



# Canadian Catholic Schools Trustees' Association NEWSLETTER

June 2022



## #TooniesForTuition

*"Over the past 3 years, this much needed financial assistance has made a difference to several of our low-income families. Many of our families are recent migrants and are struggling to keep up with the high cost of living in the Lower Mainland. Without the extra support from the CCSTA, these families would not be able to access a faith-based quality education that is provided by our Catholic schools."* -PRINCIPAL ST. EDMUND'S ELEMENTARY, NORTH VANCOUVER, BC

### *What's Inside?*

**News & Events** - Page 2

**President's Message** - Page 4

**From the Office Desk** - Page 5

**Chaplain's Corner** - Page 6

**Provincial Reports** - Page 8

**Connect with us!** - Page 24





## CCSTA's UPCOMING VIRTUAL AGM JUNE 2 - 3, 2022

We're very much looking forward to gathering with our members at our upcoming Virtual AGM taking place on June 2nd and 3rd!

While we had originally hoped to gather in-person in Blue Mountain, ON, our plans began to change when another wave of Covid hit earlier this year. Due to the unpredictability and need for sufficient planning, we made the call to host this year's AGM virtually.

We know that gathering together to represent the different provinces and school boards which make up our membership is crucial to the ongoing growth and vitality of CCSTA. We want to continue strengthening our connections and cultivating community so that our defense of Catholic Education will be one that is unified and strong. Despite the shift to host our AGM online, we're extremely thankful for the platforms which make it possible for us to connect from a distance.

### AGM Theme

Shortly after the decision was made to move the AGM to a virtual platform, the theme of the upcoming 'Synod on Synodality' was discussed and chosen.

At the request of Pope Francis, meetings have been taking place in parishes and Catholic organizations across the globe to discuss what it means to be a Synodal Church. As Catholic Education plays a vital role in the evangelizing mission of the Church, we felt it was an ideal time for CCSTA Members to connect and engage in this important theme.

Fr. Stefano Penna, Chaplain of CCSTA, suggested this year's theme. In reflecting on its significance, he shared,

*"The Synod on Synodality has three key words: **Communion, Participation, and Witness** all of which are dimensions of realizing the vision of Pope Francis, 'For a Synodal Church'. Synod means: 'on the same road' with the sense of 'walking'.*

*As we have so often recognized - unity means walking on the same road with Christ with the same vision.*

*There is a beautiful passage from St. John's third letter that uses the word for 'walking around and teaching' **περιπατεω** (peripateo) that complements this "journeying together":*

***'I have no greater joy than this, to hear that my children are walking in the truth.'***  
*3Jn 1:4."*



# News & Events (continued)

## Keynote Speakers

Our AGM will commence on Thursday, June 2, with two two dynamic presentations aimed at bringing hope to each of our CCSTA Members after another long and difficult year of educating through the pandemic.

Our first Keynote address, held at 11:00 am EST, will be given by Spencer West. After losing both legs from the pelvis down at the age of five due to a genetic disease, Spencer West tackled challenge after challenge, learning to navigate a world set against those with disabilities. He is known for summiting Mount Kilimanjaro, opening for Demi Lovato's 2014 World Tour, starring in the documentary *Redefine Possible: The Story of Spencer West*, which debuted at the Toronto International Film Festival, author of the best-selling book *Standing Tall: My Journey*, and his character role, *The Window Washer*, in *Murdoch Mysteries*.

At 1:00 pm, we'll be hearing our second Keynote Address from His Eminence Gérald Cyprien Cardinal Lacroix who will speak to us about the Synod. His Eminence Gerald C. Cardinal Lacroix was named Metropolitan Archbishop of Quebec on February 22, 2011. Pope Francis designated him a Cardinal on January 12, 2014, the 8th Cardinal of the Archdiocese of Quebec. He is a member of the Vatican Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, a member of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, a member of the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life, a member of the Pontifical Council for Culture, and a member of the Council for the Economy. He was also elected as member of the XVth Synod of Bishops Ordinary Council in 2018.

## Business Meeting & Higgins Award Presentations

Our annual AGM will take place Friday morning at 11:00 am EST and we encourage all CCSTA Members to partake in our important program. As part of our meeting, we're proud to be honouring the following recipients with the Justice James Higgins Award:

2020, The Sisters of St. Anne – St. Joseph's Community  
2021, Archbishop Donald Bolen  
2022, Joan Carr

We hope our CCSTA Members will make every effort to join us! After a long and difficult year, let us gather together to support and encourage one another and be renewed in our common mission of Catholic Education.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR  
FOR JUNE 1 - 3, 2023 FOR NEXT  
YEAR'S AGM!

SEE YOU IN SASKATOON!



# President's Message



**PATRICK DALY**  
CCSTA President



*"BEING CHRISTIAN IS NOT THE RESULT OF AN ETHICAL CHOICE OR A LOFTY IDEA, BUT THE ENCOUNTER WITH AN EVENT, A PERSON WHICH GIVES LIFE A NEW HORIZON AND A DECISIVE DIRECTION."*

**(POPE EMERITUS BENEDICT XVI)**

I write this article with profound gratitude to the Catholic school trustees, system and school leaders, teachers and support staff for their heroic service. None of us could have predicted the length of the pandemic nor anticipated the numerous complex challenges associated with operating Catholic schools/Catholic school boards and Trustee Associations throughout the past two plus years. You and all who serve in and support Catholic schools across Canada are to be commended for placing priority on the health and safety of students and staff while remaining focused on the realization of our Christ centred mission.

I would like to acknowledge and thank Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board and CSC MonAvenir for their hard work planning the originally scheduled in-person AGM. While we regret very much that we are once again unable to hold an in-person Annual General Meeting, we look forward to seeing you virtually. We encourage you to attend the planned keynote presentations by His Eminence Cardinal Gerald C. Lacroix and Spencer West as well as our June 3, 2022 Business AGM session.

We look forward to presenting the 2020, 2021 and 2022 Higgins Awards at our upcoming AGM. We're proud to be honouring The Sisters of St. Anne - St. Joseph Community, Archbishop Donald Bolen and our posthumous recipient, Joan Carr in acknowledgement of our profound gratitude for their tremendous contribution to Catholic Education in Canada.

On behalf of the CCSTA Board of Directors and most especially from the children who will benefit from your goodness, I would like to thank all who worked hard to raise funds in support of the Toonies For Tuition Campaign. To all of those who helped this cause in whatever way they could, we offer our sincere gratitude.

I pray that Our Lord Jesus Christ showers each of you with all of His blessings and look forward to seeing you at the upcoming virtual AGM and meeting you in person at Provincial Association gatherings next year.







# From the Office Desk

**JULIAN HANLON**

CCSTA Executive Director

As the school year draws to a close, I think we can all agree that in spite of the many challenges schools continue to deal with, things are slowly returning to normal. During the past year, the vast majority of students returned to school, a trend that will continue. Schools did an amazing job of adapting to virtual learning in order to continue to reach all students. That said, I think we can all agree that the vast majority of students benefits from being in school. The social and emotional benefits of interacting with teachers and other students cannot be underestimated. A shout out to Catholic schools across the country for the outstanding work over the past two plus years, ensuring that all students were given every opportunity to succeed.

By the time you receive this newsletter, we will be days away from hosting our virtual AGM/Convention. In addition to our June 3 business meeting, we are once again excited about the professional development component being offered on June 2. We have two excellent speakers lined up, Spencer West and His Eminence Cardinal Lacroix. Registration details have been sent to all trustees, and to date we are very pleased with the registration numbers. We are very optimistic that next year we will be able to gather in person in Saskatoon. Planning is well underway. I would be remiss if I did not thank the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board and CSC MonAvenir for all their hard work over the past two years. Unfortunately, in spite of hours of work and planning, we had to move to a virtual format and were not able to gather in Collingwood.

As mentioned in the past, a key focus for CCSTA is communications. To that end, we hired a Communications Officer on a part time contract to help with the implementation of our Communications Strategy. Catherine Burnham has done an excellent job and just recently announced our move to both Facebook and Instagram. We have received lots of positive feedback so far.

Unfortunately, once again this year, I am sure due to the previously mentioned challenges, fundraising for our Toonies Campaign has suffered. We received several substantial contributions in the last few weeks, which certainly will help. As is always the case, requests are far greater than the funds available. That said, we are very thankful to all who contributed. The winners of the Trophy Challenge will be announced at the AGM.

In closing, I wish everyone some well deserved rest this summer.

Stay healthy,  
Julian Hanlon





**Father Stefano Penna**  
CCSTA Chaplain

***Christ is Risen, Alleluia! He is Risen Indeed, Alleluia!  
Trampling down Death by death and to those who were in the grave  
He has brought life!***

How I welcomed Easter this year! Its joy was traced on the face of young E – who I baptized. Her joy despite the great price she had paid for conversion – the loss of precious friends who could not understand why she was becoming a Catholic and rejected her. Joy in the midst of the earthquake that results when a person really allows Jesus Christ into their lives as Lord. There has been a great upset in all of our lives – the pandemic. But has there been joy in this?

I do not know about you but I and all the teachers, priests, administrators, and parents out here in Saskatchewan are just exhausted having been beaten up by this upset. There seems little back-slapping on a “job well done”. Perhaps it is because the empty mantras of new age spirituality just fall flat in the face of the deaths of so many elders, the recriminations and divisions that rend our country still, the exposure of structural flaws in health care and educational systems, the wounded mental health of so many of our children, and the horrible spectre of Ukraine ravaged by war...and is this story of the virus really over? When winter passes away in Western Canada (and this year it took forever to do so) there is always a mess left behind of all the garbage and dust covered by the snow. Where is the joy in this?

Catholic educators know: **Jesus is joy.** “Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.” (John 6:68-69). There in the midst of the garbage and dust left by winter upset, is Jesus.

Jesus says,

**“If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that **my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.**”** (John 15:10-11).

We must remember that our ancient foe, Satan, does not want us to have joy. He will seduce us with pleasure and with the power ...but there will be no joy. Satan whispers, “YOLO” – “you only live once so grab the momentary pleasure”, Jesus proclaims, “keep my commandments and your joy will be complete”. Christ is Risen, Alleluia! Satan is cast down, Alleluia! What is the garbage and dust left behind? That is a culture that emptied itself of Jesus, that relied on power alone, that is furious because a small virus has left it hopeless and divided. But furious and divided our culture is even more vulnerable to the whispers of Satan, the Diabolos – the “dividing one”.



# Chaplain's Corner (continued)

This division is something we all know too well. How testy and over-sensitive we all are. How many of our friends and family relationships were lost in the pandemic-upset? **I am convinced that the divisions that emerged in our families, friendships, and communities came from cracks that were already there – cracks that were wounds waiting to be exploited ... or healed.**

So many folks are caught in the wounds of their past – and the older we are the more the wounds. The scourge of the pandemic has been that all the old wounds from relationships – especially in our families – have been deepened. We were worried about the physical co-morbidities that often resulted with the sick and elderly dying with COVID, what is the death-toll of families divided as a result of relational co-morbidities?

'Christ is Risen, Alleluia!' the Holy Church sings in this great Week of Weeks. "He is Risen indeed, Alleluia!" is the Holy Response that echoes even in the empty wounds of our relationships.

Did we not meet Jesus invite us with Thomas to "put your finger in my side... in my pierced wounds"? Jesus is wounded in our wounds and He is rushing towards us with victorious love in the wounds that divide us.



This beautiful image is by the Italian artist Duccio who worked in Siena in the first decade of the 1300's. He has several artistic representations of the Resurrection stories but this one remarkable for the way in which it echoes the traditional iconography of Eastern Christianity which turns to the mystery of the Descent into Hell (which we profess in the Apostles Creed) to portray Easter. We see Christ clothed in gold paint – the iconic colour of Divinity – breaking down the doors of Hell. Satan lies defeated under His feet as in His left-hand Christ carries His Cross which has now become a victorious battle flag. Christ is taking the hand of His ancestors – our ancestors – Adam and Eve. Behind him are figures of the holy ones of the Old Covenant who have been waiting for Christ to set them free. Can you identify them?

I can see David and Solomon and Isaiah and Elijah ... and John the Baptist. Heaven can only be theirs – can only be ours – because of Jesus Christ!

The Cave of Hades or Hell is a gaping wound on the hill and it contains the members of Jesus' family – the Family of the Father – who are divided and waiting for healing. So too Jesus is knocking down the doors which are the scabs of our wounded families. Satan thought to trap us in the division that is his weapon – but the victorious banner over us is the Cross.

Let us be the hand of Jesus to reach out to grasp the hands of those who are divided from us with fresh pandemic hurts and old dead relationships to which we have resigned ourselves. That is the gift the Holy Spirit blowing the banner in the victory march as the gates of hell break before us.





### 2022 CCSTA Annual Convention Report Catholic Independent Schools Committee of BC

Greetings from the Catholic Independent Schools Committee of British Columbia.

The Catholic Independent Schools Committee of BC (CISCBC)



The Superintendents and a representative from each of the 5 Dioceses in BC meet twice a year to work together on areas of common interest and concern. In addition, the five Bishops attend the first meeting of the year, held in November. This year all meetings were held in-person. A new CISCBC Strategic Plan was developed last fall. The goals are:

1. To foster an authentic, personal relationship with Jesus Christ in the Church to become an intentional missionary disciple.
2. To develop and implement a model that will ensure sustainable growth in our financial and human resources.
3. To listen to, equip, and support our community members as we walk together in dialogue towards truth, healing, and reconciliation.

We are currently developing detailed Action Plans to help us achieve these goals.

The new BC Catholic Teacher Professional Growth/Evaluation Tool was fully implemented last year. Our plan now is to develop a common approach for a BC Catholic Principal Professional Growth/Evaluation Tool.

#### Authority Structure

The Catholic Independent Schools of BC (CISBC) are under the direct authority of the five dioceses in which they are located. Each diocese has a Board of Directors (like a public school district's School Board) except that all the trustees are "volunteers" with the President of each Board the Archbishop/Bishop of that diocese. These Boards set policy and direction for the schools in their diocese, with many responsibilities being mandated to local School Councils/Education Committees. Schools are funded 50% of the per student operating grant of the local public schools except for students with special needs who are funded at the 100% level. There is no financial support provided by the government for capital expenditures and buildings. Additional revenues to operate the schools come from tuitions, donations, fundraising and parish subsidies. To get the 50% operating funding, schools must spend less per student than the public schools in their local area; otherwise, they are reduced to the 35% level. Your Toonies for Tuition donations make a big difference here in BC, they are greatly appreciated.

#### BC Ministry of Education

13.7% of students in BC attend Independent Schools (IS) and based on how IS are funded, we receive approximately 6.7% of the educational budget (up slightly from previous years). Sadly, additional funds for health & safety expenses (from both the federal and provincial allocation) were issued to IS like normal grants (50% of what the public schools receive). FISA was unsuccessful in lobbying for 100% funding allocation.





## BRITISH COLUMBIA (continued)

The provincial government has again provided a \$477,000 Mental Health Grant to IS this year (to be used in 2022-23). The good news was that IS received the equivalent per student (100%) funding compared with the public system per student. This year the CISBC determined that we would use the grant monies allocated to the CISBC to focus on the following areas: Adult Wellbeing, Trauma-informed Practice, Social Emotional Learning, Mental Health Literacy, and Spiritual Wellbeing. We engaged Hayley Watson, a clinical psychologist and founder of Open Parachute, to provide monthly professional learning opportunities to school teams and were granted access to all Open Parachute online curriculum and resource for the school year. All 76 Catholic Schools in BC participated in this initiative. We have not yet determined how we will spend next year's grant.

### **Federation of Independent Schools Association of BC (FISA)**

With a united voice, FISA advocates for parental choice, recognition, and funding; supports Independent School Associations in their pursuit of excellence; strengthens educational practice; and contributes to the public good (<https://fisabc.ca>). FISA's has been evaluating its progress with its current strategic goals of: demonstrating how IS contribute to the common good; developing a proactive succession strategy for the FISA office staff; developing a position on IS funding that is most beneficial to school authorities; conducting surveys and researching topics that address educational practice and policy issues important to IS; developing policy and best practice guidelines for IS; and, strengthening FISA's relationship with provincial education partners, the Ministry of Education and elected MLAs. Good progress has been made in many areas. The FISA Board met in May 2022 to begin to develop a new strategic plan for the next 3-5 years.

The FISA Board meets monthly to address topics common to all IS in the province. The FISA Executive and Committee Reps continue to meet with various Ministry of Education departments on such topics as funding, online learning, leadership, mental health initiatives, professional learning, etc. The recent successes of FISA include:

- COVID-19 dominated much of FISA's time in the early stages of the 2020 - 2021 school year. FISA provided an independent school's voice on the K - 12 Steering Committee, the Health and Safety Working Group, the COVID-19 Equity and Inclusion Working Group, the Educational Programs Working Group, the Resources and Professional Learning Working Group and the Minister's Anti-Racism Roundtable.
- FISA advocated for equitable and proportional federal and provincial COVID funding for independent schools for the 2020 - 2021 school year. This translated in independent schools receiving over an additional \$100/student FTE in either a direct grant or as an addition to their per student grant.
- Secured independent school access to preferential pricing for the Zoom platform.
- FISA facilitated the creation of a Cash Payments Policy template to assist independent schools in creating a policy that would follow the Ministerial Order.
- Secured proportional mental health funding for independent school initiatives (\$477,000).
- Filed a complaint with the Provincial Ombudsperson's Office to seek a remedy to the provinces decision to reduce per student online funding from 63% of the public school online grant to 50%.
- Created a FISA Ad Hoc Advocacy Committee (with representation from the 5 member associations) to support strategic engagements with provincial decision makers and to create communications that promote the value of parental choice in education and fair and equitable funding to the independent school sector.
- Advocated for greater access for international students to pursue their education at a BC independent school. Worked with provincial and federal regulators to guide policies that promoted access balanced with public health concerns.
- Secured priority teacher certification application processing for independent schools scheduled for monitoring or external ministry of Education inspections in 2020 - 2021.
- Provided an independent school's voice to the Provincial Management Foundations Project that endeavors to create standards and provide supports to aspiring school leaders in both the public and independent school sectors.

The Catholic Independent Schools (CIS) group is one of the five associations within FISA. Three CIS members are elected as representatives to the FISA Board, and they ensure that the "Catholic" voice is heard at the FISA table.



### The 2021-2022 School Year Update:

#### COVID

The 2021-2022 School Year began with the hope that many of the COVID restrictions would be lifted in September 2021; however, that was not the case. Throughout this school year, staff again navigated changes in school schedules, regularly updated health and safety protocols based on the Provincial Health Orders and Regulations, and COVID cases in their local communities. All in all, it has been a good school year considering the circumstances.

#### School Year Theme

The development of a theme is a wonderful community building activity that strives to integrate all that we do throughout our schools in the year ahead. Prophetically, our 2020-2021 theme "Walk with Jesus Our Living Hope" served us extremely well last year. It was an excellent reminder of Who we need to turn to for strength and hope in these challenging times.

In April 2021 we discerned our new theme 'virtually' with principals and teachers from across the province. On March 19, 2021, the fifth anniversary of his Apostolic Exhortation, Pope Francis inaugurated the Year "Amoris Laetitia" on the joy and beauty of familial love, which concludes on June 22, 2022. The question "how can we align our annual school year theme?" guided our search. While the Pope's theme will focus on the 'family at home' our discussion focused on how we can approach this theme from a school's perspective - to the work of our school 'families'. Following a facilitated process, the wording "One Family, One Hope in Christ" emerged as our theme for the 2021-2022 school year. This year's theme has provided wonderful opportunities for integration throughout the curriculum and faith practices as well as unite the Catholic School communities across the province.

#### Catholic Schools and the Common Good

Catholic schools across the province make a difference in their communities. Some good news stories from this year include: students volunteering at their local food banks, missions and thrift stores; raising funds for women's shelters, children's hospitals, Make a Wish Foundation, SPCA; sending cards to the elderly in Senior Care homes; participating in the Archbishop/Bishop's Appeal, Terry Fox Run, Jump Rope for Heart, winter jacket drives, and Fill-a-Crib Pregnancy Outreach; donating blankets, toques, mitts and socks to the homeless; collecting food for Christmas hampers; dedicating one school fundraiser each year to engaging in community clean ups; and sharing virtual Christmas concerts with Senior and Long-term Care homes. The list could go on ... you get the point - our students make a difference in our communities.

That is for another year. Blessings to you all!

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Marshall, Associate Superintendent of Schools for the Vancouver Archdiocese and CISCBC Chairperson





## June 2021 to May 2022 - CCSTA AGM and all Reports

The year 2021 was a municipal election year for the province of Alberta, and so in October we welcomed a number of new Catholic school trustees. Ten new Directors were appointed to the ACSTA Board by their division boards shortly after the election. At our November AGM the membership elected Harry Salm of Christ the Redeemer Catholic Schools as President and Kelly Whelan of Holy Family Catholic Regional Division as Vice-President of the association.

In February 2022 ACSTA provided a Trustee Orientation Session for all Catholic school trustees, garnering a total of 120 registrations. Topics and speakers included: an organizational summary and introduction to GrACE (Grateful Advocates for Catholic Education) by Dr. Bonnie Annicchiarico; a history and legal background to Alberta's Catholic Schools by Cristina Wendel and Simon Elzen-Hoskyn of Dentons Canada LLP; an overview of the relationship between Catholic Schools and the Church by Fr. Philip Creurer, Judicial Vicar of the Edmonton Archdiocese; and general explanation of ACSTA's advocacy role by Dr. Robert Murray, also of Dentons. An onboarding session specifically for the ACSTA Board of Directors was also organized for that week, in conjunction with our regular February Board of Directors' Meeting.

On April 1st of 2022 the Board was pleased to announce the appointment of Mr. Eldon Wyant as ACSTA Executive Director. He brings an extensive educational and business background to this role, and has continually demonstrated steadfast commitment to publicly funded Catholic education through his career as a teacher, principal, trustee, and municipal administrator. Our organization warmly welcomes Mr. Wyant, and is looking forward to seeing what the future holds under his leadership.

We were extremely excited to return in-person to our annual SPICE (Serving with Purpose In Catholic Education) and Blueprints retreats this year. Starting on April 28th and until May 1st we hosted 135 SPICE attendees, primarily teachers, followed by approximately 180 administrators and trustees for Blueprints, in the peaceful and rejuvenating setting of Kananaskis, in the Rocky Mountains. Our speaker for the retreats was motivational speaker, teacher, catechist and author, Mr. David Wells, who proved truly inspirational throughout his talks elaborating on Pope Francis' concept of 'The Art of Accompaniment'.

ACSTA will be celebrating Catholic Education Week May 23rd through 27th. This will coincide with World Catholic Education Day and Ascension Day on May 26th, and we will be wearing blue for Catholic Education throughout our Alberta divisions on that day. Throughout the week a virtual daily prayer liturgy will be led by one of the Alberta Bishops, and digital content has been developed and will be shared on social media by ACSTA as well as our member divisions and other stakeholders.

While the previous months have brought many changes to our organization, the state of Catholic education remains strong in Alberta. We look forward to reinforcing ACSTA's capacity to advocate on behalf of our schools over the coming year. God bless.

Harry Salm, ACSTA President

CCSTA Director: Alberta-Northwest Territories-Yukon





## SASKATCHEWAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION CCSTA AGM REPORT

### **Communications:**

**June 2022**

Good News stories are still being posted to the SCSBA website and are being tweeted out to increase exposure of the stories and to drive some traffic to the website. A replacement website administrator was engaged as of October 1, 2021. Changes to the website have been steadily made since that time, deleting dated material, and focussing on posting relevant, timely information in an easily searchable format. The new permeation materials are worth a look for teachers wanting to permeate the Catholic faith into their teaching. These are being further enhanced by inserting introductions and key words to make the grade level materials more easily searchable.

The SCSBA has been undergoing a process to create a new logo design. The subcommittee has completed its work and the Board of Directors has provided additional input. A new design should soon be in place.

The Minister of Education for the Government of Saskatchewan has again proclaimed Catholic Education Week this year for the week of May 22-29, 2022. Materials have been prepared by the Catholic Education Coordinators/Consultants Association of Saskatchewan (CECAS) for use in Saskatchewan.

### **Advocacy:**

The SCSBA which is a Section of the larger Saskatchewan School Boards Association (SSBA) reached an agreement governing the relationship between the two parties. Work is still ongoing to clarify aspects of the relationship.

In the wake of the Theodore decision, it was recognized that the relationship with the public Boards needed some work. Misunderstandings over the proclamation of Catholic Education Week in 2021 and the SCSBA agreement with the SSBA were discussed at a meeting of Presidents and Executive Directors of the SCSBA and the Public Schools of Saskatchewan. Avenues for collaboration have been explored.

Two editions of the Former Members Connection were published this past year. The publication is an effort to keep former trustees and directors of education informed as to what is going on in Catholic Education in the province of Saskatchewan.

### **Catholic Congress Saskatchewan:**

A feasibility study examining the possibility of holding a Congress of Catholics in Saskatchewan determined that such a Congress was feasible. The Bishops of Saskatchewan still support the idea of a Congress, but as with many things the pandemic put any planning on hold.





### **Indigenous Leadership Team:**

In our ongoing efforts to address calls to action under the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the Education Committee of the SCSBA, made up of Directors of Education of the 8 Catholic School Divisions created a group presently called the Indigenous Leadership Team. This group is made up of division representatives for indigenous education. Where a division does not have an indigenous person in that role, elders and knowledge keepers assist the division representative. The group first met in person on December 1, 2021 and has been given considerable freedom to develop its own terms of reference and planning. The idea is to listen to indigenous voice and take collaborative action based on that voice. Because of the anticipated papal visit, the group will likely be busy with developing a response for Catholic divisions to the visit.

### **2021 Virtual SCSBA AGM:**

Because of the pandemic the SCSBA was again unable to have a full conference and AGM. As a result, a virtual business AGM was held on November 15, 2021. Elections for President and Vice President were held, and Jerome Niezgoda from Christ the Teacher was acclaimed as President and Bruno Tuchscherer from Holy Family was acclaimed as Vice President. Vicky Bonnell from Regina will still serve as Past President and will also be the Saskatchewan representative on the CCSTA Board of Directors.

Award winners were also acknowledged at the AGM although formal presentation of the awards would take place later. An Appreciation Award was awarded to Maurice Chalifour of Prince Albert. The Julian Paslawski Meritorious Service Award winner is Delmer Wagner.

### **2022 SCSBA AGM:**

Since the CCSTA AGM and Convention is scheduled for 2023 in Saskatoon, Catholic Boards have decided to save their faith development dollars to attend the CCSTA convention. Since there will not be a full conference, a simple AGM business meeting will be held in conjunction with the Saskatchewan School Boards Association (SSBA) Fall Assembly on November 14, 2022. In terms of an awards event, plans are being made to have an awards ceremony Sunday afternoon on November 13. That would be followed by a banquet to take place before the SSBA Fall Assembly begins that evening.

### **Pandemic Response:**

The pandemic continued to impact all aspects of school operations. Most opening day events were held virtually. Pandemic plans needed to become more refined. Considerable time and effort were expended in the fall addressing vaccine mandates in Catholic schools. A legal opinion regarding the Catholic perspective aided divisions in developing individual division policies. With the increase of Omicron cases during the Christmas break, and continuing into 2022, all Saskatchewan school divisions were tasked with a much larger role in the communication of positive COVID cases. School divisions had to continually alter their processes. The result was that school administrations and office personnel worked countless additional hours. Absenteeism of students and staff caused all kinds of problems and additional cost. Finally, School divisions also had to deal with the eventual lifting of restrictions by the Government. All in all, a very challenging year!





## 1. PANDEMIC UPDATE

The pandemic has been the major focus of Catholic schools in Manitoba over this past two years. As we moved thru the six waves, schools had to adjust to different requirements of Public Health including distancing, cleaning, masks, and vaccinations. At different times, school buildings were closed and operated remotely, or blended learning occurred with limits to the number of students in a room. Cohorts became very important for contact tracing when cases occurred. Staffing was also an issue as people had to isolate. All aspects of the daily operations of a school were impacted from sports to how students moved in a building, played or ate their lunch. This was very hard on younger students as manipulatives were packed away and they could not do many normal activities.

As the current Public Health restrictions ended in March, we are gradually returning to more normal circumstances although we continue to deal with the impact of cases from the latest variant. Masks are no longer required but are recommended and are very common with staff and older students. We are still concerned about mental health issues for staff and students and learning deficits, especially for younger students. Socialization skills are missing for some students who did not spend the time interacting with their peers for two years. We are working to put supports in place.

We are all very tired and are looking forward to summer and hopefully normal operation in the Fall.

## 2. PROVINCIAL EDUCATION REFORM

In the summer of 2021 under intense political pressure the PC Government withdrew Bill 64, the Education Modernization Act which replaced several acts related to education that date to the 1960's. The new act would have eliminated public school boards except for the DSFM (French language board) and created the Provincial Education Authority (PEA) to oversee K-12 schools. Catholic schools would not have been directly impacted as we operate as independent schools outside the public system.

The province is continuing with their plan to reform the public-school funding model. The ability of public boards to tax is being removed and funding will be come directly from the province. Currently each board sets their own tax rate and covers approximately one third the cost of their operations. There are great differences in the tax base and rates of each division in the province.

We do not anticipate an impact to our funding agreement as it is based on the cost of educating public school students two years previous (50%). This never decreases as public sector unions continue to put pressure on the system. Our funding for 2022/23 will increase by 2.5% and was based on public school expenditures in 2020/21.

The province will also move to provincial bargaining for public school teachers as current contracts expire. The appropriate legislation has been passed. Currently each division negotiates separate contracts and there are different salary rates across the province. Catholic schools will not be impacted by this directly as our teachers are not part of the public system.



### **3. PROVINCIAL EDUCATION ACTION PLAN**

In April, our new Minister of Education, Wayne Ewasko released the K-12 education action plan as a roadmap to the recommendations of the Education Commission. The guiding principles of the plan include advancing truth and reconciliation, achieving equality, ensuring inclusion, striving for excellence, prioritizing well-being, and enhancing accountability. The plan is based on 4 pillars for student success: high quality learning, student engagement and well being, excellence in teaching and leadership, and responsive systems. The plan is grounded by Manitoba's new Indigenous Education Policy Framework, *Mamahtawisiwin: The Wonder We Are Born With*. The Department of Education will use the action plan to guide their work in partnership with stakeholders over the next 5 years. The new plan has been well received with educational stakeholders and represents a collaborative approach to education reform.

### **4. TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION**

Truth and Reconciliation continues to be a focus for Manitoba Catholic schools. The Superintendents' Advisory Committee recently sent out a survey for teachers to complete to give us perspective on where we are and what the next steps on this journey should be. There was very positive feedback on the Four Seasons of Reconciliation online course which is a required program that all teachers and support staff must complete by the end of this year. Teachers also expressed some concerns they have about how we move forward that will now be reviewed by the Committee. Truth and Reconciliation will be the focus of our Catholic Schools Day in February 2023.

Robert Praznik – Superintendent



## Ontario Report for CCSTA



Ontario Catholic School  
Trustees' Association

### OCSTA AGM and Conference



More than 170 delegates in April attended OCSTA's first in-person event in over two years. Following all health and safety protocols, the Association in partnership with the Ottawa Catholic School Board, successfully hosted the 92nd AGM and Conference in Ottawa at the Fairmont Chateau Laurier Hotel.

The Association is most grateful for the warm welcome and hospitality provided by the Ottawa CSB. From the opening liturgy, to the closing student choir performance - the students and staff of the Ottawa CSB provided several faith-filled, memorable experiences for all in attendance.



The Conference program featured timely and relevant presenters including Child Psychiatrist and Author, Dr. Jean Clinton (Resilience and Empathy in Education), Ottawa's Poet Laureate, Elder Albert Dumont ("A Glimpse into the Indigenous Worldview"), and Professor Mark McGowan who OCSTA commissioned to update the well-referenced book "The Enduring Gift - The History of Catholic Education." Prof. McGowan's closing presentation addressed many contemporary topics aligned with this year's Conference theme - Communities of Faith and Resilience.

### OCSTA Elections



Members of the OCSTA Board of Directors at Notre-Dame Cathedral, Ottawa

Patrick J. Daly, Chair of the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board and current CCSTA President, was re-elected as President of OCSTA:

*"I am honoured and humbled by the trust that the membership of the OCSTA has placed in me. I am inspired by the goodness and commitment of Ontario's 237 Catholic school trustees as they faithfully serve as strong advocates, good stewards and servants and political leaders of the school systems entrusted to their care. I pledge to work with each of them, the OCSTA Board of Directors and Provincial Catholic Education Partners as we continue to strive to 'place Christ and the teachings of the Catholic Church at the centre' of publicly funded Catholic education," said President Daly.*





## ONTARIO - OCSTA (continued)

The Chair of the Sudbury Catholic District School Board, Michael Bellmore was also re-elected as Vice-President of the Association and will serve with President Daly and Past President Beverley Eckensweiler (Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board) on the OCSTA Executive.

The following trustees were appointed to the OCSTA Board of Directors for the 2022-2024 term:

Region 6 – Toronto CDSB: Trustee Nancy Crawford and Trustee Garry Tanuan

Region 7 – Dufferin-Peel CDSB: Chair Sharon Hobin and Trustee Luz del Rosario

Region 8 – York CDSB: Trustee Jennifer Wigston

Region 12 – Ottawa CSB: Chair Mark Mullan

Region 13 – Halton CDSB: Janet O’Hearn-Czarnota

Region 12 OCSTA Director Mark Mullan was elected by the membership to represent OCSTA on the Board of Directors for the Canadian Catholic School Trustees’ Association.

The complete list of trustees on OCSTA’s Board of Directors can be viewed at <https://www.ocsta.on.ca/ocsta-board-of-directors/>.

### OCSTA Awards Program

The Association was pleased to acknowledge outstanding Catholic education leadership and service to others through the annual OCSTA Award Program. This year’s awards recognized the following individuals:

#### 2022 OCSTA Trustee Award of Merit Recipients:

Trustee Kathy Burtnik, Niagara Catholic District School Board ([view profile](#))

Former Trustee Barbara Poplawski, Toronto Catholic District School Board ([view profile](#))

#### 2022 OCSTA Special Award Recipient:

Most Rev. Ronald P. Fabbro, CSB, Bishop of London ([view profile](#))

#### 2022 OCSTA Student Trustee Award Recipient

Trustee Michael Murphy, Algonquin & Lakeshore CDSB ([view profile](#))

### Current Priorities:

OCSTA’s current advocacy platform includes:

- COVID-19 supports for Catholic school boards
- the municipal property assessment system’s default ‘public’ mechanism
- on-line learning (see Catholic Virtual Ontario below)
- adequacy and equity in the GSNs
- central collective bargaining
- provincial party election platforms, and
- Executive Compensation.

### Catholic Virtual Ontario

An important focus of the Association’s current advocacy relates to government policy with regard to mandatory on-line learning.

OCSTA has been extremely proactive in supporting Catholic school boards as they prepare to introduce the two mandatory on-line learning credit secondary school graduation requirement.



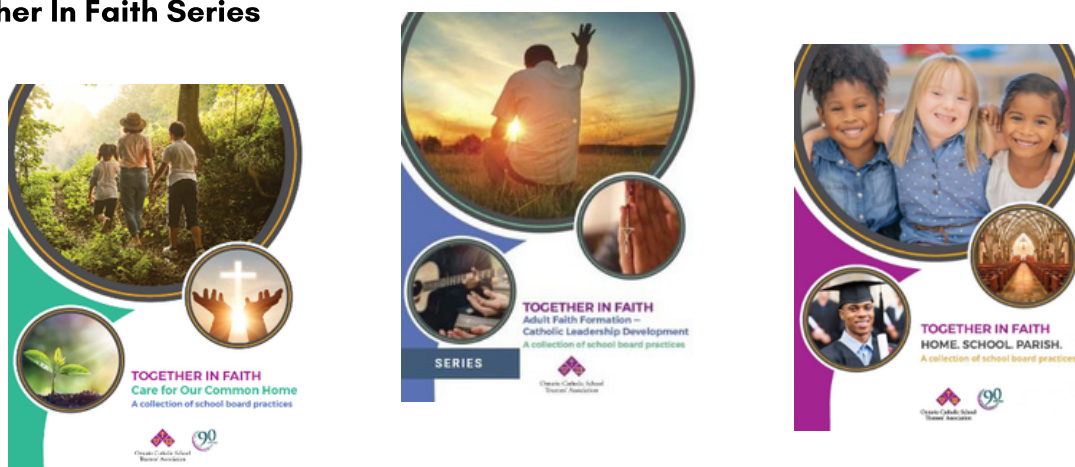
## ONTARIO - OCSTA (continued)

The development of Catholic Virtual Ontario (under OCSTA) and the securing of funding from the Ministry of Education to support development of distinctly Catholic on-line courses will be of tremendous benefit to Catholic school boards and the students they serve. These efforts also help to protect the denominational rights and promote the Catholic Identity of publicly funded Catholic education.

### Catholic Identity

As part of the Association's ongoing focus on Catholic Identity, OCSTA continues to encourage conversations with regard to the Catholic Identity of publicly funded Catholic education in Ontario. This work has led to the development and distribution of a number of resources/documents which give witness to OCSTA's commitment to support Catholic school boards in "placing Christ and the teachings of the Catholic Church at the centre" of their school systems. Resources include:

### Together In Faith Series



- *Together in Faith: Home, School, Parish* booklet
- *Together in Faith: Care for Our Common Home. A Collection of School Board Practices* booklet, and
- Recently released: *Together in Faith - Adult Faith Formation - Catholic Leadership Development. A Collection of School Board Practices* booklet.

These documents are available on the OCSTA website at:

<https://www.ocsta.on.ca/together-in-faith-series/>

### Catholic Education Week



## ONTARIO - OCSTA (continued)

OCSTA's Annual Catholic Education Week province-wide promotion took place May 1 - 6, 2022. In addition to the curriculum and liturgical packages that are prepared by the OCSTA CEW Committee for all Catholic schools, the Association also works with a provincial student trustee executive to host the Ontario Catholic Student Youth Day Event.

This event opened with the Provincial CEW Mass (celebrated by His Eminence, Cardinal Thomas Collins and live-streamed from St. Michael's Cathedral) and concluded with the OCSYD Seminar featuring speakers and workshops delivered virtually for the several hundred students participating in the event.

To view and download the CEW packages, special video, posters and prayer cards, please visit: [www.goodnewsforall.ca](http://www.goodnewsforall.ca).

### OCSTA Year in Review



The OCSTA 2021-22 Year in Review report highlights the priority work of the Association over the past year. This report can be downloaded directly from the OCSTA website at the following URL:

<https://www.ocsta.on.ca/resources/the-year-in-review/>



## ACTIVITY REPORT FOR ACCEC / CCSTA



**For the period from January 1st to March 31st, 2022,**

Hello everyone,

Here is our summary of some of the activities the Association has accomplished since the last report submitted. The overview of activities for the past few months is grouped according to the main issues facing French-language Catholic school boards in Ontario, as well as the activities scheduled for the coming year.

## ACTIVITY REPORT FOR ACCEC / CCSTA

**For the period from January 1st to March 31st, 2022,**

Hello everyone,

Here is our summary of some of the activities the Association has accomplished since the last report submitted. The overview of activities for the past few months is grouped according to the main issues facing French-language Catholic school boards in Ontario, as well as the activities scheduled for the coming year.

**1. Management in COVID mode** – At the beginning of 2022, the city of Toronto and some administrative regions recorded an increase in Covid cases due to a new wave of the virus. To limit the risks for employees having to come to the office by using public transport from January to March, the AFOCSC offices decided to mainly operate in teleworking mode.

Despite this increase in cases, schools continued to function normally in face-to-face mode. A few isolated outbreaks have occurred in some areas. During this period, the situation has been almost under control, with the authorities stepping up calls for the vaccination of students and all teaching staff, while improving access to Covid-19 screening tests and increasing the installation of HEPA filters in most premises. Staff absenteeism is on the rise and continues to rise significantly, creating pressure to keep classes and sometimes schools open.

**2. Training – The October 2022 elections** are just around the corner and to this end, the AFOCSC held 3 training sessions for current French school trustees in preparation for this democratic exercise. Sessions were held on February 24, 26 and 28, 2022 in virtual mode. Recording of the session and reference documents are available on the AFOCSC website. A good and active participation of our members was noted.

A training aimed at those interested in becoming a candidate for elections entitled “Shaping the future – Façonner l’avenir” was also planned for April. The Association makes efforts to interest parents of young families, candidates from the diversity, visible minorities and other candidates who would like to run in the next elections.





**Advocacy activities** — The pandemic continues to be a hindrance to meetings with our elected government officials. Despite everything, we managed to hold a few positioning meetings on important files. Advocating in virtual mode, although it has become the main way for our elected officials to meet their interest groups, remains distant and incomplete. However, it is important to recognize that this activity will never be the same again. New models of dynamic discussions will have to be established between virtual mode and face-to-face meetings.

- At the beginning of March, the **Ontario Human Rights Commission** – CODP-OHRC tabled the report of its public inquiry into “the right to read”. This public inquiry into the right to read was launched in October 2019 following the COPD's desire to review in detail how Ontario's public education was meeting the needs of students with reading disabilities. The Right to Read report offers 157 recommendations.

The raison d'être of the COPD is the promotion and protection of human rights. However, since the launch of its survey in 2019, the COPD made the deliberate choice to exclude French-language school boards and faculties of education from its sampling. Indeed, only eight English-language boards and 13 English-language faculties of education were included. We dare to believe that a public study in Ontario should consider its 4 education systems, namely English Catholic and public and French Catholic and public.

The OHRC acted in a manner fundamentally contrary to its mission to protect the rights of all Ontario students, regardless of the language in which they receive their education. Of the 157 recommendations in the study, French-language school boards are mentioned twice.

The government has already taken up some of the recommendations to transpose them into solutions in our school system, once again without conclusive data and without validation with the actors involved in the network. It is once again sad to have to demand that the francophone reality be respected.

- With the **municipal and school elections** scheduled for October 2022, SFEM-MPAC held consultations and working meetings to improve the quality of data in its registration system to provide better access to data and information. voter registration.

The current municipal registration system continues to register taxpayers who have not changed their property taxes to support the French-language Catholic system by default to the English-language public system. This has a significant influence on the number of voters registered to vote correctly on October 24, 2022.

AFOCSC actively works with school boards and trustees to raise voter awareness and continues to influence decision makers for change to this disadvantageous system.

- In March, our members participated in a “Sommet de la Francophonie” organized by Francophone Liberal MPs from Ontario in preparation for their election platform. Good news, several of our recommendations seem to have been retained.

**4. E-learning file** – E-learning file — just like in the last few months, we can say that there has been some progress in this file during this period. The working committee is proud to announce that the ministry clearly recognizes that these activities must be under the exclusive governance of school boards.

However, there appears to be a significant gap between the Ministry's expectations for the next year and the funding offered, which may impact course offerings or program support for 2022-23. The AFOCSC continues to work with the Ministry of Education to ensure that this initiative comes to fruition soon, that a medium-term planning process is put in place and that the Francophone consortium can offer our students quality online programming, at the very least, equivalent to what is available to students in English-language education systems.

**5. Discussions with School Principals and Vice-Principals** – We are pleased to announce that discussions have concluded on an agreement with our school leadership teams. The process began in May 2021 and ended in March 2022.

**6. Implementation Committee – French Teacher Recruitment Strategy** – This committee, now headed by the Ministry, held 2 working meetings during the period. The report tabled more than a year ago reported a serious shortage of French-language teaching staff. This shortage curve is only increasing year after year.

The working table brings together representatives of the Ontario College of Teachers, universities, unions, school boards trustee's associations and the ministry. Several initiatives were discussed such as recruitment from universities in France, relaxation of current regulations, more flexibility for our teaching candidates, better promotion of the profession and a few other avenues.

However, it remains very important to launch and fund major initiatives that will have a significant impact on recruitment and training because the report's estimates indicate that at least 500 teachers should be trained and hired each year simply to meet the needs of schools in French language. This is without considering the needs of the English system. Much remains to be done.

**7. Annual General Meeting** – The next AFOCSC Annual Meeting is scheduled in person, for May 26, 27 and 28, 2022 in Toronto. Sanitary measures in accordance with the City of Toronto's public health orders will be in place, to ensure the necessary collective protection measures. Here we go again for in-person activities!

The AGM of AFOCSC members will complete the program of our meetings on Saturday, May 28, 2022. Everyone is eager to return to conventional mode. But to facilitate the participation of all our members during the AGM, it will be held in hybrid live mode.

Our annual conference program includes 5 of the most interesting conferences which will be recorded and available on our YouTube page afterwards.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.  
Be careful and stay healthy!

*Langis Dion*

Président, CSCD des Grandes Rivières  
Représentant à ACCEC/CCSTA

*Yves Lévesque*

Directeur général  
AFOCSC

The Association franco-ontarienne des conseils scolaires catholiques is the voice of Ontario's eight French-language Catholic school boards, bringing Education to more than 78,000 Franco-Ontarian and Franco-Ontarian students, in nearly 300 schools and supported by more than 11,200 employees.





## RCISA-AR May Report 2022

As we near the end of another school-year, we remain deeply grateful for our school communities and all of those who support our efforts in Atlantic Canada. We are most especially thankful for the support shown to our families through the Toonies for Tuition program. We're keenly aware of the fact that some of our students would not otherwise be able to attend our schools without this support - we are filled with gratitude for the generosity shown to us through this incredible program.

This Spring found our 5 schools celebrating some in-person normalcy! We were delighted to watch the excitement of students, staff and parents as special events and outings resumed during the last few months of the school-year.

There was a special joy buzzing in our school hallways at the announcement of special events resuming! Among the highlights was an Olympics Day, a musical production of Madagascar, a field trip to a Maple Sugar shack and presentations from Peaceful Schools International. Some incredible news was celebrated at DMCS in Saint John, NB when they announced that the Diocese, along with The Redemptorists of Canada, gifted the school with debt-free ownership of their building - a huge step in securing the future of their school.

We'd like to express our gratitude to Sister Anne Wachter, RSCJ, who will be retiring as Head of School at Sacred Heart School in Halifax, NS. Though her last few years were filled with unprecedented difficulties, her faithful leadership was a profound gift to her school community.

We can't speak highly enough of our School leaders, boards and staff here in Atlantic Canada who lead our communities with incredible generosity, patience and courage. We saw clearly the self-sacrifice each of our Principals made this year as they remained faithful to their call of leading these missions of Catholic Education.

Psalms 25:5

Lead me by your truth and teach me,  
for you are the God who saves me.  
All day long I put my hope in you.



#### 2021 -2022 Executive:

**PATRICK DALY** - President  
**PAULA SCOTT** - Past President  
**TERESITA CHIARELLA** - Vice President  
**FR. STEFANO PENNA** - Chaplain  
**JULIAN HANLON** - Executive Director

#### 2021 -2022 Directors:


British Columbia: **Colleen Easson**  
Alberta/NWT/Yukon: **Harry Salm**  
Saskatchewan: **Vicky Bonnell**  
Manitoba: **Giuseppi Caligiuri**  
Ontario French: **Langis Dion**  
Ontario English: **Bev Eckensweiler**  
Ontario English: **Mark Mullan**

*Join the momentum as we strive to grow the voice of  
Canadian Catholic Education Online!*



**CONNECT WITH US!**



  
**#CATHOLICED**  
**WE CANNOT  
CREATE A  
CULTURE OF  
DIALOGUE IF WE  
DO NOT HAVE  
IDENTITY.**  
Pope Francis

