



DIRECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT 2024



St. Clair Catholic
District School Board

Catholic
Education
Future
Ready



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Message from the Director of Education

As I prepare to share my final Director’s Annual Report, I do so with a deep sense of gratitude for the St. Clair Catholic community and pride in our shared accomplishments during the 2023-2024 school year. This year’s theme, “We Are Called to Love,” has been a guiding light, inspiring every member of our community to live out our faith and values through love, service, and excellence.



Reflecting on this past year, I am especially proud of the significant milestones we have achieved together. Among the most notable are the opening and blessing of two beautiful new schools, Gregory A. Hogan Catholic School in Sarnia and St. Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School in Chatham, which serve as vibrant, faith-filled spaces where our students can learn and grow. These new facilities stand as a testament to our commitment to providing exceptional learning environments for our students and investing in the future of Catholic education.

This year, our students demonstrated remarkable progress in key areas of academic achievement, particularly in mathematics. Grade 3 students achieved an impressive 7% improvement in math scores, while students in our targeted “math priority schools” saw gains of 11% in Grade 3 and 17% in Grade 6 math, far exceeding provincial growth averages.

These indicators reflect our ongoing commitment to enhancing literacy and numeracy across our schools and highlight the dedication of our staff in fostering student success.

Throughout St. Clair Catholic, the spirit of service and faith has remained strong. From acts of kindness and charity to impactful social justice initiatives, our students, staff, and families have embodied this year’s theme, demonstrating that we are indeed called to love in countless ways. Together, we are building a community of faith and excellence, where each person is valued and encouraged to achieve their God-given potential.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to every member of our St. Clair Catholic family. As I look to my final months with the Board, I am filled with hope and confidence that the foundation we have built together will continue to flourish. It has been a privilege to serve alongside you, and I am deeply grateful for your support, dedication, and faith in our mission to transform lives through Catholic education.

Sincerely,
Scott Johnson
Director of Education

Message from the Chair of the Board

As we reflect on the past year, it’s essential to acknowledge both our achievements and the path ahead. The Director’s Annual Report offers us a valuable opportunity to celebrate the progress we’ve made together and to reaffirm our commitment to excellence in Catholic education, guided by our mission: “*Learning Together Today, Transforming Tomorrow.*”

In the pages that follow, you will find inspiring examples of how the St. Clair Catholic community continues to thrive. From the successful opening of our new schools to impressive gains in student achievement, particularly in mathematics, our collective efforts are evident. We have fostered an environment where academic excellence, athletic achievement, and a deep commitment to faith and service flourish.

I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated staff, whose unwavering commitment and passion make a profound difference in the lives of our students. Together, we embody the foundational triad of home, school, and parish, partnering in our mission to nurture our students as they grow in faith and knowledge, preparing them to be compassionate and engaged members of society.

As we enter this final year of leadership under Scott Johnson, I invite you to celebrate the incredible milestones we have achieved and to look forward with hope and excitement for what is yet to come. I am confident that our community will continue to embody the spirit of love and service that defines St. Clair Catholic.



May God’s blessings be with you and your family as we embark on another successful year together.

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



Learning & Innovation

Teaching transferable skills, critical thinking, and creativity



Secondary Literacy

During the 2023-2024 school year, Literacy Leads continued to enhance structured literacy practices for secondary students.

Building on previous Orton-Gillingham training, the “Reading for the Love of It” conference, and introductory Wilson Reading Systems training, staff developed their skills to create enriched learning opportunities. These experiences allowed staff to integrate Wilson Reading Systems into the English curriculum, fostering a supportive and successful learning environment.

In a new approach, the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) for Grade 10 students was administered over two days, leading to positive feedback from both staff and students. This adjustment, along with focused preparation, contributed to improved success rates compared to previous years. Additionally, secondary educators implemented the updated Grade 9 English curriculum, collaborating across the District to identify supplementary resources and opportunities for students.



Secondary Numeracy

St. Pat’s and UCC have both demonstrated a strong commitment to fostering student success in mathematics, achieving impressive progress despite not being designated as math priorities by the Ministry. Through innovative strategies and focused support, these schools have cultivated an environment where students can thrive in numeracy.

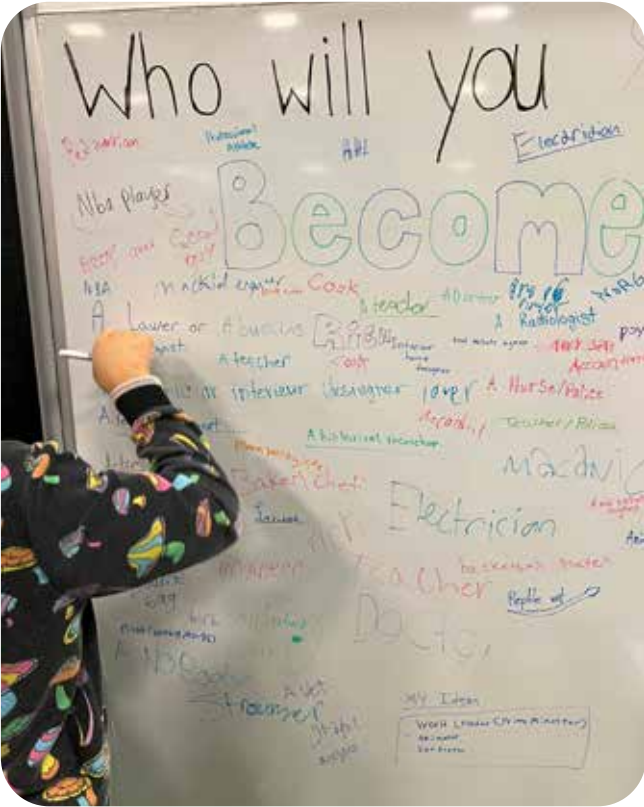
In 2023-2024, secondary numeracy efforts concentrated on enhancing intermediate math courses with a student success approach. Teachers collaborated in sessions focused on Grade 10 applied and academic math, delving into curriculum analysis and assessment strategies. A new resource was piloted in Grade 9 math at one school, and EQAO assessments were incorporated into students’ grades.

Additional after-school support was offered to students in Grades 9 to 11, with targeted sessions for Grade 9 students available by invitation. This comprehensive approach contributed to a 3 percentage point increase in EQAO math scores, showcasing positive student outcomes.

Cooperative Education & Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP)

During the 2023-2024 school year, a total of 254 students were enrolled in cooperative education classes. Among these, 122 placements were in skilled trades, with students registered as participants in the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP). Support from the Chatham-Kent and Sarnia-Lambton communities remains instrumental in the success of our cooperative education program, with new placements being introduced each year.

Two students completed Level 1 Welding (300 hours) at Lambton College, while another two students undertook Level 1 Electrician (240 hours), and one student pursued Level 1 Hairstyling (240 hours) at St. Clair College in Windsor. Additionally, eleven Grade 12 students were awarded skilled trades bursaries of \$1,000 each, funded by the Ministry of Education.



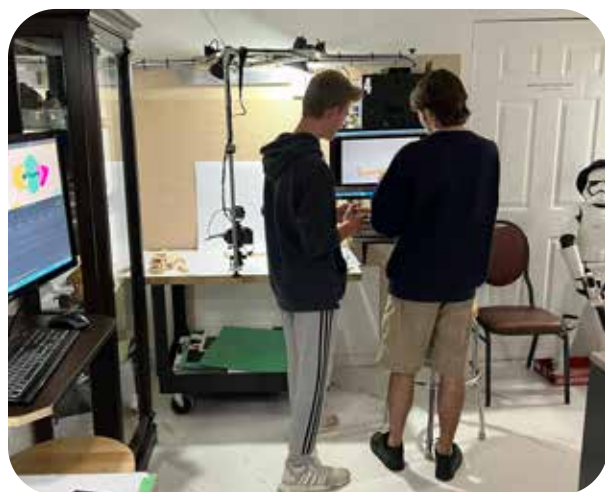
Dual Credits & School Within a College (SWAC) Programs

In the 2023-2024 school year, students successfully completed a total of 234 dual credits available to both secondary and School Within a College (SWAC) students. Within the SWAC program, 30 students from UCC and 11 students from St. Pat’s achieved their Ontario Secondary School Diploma.



Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) Programs

A total of 202 students in Grades 11 and 12 were enrolled in 11 Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) programs. Thanks to SHSM funding, more than \$56,000 was allocated for training and an additional \$62,000 was provided for classroom resources. Field trips were organized to career fairs and several post-secondary institutions, offering students reach-ahead and experiential learning opportunities related to their chosen career paths. The Board anticipates that these programs will yield 82 SHSM Red Seal Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) graduates.



Secondary Summer eLearning & Travel for Credit

In July of 2024, St. Clair Catholic provided dynamic summer learning experiences through a broad selection of online eLearning courses for secondary students. With 266 students enrolled across seven different eLearning courses, offerings allowed students to advance academically during the summer while supported by dedicated staff.

In addition to eLearning, three unique Travel for Credit courses provided students with experiential learning opportunities abroad. Fifty-two students from St. Pat's and UCC participated in civics and careers courses, travelling to Ottawa, Montreal, and New York. A Grade 12 English course also brought 19 students to England, enriching their studies with a culturally immersive experience.

The Summer Co-op program, available at both secondary schools, enabled 60 students to earn two credits through hands-on learning. Secondary Summer Learning Principals Michael Giroux, Ryan Hare, and Tamara Johnson, along with TELT Payton Jacklin, provided invaluable leadership and support throughout the program. Special thanks to OECTA partners for their ongoing dedication to summer learning initiatives, ensuring students have impactful and meaningful educational opportunities year-round.

UCC Art Club Celebrates Crowfest with Artistic Window Designs

Students from UCC's Art Club contributed their time and talent to the promotion of Crowfest 2023 by designing and painting three large crow-themed windows at Crow City Coffee in Chatham. Their artwork, displayed alongside pieces from other local artists, added a vibrant touch to the café for the festival.



UCC's Sold-Out 'Matilda' Marks Triumphant Return to the Stage

UCC's production of "Matilda: The Musical" marked a triumphant return to the stage, with all eight performances during the five-day run completely sold out. Drawing in a total of 4,000 attendees, the show captivated audiences and showcased the talents of approximately 70 students involved in various roles, from onstage performances to technical support. The production was further supported by over 40 dedicated volunteers, including staff, alumni, parents, and community partners. The overwhelming success of the show highlighted the strong community support for the arts and the exceptional talent of UCC students.





St. Pat's ELL Students Enjoy a Fun-Filled Skating Lesson

In February, English Language Learners (ELL) at St. Pat's experienced a new facet of Canadian culture with a skating lesson at the Progressive Auto Sales Arena. Many ELL students, especially those coming from warmer climates, had never skated before. The event, organized by the coach of the St. Pat's girls hockey team, allowed students to practice language skills in a fun, interactive setting. Team members assisted with the skating lesson, making it an enjoyable and memorable day for all involved.



UCC Celebrates Black History Month with Inaugural Panel Discussion

UCC marked Black History Month with its first panel discussion, aligning with Kindness Week celebrations. The panel featured Craig Shreve, author from North Buxton; Lindsey Travis, psychotherapist with Future Black Female; Oluwatosin Akinbinu, legal expert; and Kyle Wright, Acting Sergeant of Community Mobilization for the Chatham-Kent Police Service. Organized by the UCC United Alliance, the event highlighted the school's dedication to inclusive dialogue and celebrated the significant contributions of Black individuals to the school, community, and throughout history.



"Rice Is Nice" Luncheon at UCC Celebrates Global Cuisine

Organized by the UCC United Alliance and Kidwin Zhiingwaak (FMNI) student groups, the "Rice Is Nice" luncheon showcased rice dishes from various cultures around the world and included recipes collected from students and prepared by the school's culinary arts program. UCC's entire student body and staff were invited to sample dishes from Nigeria, Japan, Canada's First Nations, Tanzania, El Salvador, and the Mediterranean.

The event, which aligned with Nutrition Month and OSNP's Soup for School Food Community Campaign, aimed to celebrate cultural diversity and raise awareness for the Ontario Student Nutrition Program. The day was marked by vibrant cultural engagement and showcased the culinary talents of the school's students.





Elementary Literacy

In 2023-2024, St. Clair Catholic focused on enhancing literacy through targeted professional development and resource implementation.

Fall Professional Development days for staff featured in-service training for teachers on the New Language Curriculum for Grades 1 to 8 and the ongoing implementation of structured literacy, an evidence-based approach to reading instruction.

Grade 4 teachers received classroom support for morphology instruction with the new resource “Morpheme Magic” and utilized the Developmental Spelling Assessment to enhance foundational skills. Additionally, the pilot program for Lexia Core 5, a research-proven reading program, was launched as a Tier 1 resource for 100 Grade 1 students. The individualized lessons from Lexia resulted in significant learning improvements, leading to the purchase of licenses for all Grade 1 to 3 students for the 2024-2025 school year.

The literacy team made significant strides by creating the St. Clair Catholic Primary and Junior Language Block framework, which includes both single and split-grade structures. They also developed a comprehensive week-by-week scope and sequence incorporating the UFLI resource for foundational skills instruction in Kindergarten to Grade 2. Professional development sessions were conducted for all primary educators, including Early Childhood Educators, to effectively implement UFLI as a Tier 1 tool for explicit and differentiated reading instruction.

Elementary Tutoring

In 2023-2024, St. Clair Catholic hired 27 university students to provide in-class tutoring for 216 Grade 2 and 4 students, using Lexia as the primary tool for foundational skill development.

Over an 8-week period, students received targeted support in key learning areas. This initiative, combined with a Lexia pilot in Grade 1 and 2 classrooms, demonstrated strong student growth, leading to the decision to purchase Lexia licenses for all Grade 1 to 3 students in the upcoming school year.

Elementary Mathematics

Under the Math Achievement Action Plan, eight elementary schools were identified as “math priority schools”, targeting 11 grade bands across Grades 3 to 6.

Math facilitators collaborated closely with classroom teachers in these schools, modelling and co-teaching lessons and providing small-group instruction for select students. This targeted support led to a 14.5 percentage point increase in students achieving levels 3 and 4 on the EQAO math assessment year-over-year at priority schools. Board-wide, while junior level results remained steady, primary level achievement rose by 7 percentage points.

Across all schools, the Board’s comprehensive scope and sequence document for Grades 1 to 8 continues to serve as a valuable planning resource, enabling collaborative professional growth. Recent updates to this document include assessment samples and lessons focused on teaching through mathematical processes, further supporting teachers and principals in delivering consistent, high-quality math instruction.





Elementary Elementary Outdoor Education & Innovative Learning

St. Michael, Ridgetown Unveils New Outdoor Classroom

Students and teachers at St. Michael, Ridgetown quickly began utilizing their new outdoor classroom for a range of activities, including social-emotional learning, buddy work, Christian meditation, and physical activities. The innovative space features drainage and artificial turf for quick recovery after rain, along with sun sails for shade. The project is part of St. Clair Catholic's broader initiative to enhance outdoor learning across the district and aims to foster curiosity, improve wellness, and expand educational opportunities beyond the traditional classroom setting.



Exploring Water: Education, Safety, and Conservation

St. Clair Catholic students have been diving into environmental learning and water safety through two impactful initiatives. Over 650 Grade 4 and 5 students, along with 75 UCC student leaders, attended the 12th annual Chatham-Kent and Lambton Children's Water Festival at C.M. Wilson Conservation Area. The festival offered over 40 interactive stations covering themes like water conservation, pollution, aquatic habitats, and traditional ecological knowledge from local First Nations, while addressing issues such as lakeshore flooding and algae blooms.

Meanwhile, the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority visited nine elementary schools to deliver the Spring Water Awareness Program. These engaging sessions focused on water safety, featuring activities such as skits, role-playing, and hands-on demonstrations to teach about the risks of hypothermia and other water-related hazards. Together, these initiatives emphasized the importance of water in our environment and community.



Holy Family Students Leap into the World of Animated Film-Making

Grade 6 and 7 students at Holy Family participated in an engaging workshop on animation led by SheepDog Animation. The interactive sessions covered the full animation process, from filming and post-production to sound effects editing. Students utilized hand-painted backgrounds to bring their stories to life and also explored 3D sculpting in a second workshop. Both sessions were highly successful, leaving students excited and deeply engaged in the creative process.

Holy Family Students Triumph at Provincial Esports Championship

Holy Family students achieved victory at the Provincial Esports Championship, hosted at the NEXUS Esports Arena. Competing in Rocket League, Holy Family's teams—Team Parrot, Rage Team, and The Exterminators—demonstrated exceptional skill and teamwork, going undefeated to win the Provincial Rocket League Championship in the Middle School Division. This victory capped off a successful season marked by other notable achievements, including top finishes in Provincial Super Smash Bros. and Fortnite Championships.





Gregory A. Hogan Hosts First World Fair Celebrating Global Cultures

Gregory A. Hogan recently hosted its inaugural World Fair, a milestone event celebrating diversity and community engagement. Held in the school gymnasium, the fair featured a variety of booths representing different cultures, offering traditional foods, handmade crafts, and artifacts from around the world. The fair included engaging performances by students, such as traditional dance and a Brazilian rodeo demonstration. A standout attraction was the French Café, organized by Grade 8 students, where guests enjoyed French cuisine and beverages, including poutine, highlighting French-Canadian heritage.



Students Showcase Artistic Talents in Expressive Arts Show

Students from across St. Clair Catholic showcased their talents and artistry through participation in “Look Up!,” an expressive arts show presented by the Pathways Centre for Children and directed by St. Clair Catholic teacher, Jen Brown-Neade.

The show took place at the Imperial Theatre and was a collaborative effort, with students not only performing but also contributing as backstage crew members. Staff were also involved, playing in the band, managing the stage, and working on videos and projections. The production was celebrated for its inspirational and uplifting content, highlighting the dedication and creativity of everyone involved.



St. Angela Merici Choir Takes Center Stage in National Music Monday Spotlight

Students from St. Angela Merici were featured in the Music Monday National Spotlight Concert, celebrating 20 years of Music Mondays. Held on May 6, the event showcased young musicians and celebrated the role of music in education.

St. Angela Merici’s choir, known as “The Sammies,” performed “Máhsi ts’enjwé” in Dene Kede, highlighting their dedication to cultural heritage.



New Year Tradition at St. Philip: Turkey Dinner and Skating

St. Philip introduced a new tradition by celebrating the New Year with a turkey dinner and skating event. Following the cancellation of their Christmas dinner and skating party in 2022 due to a winter storm, the school moved the festivities to January, which proved to be a success. On January 12, students participated in skating sessions split between morning and afternoon, while the entire school community enjoyed a turkey dinner over lunch, prepared by the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 216 and served by the Parent Council. Skating was made possible through donations from two school families. The event was well-received, marking a joyful start to the year!



Chatham-Kent Students Explore Career Opportunities at Local Expo

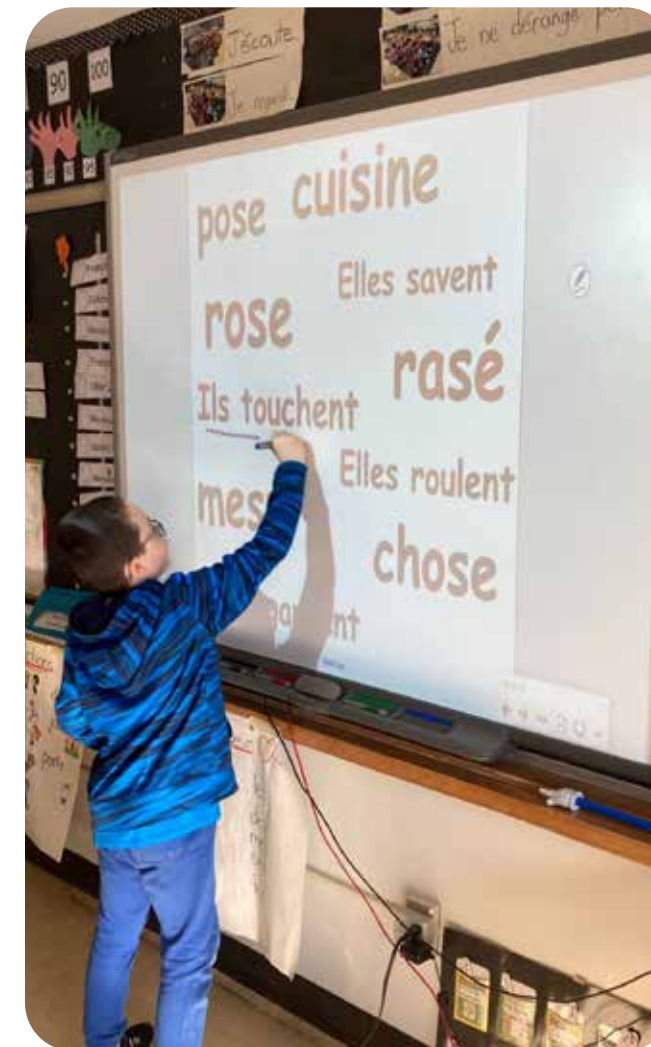
Over 600 Grade 7 and 8 students from St. Clair Catholic elementary schools and about 250 secondary students from UCC participated in the Learning, Earning, and Living in CK Career Expo at the John D. Bradley Centre in Chatham. The expo provided students with valuable insights into various career paths, including healthcare, skilled trades, military, and public works. Attendees engaged in interactive activities, spoke with potential employers, and explored post-secondary education options available in the Chatham-Kent area. The event aimed to connect students with local opportunities and foster understanding of their future career prospects.

Elementary French Immersion

In 2023-2024, St. Clair Catholic implemented Structured Literacy across all Primary French Immersion schools in Grades 1 to 3 with resources supporting explicit, systematic, and multi-modal literacy instruction.

The “I Can Read in French/Je sais lire en Français” program, covering Grades 1 to 3, and the Pratique Phonémique Phonemic Awareness Program for Kindergarten to Grade 4 were introduced, along with Sound Wall resources and decodable texts to strengthen Tier 1 instruction. Grade 3 students began formal English Language instruction with UFLI, while Grade 4 adopted Morpheme Magic to further support English skills.

A pre- and post-implementation survey at Monsignor Uyen and Gregory A. Hogan, two of St. Clair Catholic’s French Immersion schools, indicated improved student confidence and enjoyment in reading and writing in French. At the secondary level, Grade 12 participation and success in the DELF exam have increased, highlighting the program’s success in fostering language proficiency.





KinderSTART

The 2023-2024 KinderSTART event was a resounding success, with 474 future Kindergarten students, known as KinderSTARs, attending. The initiative aimed to foster a positive first experience for families, strengthen partnerships with Catholic schools, and promote Kindergarten registration.

KinderSTART provided an effective and supportive registration process for the upcoming school year. Families and students interacted with school staff and learned about various resources available in Catholic education, including support for Indigenous education and parish pathways. KinderSTART also facilitated partnerships with community organizations like Child Care, Public Health, and EarlyON, enhancing the overall experience.

The initiative also allowed schools to observe and assess potential student needs early, ensuring that appropriate supports can be recommended before the school year begins.



Summer Learning

The annual elementary Summer Learning program, held in July, successfully engaged over 80 students across four sites—St. Anne, Blenheim; Monsignor Uyen; Holy Family; and St. Anne, Sarnia. Each half-day of programming began with math-focused independent work, online activities, and group learning, followed by STEAM activities led by community and educational partners.

Students participated in a variety of hands-on learning experiences facilitated by these partners. Noteworthy activities included a visit from Special Constable Brent Boundy, who discussed community safety, and Ms. Erica from the Chatham-Kent Public Library, who led a Lego bridge-building project. Christina Sydorko from the Oil Museum of Canada also demonstrated the use of planes, ramps, and pulleys.

St. Clair Catholic extends heartfelt thanks to our incredible partners at Noelle's Gift to Children and the Ontario Student Nutrition Program for their generous support in providing healthy snacks for our Summer Learning students. Your contributions have nourished not only students' bodies but also their ability to learn and grow.



Indigenous Education

Honouring Indigenous History Through Reflection and Learning

Throughout the 2023-2024 school year, St. Clair Catholic schools have come together to honour Indigenous history, culture, and rights through impactful observances and activities.

On May 5, flags at all St. Clair Catholic schools and buildings were lowered for Red Dress Day, commemorating the lives of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, Two-Spirit, and gender-diverse people in Canada. Students created art and explored the Red Dress Project by Métis artist Jaime Black, as well as findings from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

In June, students celebrated National Indigenous History Month and National Indigenous Peoples Day on June 21 with lessons honouring Indigenous culture and traditions, including the summer solstice and the Strawberry Moon. Schools raised the Every Child Matters flag, designed by Cedric Isaac from Bkejwanong Territory, symbolizing remembrance, respect, and reconciliation.

From September 25 to 30, students engaged in Orange Shirt Week, themed “Gidinawendimin / We Are All Related / Nous sommes tous liés.” September 30 marked the 10th anniversary of Orange Shirt Day, and included discussions with Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Keepers, Survivors, and their families, deepening awareness about the Residential School System’s legacy, anti-racism, and anti-bullying.

Finally, Treaties Recognition Week in November offered students hands-on learning with Indigenous Knowledge Keepers, focusing on treaty rights, identity, and relationships. Indigenous Veterans Day on November 8 featured a presentation by Maurice Switzer on the contributions of Indigenous Veterans, further enriching students’ appreciation for Indigenous perspectives across all grades.





St. John Fisher Students Collaborate on *Coming Together* Video for Indigenous Film Festival

Students from St. John Fisher, Kinnwood Central, and Hillside elementary schools unveiled their collaborative video, *Coming Together*, at the Learning and Healing Together Indigenous Film Festival. The video, featuring a performance of a song in Ojibwe and a round dance, was a highlight of the festival. Held at the Kineto Theatre in Forest in April, the festival celebrated Indigenous filmmakers, local cuisine, and art displays.



Elementary Students Explore Indigenous Culture at Aamjiwnaang and Bkejwanong

Grade 5 students from across eight St. Clair Catholic elementary schools, along with Bkejwanong Kinomaagewgamig and Hillside Elementary School, participated in a two-day cultural event at Aamjiwnaang First Nation and Bkejwanong Territory. The students engaged in Indigenous Games such as lacrosse, archery, and Ding Ball, and learned from Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and youth mentors. Students also explored traditional stories and the cultural significance of lacrosse. The event was praised for its educational value and active student participation, with organizers and local Indigenous leaders expressing their gratitude.



Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) Results

The Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) has released the 2023-2024 assessment results, which cover school, Board, and provincial performance in Grade 3 and Grade 6 reading, writing, and mathematics, as well as Grade 9 mathematics and the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT).

At the elementary level, Grade 3 students achieved a notable 7% improvement in mathematics, surpassing the provincial average, while writing scores remained steady. Although Grade 6 math scores aligned with the province, reading and writing showed slight decreases, highlighting opportunities for targeted literacy support.

At the secondary level, Grade 9 math scores increased by 3%, approaching provincial standards, and OSSLT results remained strong, with an 85% pass rate that aligns with provincial outcomes.

The Board's focus on students with special education needs and Indigenous students continues to drive growth. Indigenous students showed outstanding achievements, especially in Grade 6 writing and Grade 9 math, with scores significantly above provincial levels. Additionally, math priority schools, which received focused interventions, saw remarkable growth, with math scores in Grade 3 and Grade 6 increasing by 11% and 17%, respectively, far outpacing provincial improvements. These results underscore St. Clair Catholic's commitment to fostering academic success and addressing areas for continued improvement across its schools.

Grade 3 Results for St. Clair Catholic Students:

Reading: 70% (-2%)
Writing: 63% (unchanged)
Math: 66% (+7%)

Grade 6 Results for St. Clair Catholic Students:

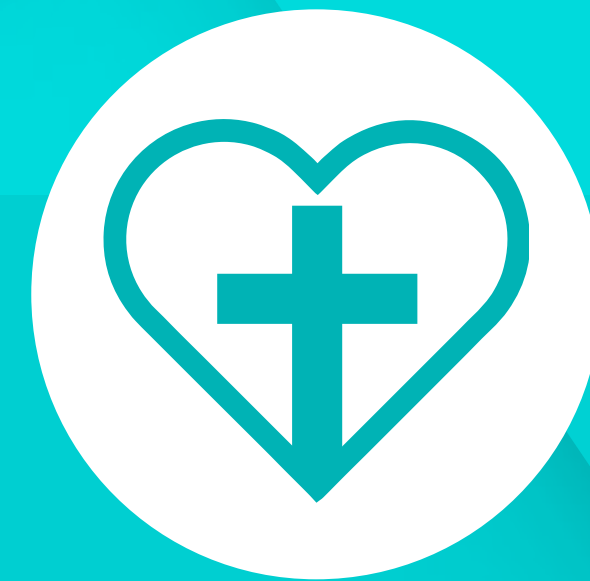
Reading: 78% (-7%)
Writing: 80% (-5%)
Math: 47% (unchanged)

Grade 9 Mathematics Results:

Students achieving at grade level 3 and above: 50% (+3%)

Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) Result:

St. Clair Catholic student success rate: 85% (-3%)



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



Board Pastoral Plan 2023 | 2024

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

The Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations guide us toward becoming...



We are Called to Love Prayer

*God is love,
Love is our calling, and the goal for which you have made us.
As we celebrate Catholic Education,
may our love in action reveal to our world
that we are people of justice and mercy.
May our daily words and examples show clearly
that we are people of faith and hope.
In the ways we reflect you daily,
may everyone recognize us as people of joy.
Help us to never forget how much you love us,
and to cherish your life within us,
which gives energy and direction to our loving.
May we hear your call to love generously and inclusively,
and may we call our world to be more loving also.
All of this we ask in the name of Jesus, our Friend and our Lord.
Amen.*



2023-2024 Key Actions

This year, St. Clair Catholic embraced the theme of Catholic Education Week 2024: “We are Called to Love,” reflecting the guiding Scripture from 1 John 4:12: “If we love one another, God lives in us.” This passage emphasizes that love is central to our understanding of God and our relationships with one another. Each month was dedicated to a specific sub-theme, focusing on various aspects of love and its expression within the community.

The overarching theme draws inspiration from Pope Francis’ upcoming Jubilee Year 2025 theme, “Pilgrims of Hope,” and the fifth anniversary of Renewing the Promise, which reinforces the importance of love in Catholic education and our collective responsibility to act with compassion and kindness.

2023-2024 Pastoral Themes

- September:** We are Called to Love as People of Welcome
- October:** We are Called to Love as People of Gratitude
- November:** We are Called to Love as People of Connection
- December:** We are Called to Love as People of Hope
- January:** We are Called to Love as People of Prayer
- February:** We are Called to Love as People of Faith
- March:** We are Called to Love as People of Mercy
- April:** We are Called to Love as People of Joy
- May:** We are Called to Love as People of Justice
- June:** We are Called to Love as People of Belonging

These themes worked to cultivate a spirit of love and support throughout the school year, fostering an inclusive environment where all individuals can be recognized and valued.



System-Wide Mass Celebrated to Launch the 2023-2024 School Year

The St. Clair Catholic community gathered for a system-wide Mass at Our Lady Help of Christians Church in Wallaceburg to launch the school year. The celebration brought together students, parents, principals, Catholic Education Centre staff, trustees, and senior administration to mark the beginning of the academic year.

The Mass, celebrated by Father Chris Pietraszko, aligned with the Board’s Pastoral Plan theme for 2023-2024, “Called to Love.” Following the Mass, students returned to their schools with bibles to be presented to employees hired in the past year at future liturgies or prayer services. The event served as an opportunity to unite the St. Clair Catholic family in faith and gratitude for Catholic education.



Living Faith Award Recipients Honoured During System Faith Day

St. Clair Catholic celebrated its 2024 System Faith Day, themed “Trust and Joy in the Lord,” with simultaneous events in Sarnia and Chatham. Uplifting and joyful Masses were celebrated by Father Joseph Ojoghenejabor from the Bluewater Roman Catholic Family of Parishes, at UCC; and by Father Ray Lawhead, of the Lambton County Family of Parishes at St. Pat’s, with music by Dan Sonier, Jennifer Trinca, Jennifer Brown-Nead and Carolyn Stepniak. The celebration also included a keynote address from Father Chris Pietraszko of the Kent Lambton Roman Catholic Family of Parishes.

The day featured the presentation of the Living Faith – Lighting the Way awards, recognizing outstanding staff members nominated by their peers. Honourees included Jen Brown-Nead from St. Joseph, Corunna, Pat DeRidder from Holy Trinity, Clare Quinlan from St. Elizabeth, and Renée Culverwell from UCC.



New Faith-Based Program Launched for Kindergarten to Grade 8

The “Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ” program, the only Bishop-approved religious resource for Kindergarten through Grade 8, has now been implemented in St. Clair Catholic schools. The Kindergarten component was introduced to all Kindergarten educators during the October Professional Development day. This program is designed to provide students with a solid foundation in faith, offering classroom experiences that nurture their relationship with God.



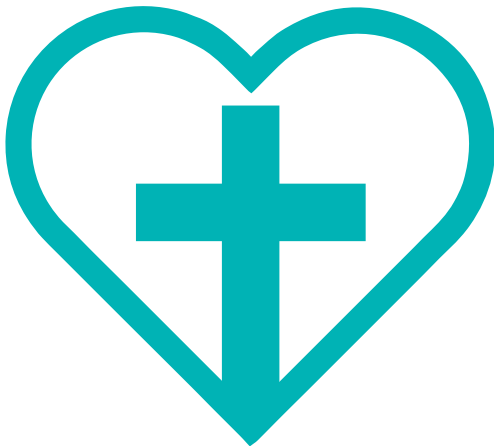
Enhancing Mental Health Literacy in Kindergarten to Grade 12 Curriculum

St. Clair Catholic has integrated mental health literacy into its Kindergarten to Grade 12 curriculum as part of our Mental Health Strategy. This initiative embeds mental health, well-being, and social-emotional learning expectations across various subjects, including health and physical education. Staff have been trained to incorporate these elements into daily classroom experiences. As part of a provincial focus, new mental health literacy modules for Grades 7 and 8 have been introduced, providing educators with tools to teach key topics such as the difference between mental health and mental illness, managing stress, and reducing stigma. These modules are designed to be inclusive and culturally responsive, supporting students with evidence-based knowledge and strategies. The initiative aims to foster positive mental health, enhance learning, and facilitate support.

Celebrating Kindness Week in Schools

St. Clair Catholic schools celebrated Kindness Week from November 20 to 24. This year, the focus was on standing against bullying and hatred while promoting kindness throughout our school communities. Activities, prayers, and announcements centered on nurturing a positive outlook and empowering students to be their best. The week highlighted the numerous benefits of kindness, including improved self-esteem, a greater sense of inclusion, better health, and reduced stress.

During Kindness Week, students participated in a video contest where they were encouraged to create videos that captured the spirit of kindness. The winning entries came from St. Anne, Sarnia; St. Elizabeth; and Holy Trinity.





MindUP Program Yields Positive Results in Emotional Resilience

St. Clair Catholic’s MindUP program, active for six years, has shown promising results in enhancing students’ mental health and emotional resilience. The program is a 15-lesson curriculum based on neuroscience and positive psychology that serves students from Kindergarten to Grade 8, focusing on skills such as self-regulation, self-awareness, and stress management. In 2023, over 5,000 elementary students completed the program, demonstrating significant developments. Understanding of the link between gratitude and mental well-being rose from 55% to 82%, knowledge of self-calming techniques increased from 68% to 87%, and daily practice of well-being skills improved from 46% to 69%. The program’s effectiveness is evident in the increased understanding and behaviour changes among students. Plans are underway to pilot MindUP in secondary schools, making St. Clair Catholic the first North American site to test the curriculum at this level.



Holy Trinity Celebrates Wellness Day with Community and Students

On June 10, Holy Trinity hosted Wellness Day, a vibrant event dedicated to promoting physical and mental well-being among students and staff. The day featured a variety of activities, including games, workshops, meditation, and self-reflection exercises, all aimed at enhancing leadership skills and self-regulation. Community partners, including Lambton Public Health and Ironworks, contributed to the event by providing engaging learning opportunities. Over 300 community members participated in a special post-school event, emphasizing the strong commitment to student health and well-being. The day was a resounding success, showcasing the school’s dedication to holistic student development and the importance of community involvement.



Over 800 Students Attend Third Annual Student Wellness Fair at St. Pat’s

The third annual Student Wellness Fair at St. Pat’s was a major success, attracting over 800 students to the school’s library. Hosted by the Student Wellness Committee, the event aimed to highlight various well-being resources available within the school and through external agencies. Collaborating with 12 community partners, the fair offered a range of wellness supports to help students manage their challenges. St. Pat’s students also contributed by setting up booths that promoted student involvement and its positive effects on well-being. The fair has become a highly anticipated event, reflecting the growing emphasis on student wellness and engagement within the school community.

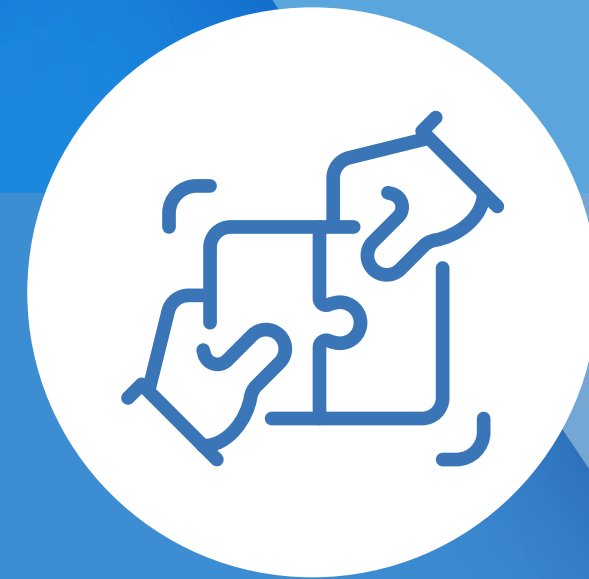
Flying a Rainbow Flag at St. Clair Catholic

St. Clair Catholic raised a rainbow flag at all elementary and secondary schools, as well as the Catholic Education Centre, to mark Pride Month and symbolize our continued commitment to fostering welcoming and inclusive school communities.

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. The act of raising a rainbow flag does not reflect a divergence 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.

We believe that the act of raising a rainbow flag emphasizes the importance of inclusive school environments where every student and community member feels safe, valued, and respected. While maintaining the core tenets of the Catholic faith, we also reinforce our dedication to ending bullying and discrimination by honouring the inherent dignity of each individual.





Partnerships

*Engaging families, parish
and community*



Generous Donation of \$188,500 from Noelle's Gift to Children Supports St. Clair Catholic and Lambton Kent School Boards

Noelle's Gift to Children has generously donated a total of \$188,500 to the St. Clair Catholic and Lambton Kent District School Boards in 2023, an increase from \$158,000 in 2022. These funds are essential in supporting students and families in need, enabling the school boards to address various emergent and unanticipated needs quickly and confidentially.

The donations are used to purchase vital resources such as eyeglasses, clothing, food, medicine, and medical equipment. Teachers can access up to \$200 for individual student needs, while larger requests are processed by principals to ensure timely support for families. St. Clair Catholic is grateful for the continued assistance from Noelle's Gift to Children, which has made a significant impact on the well-being of students and their families.



Noelle's Gift to Children Supports Healthy Habits with Water Bottle Donations



In October 2023, Noelle's Gift to Children donated water bottles to all Grade 1 students across Chatham-Kent and Sarnia-Lambton, including those in Grade 1/2 and SK/Grade 1 split classes. This initiative, now in its fourth year, aimed to encourage students to utilize water filling stations and promote the healthy habit of drinking water.

With support from students at St. Michael, Bright's Grove, Principal Steve DeGurse and retired Principal, Mark Renaud, a volunteer with Noelle's Gift to Children, organized the packing of the water bottles for distribution to schools throughout the district. More than 950 water bottles were successfully delivered to St. Clair Catholic schools.

St. Pat's Students and Sarnia Bluewater Parish Create Award-Winning Parade Float

Students from St. Pat's, led by their Grade 10 construction tech class, teamed up with the Sarnia Bluewater Family of Parishes to design and build a float for the Sarnia Santa Claus Parade. The float featured a nativity chapel and bandstand, with live Christmas music performed by the school's band and choir, under the direction of teacher Mr. Sonier. Their efforts earned first prize in the Religious Floats category, showcasing both student learning and the strength of the school-parish partnership.





Tim Hortons Smile Cookie Campaign Supports St. Clair Catholic Students

St. Clair Catholic was the beneficiary of the proceeds from the Tim Hortons Holiday Smile Cookie Campaign from November 13 to 19. This national initiative saw 50 percent of proceeds from eleven Sarnia locations donated to the Ontario Student Nutrition Program-Lambton (OSNP-Lambton), benefiting 46 student nutrition programs across Lambton County. The campaign raised a total of \$39,213, with \$19,606 allocated directly to support nourishing food for approximately 9,600 students.

The campaign’s success continued with the launch of another Smile Cookie initiative in Blenheim on April 29, involving multiple locations in Chatham-Kent. This effort aimed to raise funds for 36 breakfast programs serving 10,000 students across 41 schools, further enhancing the health and well-being of St. Clair Catholic students.



Sarnia Sting Hockey Brings Joy to Over 4,000 Students

On November 7, more than 4,000 elementary school students from Sarnia and Lambton County gathered at the Progressive Auto Sales Arena to support the Sarnia Sting as they faced off against the Saginaw Spirit. The event, organized by Ryan Hare, Vice Principal of St. Pat’s and former Sting player, created an exciting atmosphere for students and showcased the strong community spirit involved in making the day a success.

The event was made possible through the generous contributions of local sponsors, including Progressive Auto Sales, the Sting Assist Program, and Kyle’s No Frills, Sarnia, which provided healthy snacks like apples, bananas, granola bars, and chocolate milk for the students. Special ticket pricing ensured that financial concerns did not prevent any student from attending.

Additionally, the gameday experience incorporated curriculum materials focused on active and healthy living, featuring exercise routines and stretches led by Sting players. This initiative not only promoted physical fitness but also fostered a sense of community and enjoyment among the students, leaving them with lasting memories from the game.





Sacred Heart, Port Lambton Celebrates Arbor Day with Hydro One and OPP

Sacred Heart, Port Lambton celebrated Arbor Day by partnering with Hydro One to educate students about the vital role trees play in sustaining life on Earth.

As part of the celebration, Hydro One gifted the school a maple tree, which was planted in the school's front yard, and each student received a seedling to take home. This initiative not only enhanced the school's environment but also encouraged students to engage with nature. The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) joined the event, reinforcing the theme of community safety. St. Clair Catholic expresses gratitude to both Hydro One and the OPP for making the day informative, interactive, and enjoyable for all involved.



Partnership with LiUNA Introduces St. Clair Catholic Students to Skilled Trades Careers

St. Clair Catholic collaborated with the Labourers' International Union of North America (LiUNA) Local 1089 to provide students from Grades 7 to 12 with insights into careers in the skilled trades. The initiative began with classroom presentations focused on the Construction Worker Craft Apprenticeship, followed by an engaging visit to the LiUNA Training Centre in Sarnia.

During the visit, students participated in a two-hour skills rotation, where they gained hands-on experience in activities such as mini-scaffolding, concrete forming, and a "name the tools" exercise. This experiential learning opportunity allowed students to explore practical skills and understand the variety of employment options available in the skilled trades.

Participating schools included Sacred Heart, Sarnia; St. Joseph, Corunna; St. Pat's; and Christ the King.





St. Clair Catholic Students Excel at Enactus One Future Championships

On May 30, students from St. Anne, Sarnia and St. Michael, Bright’s Grove showcased their entrepreneurial spirit at the inaugural Intermediate Enactus One Future Championships held at Lambton College. Teams of students in Grades 7 and 8 presented innovative, community-focused projects aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, competing against peers from the Lambton Kent District School Board.

Among the standout initiatives was the Monarch Butterflies project from St. Anne, Sarnia, which aimed to create a Butterfly Garden to preserve butterfly habitats while raising awareness through seed and trowel sales. Another notable project from St. Anne, Sarnia focused on bioremediation methods for cleaning industrial wastewater, highlighting efforts to

provide cleaner drinking water. Students from St. Michael, Bright’s Grove presented their Environmental Miracle project which tackled deforestation by partnering with the City of Sarnia to plant trees, raising \$700 through an ice cream fundraising event. Additionally, the Little Library Book Box initiative, created by students from St. Michael, utilized 3D software to design a library box for public use, collaborating with Grade 12 construction students for its realization.

The Environmental Miracle team and the Bioremediation team were selected as finalists, delivering impressive presentations on stage. This successful event not only celebrated the students’ hard work but also set a promising precedent for future Enactus competitions, encouraging ongoing engagement in social entrepreneurship and community development.



Community Celebrates New Gregory A. Hogan Catholic School

Hundreds of visitors, including Sarnia-Lambton MPP, Mayor Bob Bailey, and Mayor Mike Bradley, toured the newly constructed Gregory A. Hogan Catholic School in April. Principal Derek Morrison and Vice Principal Tina Jarvis welcomed community members, families, and local dignitaries to explore the state-of-the-art facility. The school, representing an investment of approximately \$24 million from the province, has generated excitement for its engaging environment and advanced technology.

The tour drew over 400 attendees, with Grade 8 students serving as enthusiastic guides. Visitors praised various features, including the spacious gymnasium and convenient parking. The collaborative planning between the school board and the City of Sarnia has been highlighted as beneficial for the rapidly growing neighbourhood.





St. Clair Catholic Students Shine in Special Olympics Games and Partnerships

St. Clair Catholic Schools actively engage with the Special Olympics through a variety of events that enhance student experience and promote inclusion. In December 2023, St. Pat’s hosted a regional basketball tournament, bringing together 89 athletes from seven schools in Sarnia-Lambton and Chatham-Kent. This event provided an opportunity for students to develop organizational and leadership skills while creating a supportive environment for their peers.

In January 2024, St. Pat’s Grade 12 Business Leadership and Management class reflected on their successful planning and execution of the tournament, reinforcing their understanding of teamwork and problem-solving. The school also organized a Bocce Ball Tournament in February, welcoming around 45 athletes from three local high schools, further strengthening the partnership with Special Olympics Ontario.

St. Angela Merici hosted an elementary sports festival in April for 37 special athletes from 11

schools, allowing young athletes to engage in various activities designed to promote physical activity and healthy living. The event served as an introduction to the Special Olympics movement, enhancing awareness among students and families.

UCC contributed by hosting a 3 on 3 basketball qualifier in April, where senior students coached Life Skills students, creating an inclusive atmosphere that fostered camaraderie and sportsmanship. Additionally, UCC students participated in the Special Olympics basketball games at the University of Guelph in June, showcasing their skills and building lasting friendships.

Through these initiatives, St. Clair Catholic Schools not only support the Special Olympics but also provide meaningful experiences for students, promoting physical fitness, teamwork, and community engagement.





Catholic Citizenship

*Inspiring ethical,
responsible stewardship*



Portable Donation Transforms Sacred Heart Food Bank Storage

In a meaningful act of support, St. Clair Catholic donated a portable from Sacred Heart, Port Lambton to the Sacred Heart Food Bank, significantly increasing its storage capacity and accessibility. The new facility will provide easier access and more space for food storage, including perishables, thanks to the addition of coolers and freezers. This upgrade marks a major improvement over the food bank's previous location, eliminating the need for stairs and streamlining operations.



St. Peter Canisius Students Collect 633 Socks for Local Charities

In a successful “Socktober” initiative, Ms. Campbell’s Grade 1 class at St. Peter Canisius collected an impressive total of 633 pairs of socks. These donations will benefit various local charities throughout Lambton County, including the Salvation Army, the Women’s Interval Home of Sarnia-Lambton, River City Vineyard, Ryan’s House, the Fresh Start Project, Circles, and the Petrolia Food Bank.

The project not only emphasized community support but also included a valuable educational component, as students counted and graphed the socks during the collection process. The initiative reflects the spirit of community giving that thrives at St. Peter Canisius, highlighting the students’ commitment to helping those in need.



Sacred Heart 49ers Support Local Charities

During “Socktober,” students at Sacred Heart, Sarnia collected 690 pairs of socks for the Fresh Start Project and the Inn of the Good Shepherd. Additionally, a special Halloween event resulted in the donation of 350 non-perishable food items to the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

The Halloween Dance for canned goods has become an annual tradition at the school, promoting generosity among students. Special recognition was given to Ms. Stickley’s class for counting the food items and to Mrs. Shortt’s class for organizing the sock drive.



St. Pat’s Students Launch Miracle Mug Fundraiser

Grade 12 Leadership students at St. Pat’s have received \$1,050 from the Ministry of Education’s Entrepreneurship Initiative Fund for their Miracle Mug project. The funding will help purchase materials and create a platform for showcasing and selling the mugs, with proceeds going to the St. Vincent de Paul Society in Sarnia.

This initiative supports the Board’s and Ministry’s goals of fostering entrepreneurship and innovation among students, preparing them for future challenges and opportunities.





Sarnia Schools Unite for 40th Irish Miracle Food Drive

St. Pat's held its 40th annual Irish Miracle food drive in December, receiving overwhelming support from the community. Students, alumni, and families canvassed Sarnia, collecting 5,000 bags and boxes of non-perishable food items, along with \$2,336.70 in donations. The cafeteria and main hallway of the school were filled with contributions, all of which were donated to the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

In a show of solidarity, students and staff at St. Anne, Sarnia also participated by collecting over 800 pounds of food for the Irish Miracle. Their non-perishable items were creatively arranged in a Rainbow of Kindness "CANstruction" before being delivered to St. Pat's. Together, these efforts exemplify the spirit of community support and highlight the commitment to helping those in need, reinforcing the message of being the hands and feet of Christ in action.



St. John Fisher Students Create a Cereal Domino Chain for Advent Outreach

Students at St. John Fisher collected a truckload of non-perishable food items as part of their Advent outreach. The focus was on gathering boxes of cereal to create a domino chain, generating excitement as students filled the hallways to watch the dominoes in action.

This initiative reinforced the importance of helping others and highlighted how good deeds contribute to overall well-being. The collected items will support the St. Vincent de Paul Society of Sarnia-Lambton and Contact House in Forest.



Sacred Heart, Sarnia Students Spread Christmas Cheer to Seniors

In December, students at Sacred Heart, Sarnia made more than 200 Christmas cards, as a way of spreading the joy of the season to local seniors.

The cards were delivered to the residents of Rosewood Village, Landmark Village and Village on the St. Clair.





Holy Trinity Students Send Happy Valentine’s Messages to Local Seniors

Students at Holy Trinity sent handmade Valentine’s greetings to residents of local retirement and nursing homes. The initiative was in partnership with the Lambton County Library. The cards were delivered to the library for distribution to the seniors’ residences.



St. Matthew Food Drive Supports Inn of the Good Shepherd

Students and staff at St. Matthew participated in a food drive to benefit the Inn of the Good Shepherd. The goal was to help provide essential support to people in the community who need assistance.



Christ the King Celebrates Earth Day with Community Cleanup

In April, students in Grades 4 to 7 at Christ the King participated in a community cleanup to honour Earth Day. Collaborating with project leaders from the local hospital, the students and their teachers donned protective gloves and enthusiastically worked to clear litter from the grounds of the Wallaceburg site of the Chatham-Kent Health Alliance.

Their efforts resulted in several bags of litter being collected, enhancing the area’s cleanliness and inviting atmosphere. In addition to the cleanup, the students engaged in an eco-friendly activity by decorating seed starters for planting wildflower seeds, allowing them to nurture and grow their own green spaces at home.





Bus Driver Appreciation Winner Pays It Forward with Kindness

In November, St. Clair Catholic community members were invited to recognize local school bus drivers through the ‘Hail to Bus Drivers’ contest, organized by CKXS FM, CLASS Shared School Services, and Progressive Ford. With over 300 nominations received, twelve drivers were recognized weekly for their exceptional service, competing for a grand prize of eight tickets to a luxury box at a Sarnia Sting game.

Michelle Higgins, a dedicated driver for Badder Bus Lines in Port Lambton and Wallaceburg, was crowned the grand prize winner due to her exceptional driving skills and her outstanding care for families and children on her routes. In a remarkable display of generosity, Ms. Higgins chose to donate her prize package to the family of a child from Sacred Heart, Port Lambton.

Thanks to her kindness, the recipient family enjoyed a memorable experience cheering for the Sarnia Sting from their luxury box at a recent game, exemplifying the leadership and community spirit that led to Ms. Higgins’ recognition.

Patty’s Pantry: Fighting Food Insecurity in Sarnia

Patty’s Pantry is tackling food insecurity in the Sarnia community by providing essential nutrition to students beyond the school day. Spearheaded by St. Pat’s students from Mrs. Woodward’s Grade 12 Business Leadership class, and in partnership with Enactus at Lambton College, this initiative addresses a critical gap in support for students and families.

Building on existing programs like breakfast and lunch support, Patty’s Pantry aims to establish a sustainable, open-access pantry offering nutritious food items. Launched in 2023, the pantry features a fridge, freezer, and cupboard, and has seen multiple restocks of fresh, frozen, and non-perishable goods due to high demand, especially as living costs rise.



Record-Breaking Support for OECTA’s Dress Down for Wheels Fundraiser

The Ontario English Catholic Teachers’ Association (OECTA) successfully hosted the fourth annual Dress Down for Wheels fundraiser, achieving a record-breaking total of over \$9,000. This funding enabled the purchase of 46 bicycles, helmets, and locks for students without access to bikes. The initiative, which promotes physical activity and wellness, culminated in the distribution of the bicycles during Catholic Education Week from May 6 to May 10.





St. Clair Catholic Schools Raise Over \$36,000 for Cancer Research

St. Clair Catholic schools demonstrated a continued commitment to philanthropy through the 2023 Terry Fox School Run, raising an impressive \$36,595.45 for cancer research. This collective effort involved students and staff across the district, honouring Terry Fox's legacy and inspiring future generations. The Terry Fox Foundation acknowledged the Board's dedication and leadership in organizing this successful fundraising campaign. Since the inception of the runs, St. Clair Catholic schools have contributed over \$1.7 million to the Foundation, showcasing the significant impact of community involvement in advancing cancer research.



St. Peter Canisius Leads Successful Food-Raising Competition for Local Food Bank

Students from St. Peter Canisius organized a food-raising competition to support the Watford food bank, addressing crucial shortages of non-perishable food items during the summer months. The initiative received enthusiastic support from students and staff, emphasizing the school's commitment to compassion and community service.



Holy Rosary Food Drive Fills Hearts and Pantries in Wyoming

Holy Rosary successfully organized a food drive that received overwhelming support from the Wyoming community. In June, Grade 5 and 6 students distributed nearly 500 decorated paper grocery bags to households, requesting donations of food and household items. When the Grade 7 and 8 students collected the donations, almost every home contributed. The collected items will significantly aid local families in need, showcasing the spirit of charity and service within the Holy Rosary school community.



Lancers Scare Hunger Initiative Hit the Streets on Halloween Night

On Halloween evening, students and staff volunteers from UCC took to the streets to support Chatham Outreach for Hunger. Approximately 250 volunteers covered 50 routes across the city, collecting canned goods and non-perishable food items on October 31st.

Countless homes contributed, and community members who weren't home left donations on their porches for volunteers to pick up. This annual Lancers Scare Hunger event played a vital role in helping the food bank prepare for the busy Christmas season by replenishing its shelves.





Milestones

*Celebrations and
Accomplishments*



Father John Jasica Appointed as Board Chaplain

The Board of Trustees appointed Father John Jasica as Board Chaplain, effective September 1, 2023. His five-year term follows the departure of Father Chris Gillespie, who became Pastor of the Windsor-Lake St. Clair Catholic Family of Parishes. Father John, a London native and St. Peter’s Seminary graduate, has extensive pastoral experience, including roles as Associate Pastor and Pastor at various parishes as well as serving as Director of Vocations for the Diocese of London.



In his new position, Father John looks forward to providing spiritual guidance and support to the Board, emphasizing the significance of Catholic education in forming disciples who follow Christ. His appointment reflects the Board’s commitment to fostering strong spiritual leadership within the St. Clair Catholic community.

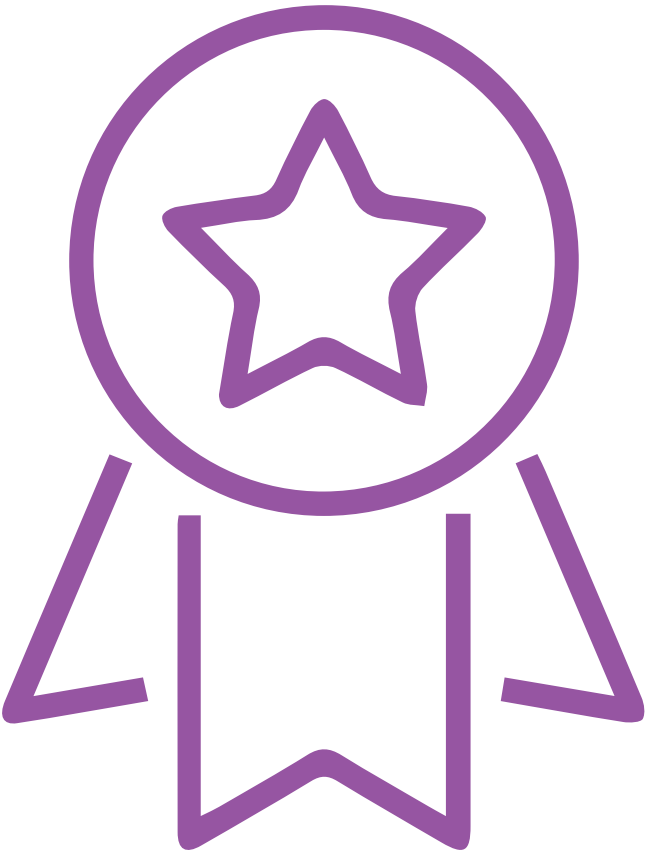
John Van Heck Acclaimed Chair of the Board for 2024; Trustee David Argenti Acclaimed Vice Chair

St. Clair Catholic renewed its leadership for 2024, with John Van Heck acclaimed as Chair and David Argenti acclaimed as Vice Chair. Van Heck has served as Chair since 2016 and has been a trustee since 2006, while Argenti begins his second term as Vice Chair after first being elected in 2018. Their remarkable commitment and impactful leadership have significantly shaped the Board’s direction and fostered a strong sense of community within the district.



New Gregory A. Hogan Catholic School Welcomes Students

On March 18, the new Gregory A. Hogan Catholic School in Sarnia opened its doors to staff and students after a collaborative effort to set up furniture, equipment, and technology during March break. The \$24 million project, funded by the Government of Ontario, includes a 659-student school and a childcare center. A \$200,000 donation from the Hogan Family also supported the addition of a 900 square foot community room.



Michelle Sawa Appointed Superintendent of Education

Michelle Sawa was appointed as Superintendent of Education, effective November 13. With over two decades of experience, she previously worked with the Kenora Catholic District School Board and most recently served on the Executive Council of the Wellington Catholic District School Board where she contributed to the Board’s Multi-Year Strategic Plan and led various initiatives, including Special Education and professional development.

Sawa brings a wealth of knowledge from her extensive background in education, including roles as a classroom teacher and school administrator. Her commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion, as well as her deep understanding of Indigenous perspectives, positions her to make a significant impact in the St. Clair Catholic community.



Georges P. Vanier and St. Ursula Celebrate Final Play Days

Georges P. Vanier and St. Ursula hosted vibrant end-of-year play days in June 2024, marking their final celebrations before closing. The day began with Mass, followed by festivities that brought together students, staff, parents, and community members. Both schools honoured their rich histories with memorabilia displays and fun outdoor activities, including a petting zoo, carnival games, and BBQ treats. As the schools close, their legacies live on as staff and students unite to form St. Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School.



UCC Celebrates New Gym with Blessing and Pep Rally

In November 2023, UCC held a blessing ceremony for its newly expanded gymnasium. Father Chris Pietraszko led the ceremony, joined by athletes, students, staff, and school administration. The event also featured an energetic pep rally, showcasing strong support for UCC's Lancers teams across various sports, including cheerleading, soccer, rugby, basketball, and more.



St. Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School Named and Near Completion

The Board approved “St. Teresa of Calcutta” as the name for St. Clair Catholic’s newest elementary school in Chatham, chosen through a collaborative consultation involving students, families, and the local community. The state-of-the-art facility, featuring modern learning spaces and a daycare, will open in September 2024, welcoming students from the former Georges P. Vanier and St. Ursula Catholic Schools. MPP Trevor Jones praised the project during his tour, highlighting its role as a future hub for the community.



Board Appoints New Student Trustees for 2024-2025 School Year

In March, the St. Clair Catholic District School Board appointed Matt Moss from St. Pat’s and Layla Hashim from UCC as student trustees for the 2024-2025 term. Both students were recognized for their leadership, involvement in school activities, and commitment to Catholic education. The board also expressed gratitude to outgoing trustees, Georgia Pitblado and Lily Cole, for their contributions during the past term. The new trustees begin their roles in August 2024.





Record-Breaking Regional Track and Field Meet at UCC Highlights Student Talent

On June 5, UCC hosted over 500 elementary students from across Chatham-Kent for a regional track and field meet. Athletes competed in various events, including sprints, long jump, and shot put, with several schools breaking five records. A new high jump training session, led by UCC coach Mr. Whyte, was a standout addition. The event celebrated community spirit and sportsmanship, with UCC’s track team serving as role models for the younger athletes. The meet was a tremendous success, raising excitement for future competitions.



St. Pat's Track and Field Meet Marks Grand Opening and Showcases Student Athleticism

On June 7, the Lambton Catholic Sports Council hosted a successful track and field meet at St. Pat's new track. Approximately 400 students from Grades 3 to 8 across Sarnia-Lambton participated in a day filled with sprints, relays, jumps, and shot put. The event kicked off with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and a parade of athletes, setting the stage for a celebration of community and sportsmanship. Highlights included POEPEL races, showcasing students with special education needs. The event garnered positive feedback, marking the new facility as a proud addition to the community.





Investing in Catholic Education

*Responsible, Ethical & Wise Use
of Taxpayer Dollars*



St. Clair Catholic’s Action News Series

During the 2023-2024 school year, St. Clair Catholic’s Action News series provided comprehensive coverage of the ongoing construction at Gregory A. Hogan and St. Teresa of Calcutta Catholic Schools. At each stage in the construction projects, students poised to attend these new schools met with Board staff to develop and deliver reports on construction progress. These reports were transformed into Action News episodes, highlighting key developments in the construction timeline, updates from the Board and construction teams, and community feedback. The series served as an engaging way to keep the community informed and involved in the construction journey. Links to the Action News episodes from the 2023-2024 school year are included below.

October 2023:

<https://newsdesk.st-clair.net/2023/10/24/st-clair-action-news-team-produces-episode-5-of-new-school-construction-project-updates/>

December 2023:

<https://newsdesk.st-clair.net/2023/12/06/st-clair-action-news-releases-episode-6-up-to-date-coverage-of-st-clair-catholics-new-school-construction-projects-in-sarnia-and-chatham/>

February 2024:

<https://newsdesk.st-clair.net/2024/02/27/st-clair-action-news-releases-episode-7-up-to-date-coverage-of-st-clair-catholics-new-school-construction-projects-in-sarnia-and-chatham/>

April 2024:

<https://newsdesk.st-clair.net/2024/04/30/st-clair-action-news-releases-episode-8-up-to-date-coverage-of-st-clair-catholics-new-school-construction-projects-in-sarnia-and-chatham/>

June 2024:

<https://newsdesk.st-clair.net/2024/06/28/st-clair-action-news-releases-episode-9-up-to-date-coverage-of-st-clair-catholics-new-school-construction-projects-in-sarnia-and-chatham/>

Major Renovation Project Announced at Future Sacred Heart, Sarnia

In June, St. Clair Catholic announced a significant renovation project for the future Sacred Heart Catholic School located at 1825 Hogan Drive in Sarnia. Funded by the Ministry of Education, this \$3,348,188 renovation aims to better accommodate the needs of the student community. The project includes demolishing the existing gymnasium and stage, constructing a new 3,634 sq. ft. gymnasium and stage area, and retrofitting 4,886 sq. ft. of existing interior space to enhance the educational environment.

The renovation is part of a broader commitment by the provincial government, which has increased its funding to \$1.3 billion for school building projects across Ontario, marking the largest one-year investment in the province’s history.





St. Clair District Catholic Education Foundation 50/50 Raffles: Supporting Students and Schools

Throughout the 2023-2024 school year, the St. Clair District Catholic Education Foundation continued its successful 50/50 fundraising raffles, awarding nearly \$22,000 in prizes. Since the launch of the 50/50 raffles in 2022, over \$42,000 in prizes has been distributed, with proceeds supporting technology, collaborative learning libraries, and Always Ready Action Plans. Proceeds also contributed to experiential learning and student leadership opportunities and aided the fundraising for a new track and field facility at St. Pat's, a project benefiting both students and the broader community.



Among the raffle winners were Andreas Laskaratos, Massimo DeVito, and Terry Maxwell, with prize amounts ranging from \$5,095 to over \$9,400. These raffles have made a positive impact by funding key initiatives in schools and enhancing facilities, further enriching the educational experience for students.



Track Surface Installation Begins at St. Pat's

In April 2024, Playtek Enterprises began applying the new rubber surface to the track at St. Pat's. This installation was essential for ensuring the facility would be ready for June events, including the Catholic Elementary School Track and Field meet.



Ridge K.I.D.S. Daycare Selected as Childcare Provider for New St. Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School

In January 2024, St. Clair Catholic announced Ridge K.I.D.S. Daycare as the childcare provider for the newly constructed St. Teresa of Calcutta. The 564-pupil school, which opened to students in September 2024, features 49 childcare spaces. Ridge K.I.D.S. offers licensed programs for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, as well as extended day and before-and-after school programs for Kindergarten through Grade 1 and beyond.

This selection marked an expansion of Ridge K.I.D.S.' childcare services, which also operate at St. Michael, Ridgetown and St. Angela Merici. The new facility was made possible through funding from the Ontario government, further supporting the school community and local families.





Board of Trustees Approves \$141 Million Budget for 2024-2025

In June, the Board approved a balanced budget exceeding \$141 million for the 2024-2025 school year, demonstrating its unwavering commitment to providing high-quality education and essential support for students. This budget not only reflects the St. Clair Catholic’s strategic focus on enhancing student achievement but also addresses key areas of growth and development within the educational framework. The increase in funding primarily results from provincially negotiated settlements with various employee groups, which aim to enhance the overall educational experience.

St. Clair Catholic’s commitment to excellence is encapsulated in several key priorities for the upcoming school year. These initiatives will guide the allocation of resources and efforts to ensure that all students receive the support they need to thrive academically and personally.

KEY PRIORITIES OF THE 2024-2025 BUDGET INCLUDE:

Mental Health Support:

Enhance mental health services based on the mental health and addictions strategy, incorporating findings from the School Climate Survey and guidance from School Mental Health Ontario.

Student Engagement:

Drive student engagement through the Equity Action Plan, Indigenous Education Action Plan, and Special Education Plan, with additional support for multilingual learners.

Curriculum Enhancements:

Fund the implementation of a revised curriculum, including the “Reading Success for All” program and new resources for the “Growing in Faith – Growing in Christ” initiative.

Literacy and Numeracy:

Strengthen literacy and numeracy support for students in Grades 7 to 12, ensuring targeted interventions and resources are available.

Student Success:

Assist every student towards graduation, while actively engaging secondary students in experiential learning and pathways planning.

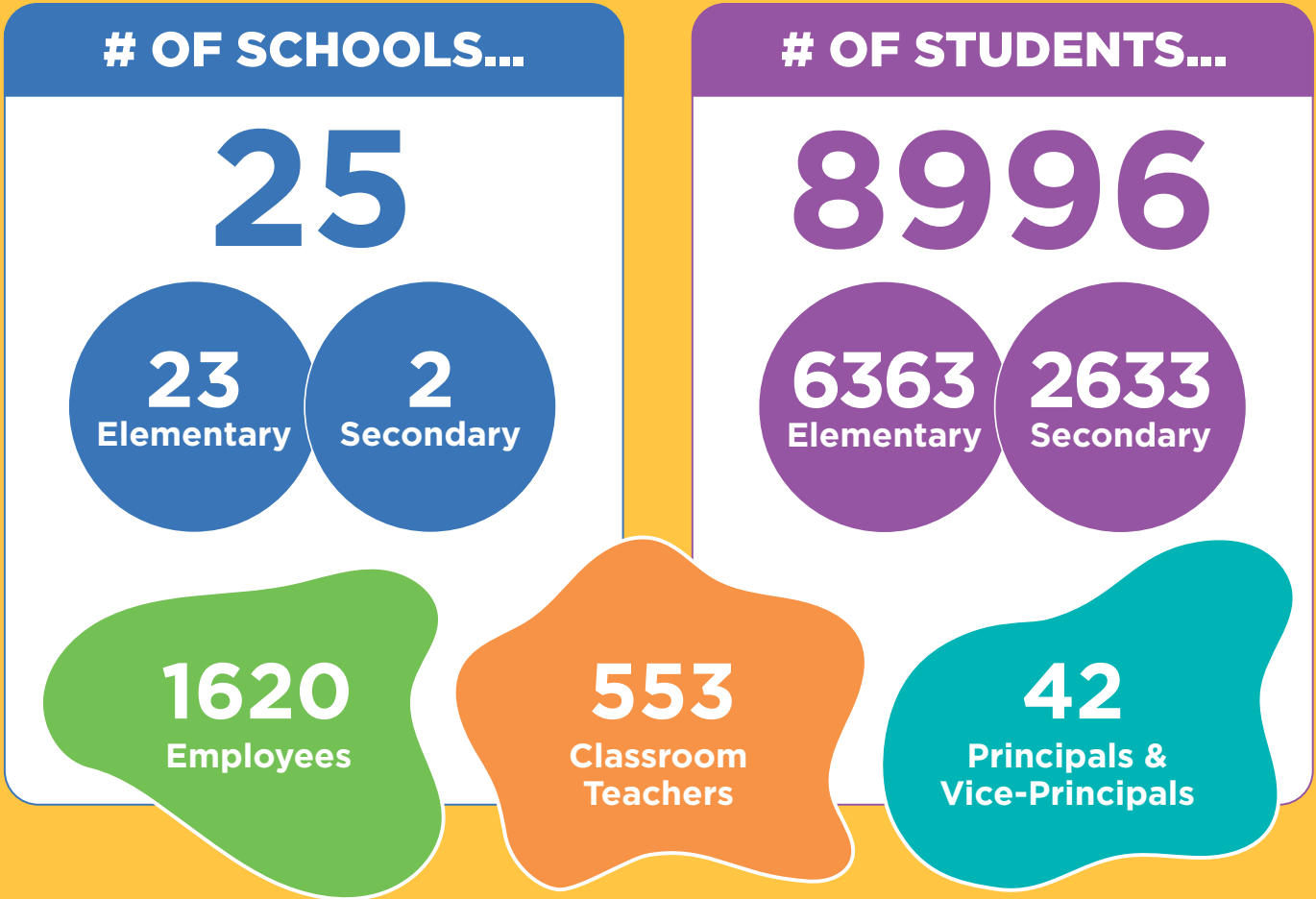
Technology Access:

Ensure every student and classroom educator has access to board-owned devices and reliable broadband connections to facilitate effective learning.



St. Clair Catholic
District School Board

By the Numbers...



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
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Linda Ward
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Father John Jasica
Board Chaplain



Lily Cole
Student Trustee



Georgia Pitblado
Student Trustee

Senior Administration



St. Clair Catholic District School Board Executive Council:
Front Row (L-R): Amy Janssens, Scott Johnson
Back Row (L-R): Lisa Demers, Chris Kehoe, Jamie Majeski, James Duff, Michelle Sawa



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St. Clair Catholic
District School Board

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