement
Good Shepherd	Domestic Hot Water Boiler Replacement
St. Anne, Blenheim	Fire Alarm Panel Replacement
St. Michael, Ridgetown	Roof Top Unit Replacement

BUILDING ENVELOPE PROJECTS	
LOCATION	PROJECT
Gregory Hogan	Partial Roof Replacement (2013 Addition)
St. Anne, Blenheim	Exterior Brick Repair

SITE IMPROVEMENTS	
LOCATION	PROJECT
St. Michael, Ridgetown	School Yard Improvements
St. Philip	School Yard Improvements
Ursuline College	LED Road Sign

TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATIONS	
LOCATION	PROJECT
Port Lambton	Relocate Portables from Sacred Heart





## Board Approves \$1.07 Million in Funding for Track Upgrade

**The St. Clair Catholic Board of Trustees has approved a \$1.07 million upgrade to the track at St. Patrick's Catholic High School. Some new features of the upgraded track design will include:**

- Rubberized running track surface including 6 full lanes and 8 lanes on 100m stretch
- Long jump and triple jump runway and pit
- Javelin runway
- High jump runway
- Discus circle and fenced cage
- Bleacher pad
- Perimeter fencing surrounding track area
- Conduits for future electrical power boxes

A portion of the property planned for construction is owned by the Conseil scolaire catholique Providence (CSC Providence). The Board has received written approval from CSC Providence to proceed to tender with this project. CSC Providence will share a portion of the cost equivalent to the percentage of enrolment under the terms of a pre-existing agreement between the two boards. Based on enrolment at October 31, 2022, the CSC Providence share of the project will be seven percent of the total cost. The remainder of the project cost will be funded by St. Clair Catholic's School Renewal Allocation.

Throughout the 2022-2023 school year, a committee of teachers, coaches, principals, Board staff and members of the Lambton Catholic Sports Athletic Council met with the prime consultant, Cornerstone Architecture and the specialist track consultant, RK & Associates, to determine the proposed design for the upgraded track.

A fundraising initiative was launched in the Fall of 2023, to help cover enhancements to the track. The project is expected to be completed by Spring 2024.



## Board of Trustees Approves Budget of Nearly \$131 Million

In June, the Board of Trustees passed a \$130,998,620 budget for the 2023-2024 school year. The budget was developed in alignment with the Board's Strategic Plan and 2023-2024 Board Improvement Plan and is a commitment to balancing supports for all students.

The 2023-2024 budget includes a deficit for compliance of \$664,636, primarily due to a funding shortfall in transportation. Although transportation funding has not been reduced, the Ministry has introduced a new funding formula which does not completely align to the costs of providing transportation services for this region. CLASS Transportation Services, a consortium operated jointly with the Lambton Kent District School Board, will continue to collaborate with both school boards to analyze the extent of the difference and develop strategies to achieve a balanced transportation budget in future years.

Other fluctuating budget items that are monitored rigorously include staff replacement costs and costs impacted by inflation, such as maintenance of facilities, due rising utility and commodity prices.

### Priorities of the 2023-2024 budget include:

- Continue into year three of a three-year mental health and addictions strategy and annual action plan for mental health, informed by School Climate Survey results and School Mental Health Ontario;
- Continue a focus on engagement of all students through the Board's Equity Action Plan, Indigenous Education Action Plan, Special Education Plan, and supports for multi-lingual learners;
- Focus on curriculum – a continued implementation of revised curriculum; Reading Success for All; and implementation of new resources in the Growing in Faith – Growing in Christ curriculum; secondary de-streaming implementation; supporting literacy and numeracy for Grades 7 to 12;
- Support at-risk students for graduation;
- Engage secondary students in experiential learning and pathways planning;
- Board-owned devices and strong connections to the broadband network for every student and classroom educator;
- Board owned devices for all secondary students engaged in e-learning.
- Budget estimates for 2023-2024 comply with all Ministry of Education accountability and reporting requirements. The approved budget was forwarded to the Ministry of Education.





St. Clair Catholic  
District School Board

## By the Numbers...

### # OF SCHOOLS...

25

23  
Elementary

2  
Secondary

1555  
Employees

556  
Classroom  
Teachers

39  
Principals &  
Vice-Principals

### # OF STUDENTS...

8646

6193  
Elementary

2453  
Secondary

Catholic  
Education  
Future  
Ready



# Board of Trustees



**John Van Heck**  
*Chair of the Board*



**David Argenti**  
*Vice Chair*



**Jennifer McCann**  
*Trustee*



**Mat Roop**  
*Trustee*



**Brenda Rumble**  
*Trustee*



**Jann Tooshkenig**  
*Trustee*



**Linda Ward**  
*Trustee*



**Father Chris Gillespie**  
*Board Chaplain*



**Samantha Lozon**  
*Student Trustee*



**Annabelle Rayson**  
*Student Trustee*

## Senior Administration



**St. Clair Catholic District School Board Executive Council:**

*Front Row (L-R): Amy Janssens, Associate Director – Corporate Services & Treasurer; Scott Johnson, Director of Education & Secretary of the Board;*

*Back Row (L-R): James Duff, Executive Manager – Human Resource Services; Lisa Demers, Superintendent of Education; Laura Callaghan, Superintendent of Education; and Chris Kehoe, Superintendent of Education.*





# St. Clair Catholic

## District School Board

420 Creek Street, Wallaceburg, ON N8A 4C4 | 519-627-6762

**Toll Free** 866-336-6139 | [www.st-clair.net](http://www.st-clair.net)

Catholic  
Education  
Future  
Ready