



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

## **MEDIA RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Catholic Education Centre**  
420 Creek Street  
Wallaceburg, ON N8A 4C4  
Telephone: 519-627-6762  
Facsimile: 519-627-8230  
Website: [www.st-clair.net](http://www.st-clair.net)

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

**Director of Education**  
Paul Wubben  
519-627-6762, ext. 241  
E-mail: [media@st-clair.net](mailto:media@st-clair.net)

**Chair of the Board**  
Carol Bryden  
519-627-8976

**Supervisor –  
Communications and  
Community Relations**  
Todd Lozon  
519-627-6762 Ext. 243  
E-mail:  
[todd.lozon@st-clair.net](mailto:todd.lozon@st-clair.net)

### ***BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVES SELF-IDENTIFICATION POLICY FOR FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS AND INUIT STUDENTS***

The Board of Trustees for the St. Clair Catholic District School Board has approved Policy 3.24 – *Voluntary and Confidential Aboriginal Self-Identification*. The new policy is intended to provide the Ministry of Education with data, to support its initiative to improve achievement among First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) students and to close the gap between Aboriginal and non-aboriginal students in the areas of literacy and numeracy, retention of students in school, graduation rates and advancement to post-secondary studies.

“We are pleased to have developed and adopted this new policy, in consultation with our partners in the Aamjiwnaang, Chippewas of Kettle and Stoney Point, Deleware and Bkejwanong Territory First Nations,” says Paul Wubben, Director of Education. “This policy will assist the Ministry of Education and our school board in helping to meet the needs of students who self-identify as First Nations, Métis and Inuit,” says Mr. Wubben.

Similar policies are being adopted by school boards across Ontario. The province’s Ministry of Education has identified Aboriginal education as one of its key priorities, with a goal of improving achievement among FNMI students by 2016.

Under the new policy, FNMI students and their families will have the opportunity to voluntarily identify themselves to the Board and the Ministry of Education, whether they live on or off a reserve. The Ministry of Education and the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) will gather data, which will be depersonalized and used in the aggregate, to report on the achievement of FNMI students, in priority areas identified by the ministry. The data will serve to inform the ministry and the Board as to the best way to help meet the learning needs of FNMI students.

Voluntary self-identification applies to students with any degree of Aboriginal ancestry and no proof of ancestry is required.

Policy 3.24 – *Voluntary and Confidential Aboriginal Self Identification* takes effect May 25, 2011.