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THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO SUPPORTED THIS YEAR'S TOONIES FOR TUITION CAMPAIGN!

Your generosity helps support families seeking access to Catholic education across Canada and reminds them that they are not alone.

Together, we continue to strengthen and support the mission of Catholic education.



Toonies
can make a difference

PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



HARRY SALM
CCSTA President



GIUSEPPI CALIGIURI
CCSTA Vice President

A recent gospel was the parable of the Pharisees challenging Jesus about paying taxes. Jesus asks for a coin and asks the Pharisees whose image is on the coin. When they say Caesar, he tells them to give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's. I am borrowing following the reflection from Bishop Robert Barron about that reading.

Bishop Barron notes, "So what about our famous question of religion and politics?"

"Politics is not in a realm separate from the religious; rather, its deepest ground is spiritual. Thomas Aquinas held that law comes from the eternal law, which is identical to the mind of God. This eternal law is reflected in the human mind and heart, those basic principles that are called the natural law. Positive laws—from traffic regulations to antitrust laws—are then concrete applications of the natural law.

"Hence, all law—the very stuff of politics—has to do with God, since positive law nests in the natural law, which nests in the eternal law. This is why we should expect our politicians [which is most of us] and judges to be acting in accord with moral and spiritual goods."

CCSTA provides the opportunity to share religious and political developments, consistencies and aberrations. I feel it is of the utmost importance to maintain this opportunity for sharing, as I have often heard that what happens in Alberta happens in Saskatchewan, and what happens in Ontario happens in Alberta and vice versa. Education may be part of provincial mandates, but by sharing, we can learn much from each other and offer to support one another. By virtue of Canon Law, our bishops have the primary responsibility for Catholic education. For all of us as Catholic school trustees, we carry the authority and responsibility of our bishops as we stand as one in support of Catholic education across our country.

CCSTA'S MISSION – TO SPEAK AS ONE IN PROMOTING AND PROTECTING CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN CANADA – HAS NEVER BEEN MORE IMPORTANT.

PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (CONTINUED)



HARRY SALM
CCSTA President



GIUSEPPI CALIGIURI
CCSTA Vice President

At our national AGM and Conference in Winnipeg earlier this month, representatives from all member provinces participated and enjoyed many fruitful conversations. It was a blessing to be able to gather with like-minded supporters of Catholic education, and we are grateful to Manitoba Catholic Schools for their many hours of organization and effort to make us feel welcome. Even though we did not have sufficient information to pass our 2027 budget, we nevertheless came together to discuss matters that pertain to all our students and their families.

As we look towards summer and our next conference in Vancouver in 2027, I urge all of you to remain vigilant and continue to hold all trustees from across Canada in prayer. We are living in a time of change and upheaval. Remaining united at such times is critical. Rest assured that the Board of Directors and staff of CCSTA will continue to work diligently on your behalf. We will be holding a special virtual meeting sometime before the end of 2026 and look forward to reconnecting with you at that time.

I pray that the Holy Spirit bestows blessings upon you in your lives, in your work as trustees, and in your families.

Harry Salm
President

Giuseppi Caligiuri
Vice President



Rose Burton Spohn
CCSTA Executive Director

My husband and I have been geographically challenged since we met over 40 years ago. He's in Toronto; I'm in Kitchener. He's in Waterloo; I'm in London. He's in Windsor; I'm still in London. He's working in Cambridge; I'm temporarily studying in Calgary. He's on the road; I'm on the road. He's in Woodstock; I'm living near Sault Ste. Marie. We have spent years of our relationship and marriage commuting on weekends to see each other and/or our respective families.

Perhaps it is little wonder that we have now found ourselves as a couple married over 35 years splitting our time between two communities — one in southern Ontario and one in northern Ontario — and worshipping in parishes that reflect their differences.

For instance, one of our church communities rises majestically from the landscape. A testament to the confidence of its proud parishioners, it is an inspirational beacon on a hill that can be seen from almost anywhere in the city. By contrast, our other church community is nestled quietly on a sleepy little side road among pine trees, cottages, and a volunteer fire hall; it took me a full three weeks and a conversation with a local gas station employee to locate this parish when I first moved north.

Our southern church is decorated with ornate statues, historic artwork, stunning stained-glass windows, awe-inspiring flying buttresses, marbled pillars, and Gothic Revival-style spires that reach to the skies. Hundreds of people, perhaps even thousands, call this parish home. Sunlight streams through the windows, forming magnificent, dazzling, multi-coloured patterns. Our northern church has white siding and a steel blue roof. Its simple wooden pews and stations of the cross are hand-me-downs from a convent chapel that shuttered years ago. This church seats perhaps 100 people. Even that's pushing it. Sometimes, when it rains hard, the congregation can't help but watch the water gush over the eaves; nervous giggles or glances are exchanged, as we hope the system will pass through before the end of Mass.

Down south, our church has a powerful, resounding organ that would rival any found in a European cathedral. It is played by professionals whose titles include "organ scholar", "sub-organist", "organist and choirmaster". The choir members wear gowns and sing authoritatively with lovely soprano voices from the front of the church. Up north, the ragtag church choir that I help lead sometimes features a violin, a clarinet, two guitars, and multiple singers. Some Sundays, there is but one instrument and one singer huddled at the back. You just never know from week to week.



Rose Burton Spohn
CCSTA Executive Director

One church feels like a place worthy of the worship of our powerful, omnipotent God, who knows all, sees all, and has a master plan for all. Since my husband and I are relatively new to the city and geographically challenged, we know the names of maybe five people here. Nobody touches each other at the sign of peace. Conversely, our little rural parish feels like home. That's Bill over there. His wife is Laurie. She broke her hand last year bringing a vase of flowers into the church from her garden. That's Erin and her two kids, whom we have seen grow up over the past decade. Here's Mary Ann. She's a lector, a musician, and the parish treasurer – sometimes all three at the same Mass. Soon Betty will come back to the parish to visit. We buried her husband and daughter in the past five years and now she lives in a retirement home in town; winter out here can be unforgiving.

If I have learned anything about faith communities over our years of geographic challenges, it is that they come in various shapes and sizes. Our two current parishes are certainly witness to that reality.

But God is present in them all.

In truth, it is difficult not to feel like you have had an encounter with the Divine in our two churches. But the God I encounter down south — mighty, awesome, the one who makes me shield my eyes in humility and reverence and shame at my inadequacy — doesn't feel like the same God I meet up north. God up north somehow feels like a gentle fellow parishioner who sidles up to you and says, "Got room for one more? Sorry - I have a bassinet too, but I could leave that in the aisle if needed." This Lord is the one to whom I talk more freely, the one with compassionate eyes and a knowing nod. God is everywhere, and perhaps he appears in different ways to us all.

This is the same lesson I have learned from CCSTA and living in various places in Canada over the years. Oh, we Catholic Canadians have some very definite things in common, but we don't look or function the exact same way. Yet, as we were repeatedly reminded at our phenomenal conference in Winnipeg, "For all of you are one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28).

There is room for everyone here, to come as they are. In this Church of ours, indeed in this organization of ours — whether north, south, east, or west — we can sit side by side, respectful of one another. This same love and respect has held us together for over 65 years, and it is this same love and respect that will keep us together, despite geographic or other challenges, for years to come...God willing, of course.



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Catholic Independent Schools of British Columbia
Annual Report for CCSTA
2025–2026

Catholic education across British Columbia continues to advance with confidence, clarity of mission, and a deepened commitment to excellence. Drawing from reports submitted by the Catholic Independent Schools of the Vancouver Archdiocese, the Catholic Independent Schools of the Nelson Diocese, Island Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Victoria, the Catholic Independent Schools of Kamloops Diocese, and the Catholic Independent Schools of Prince George, the 2025-2026 annual report identifies the principal trends shaping Catholic education in British Columbia today. Across urban, rural, coastal, interior, and northern communities, a consistent picture emerges: Catholic schools are deepening faith formation, strengthening literacy and instructional practice, investing in leadership and governance, responding to increasingly complex student needs, and attending carefully to long-term sustainability.

Provincial Snapshot

System	Current Enrolment / Reach	Key Provincial Signal
CISVA (Vancouver)	14,088 students; 16,688 including affiliated schools	Largest Catholic school system in the province, with strong recruitment, communications, and leadership infrastructure.
CISND (Nelson)	1,380 students; 14% growth since 2020	Province-leading literacy work integrated with Catholic identity and diocesan coherence.
Island Catholic Schools (Victoria)	1,600 students; growth of just over 5%	Strategic-plan renewal, strong staff formation, and early learning expansion.
CISPG (Prince George)	1,621 students across 8 schools in 6 communities	Strong northern enrolment, expanded teacher-leader structures, and mission-centred recruitment.
CISKD (Kamloops)	1,505 Strongest enrolments in seven years	Renewed confidence, improved financial footing, and visible momentum in evangelization.

1. Catholic identity remains the defining centre of school life

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Across all five systems, Catholic identity is not an adjunct to school life; it is its animating centre. Faith formation continues to find expression through sacramental preparation, retreats, pilgrimages, diocesan faith days, co-missioning events, prayer initiatives, Catholic Schools Week celebrations, and works of service to those in need. Throughout the province, Catholic schools are forming students not only for academic success, but for discipleship, virtue, service, and a life of meaning rooted in Jesus Christ. The final year of the provincial theme, Living, Celebrating, and Proclaiming Our Faith, has provided a shared ecclesial language and a common spiritual focus across British Columbia.

This provincial witness is significant. In an increasingly fragmented culture, Catholic schools in British Columbia are educational communities that allow themselves to be guided by the Gospel, and as a result are courageously responsive to the possibilities within our increasingly complex society. This hope-filled, and visionary approach to the future remains one of the enduring strengths of Catholic education in the province.

2. Enrolment growth reflects sustained family confidence in Catholic education

A second clear provincial trend is sustained enrolment growth. All Dioceses reported strong or increasing student numbers. This growth is especially noteworthy in a context marked by rising financial pressures, increasing student complexity, and heightened expectations for schools to provide both academic excellence and broad forms of support.

Families continue to choose Catholic schools because as Pope Leo XIV says, in *Drawing New Maps of Hope*, they are an “environment in which faith, culture and life intertwine.”¹ Across British Columbia, this continued growth signals not only confidence in Catholic schools as educational institutions, but trust in their distinctive mission.

3. Educational excellence is increasingly mission-driven and evidence-informed

Catholic schools across British Columbia are investing with growing intentionality in instructional quality, professional learning, and leadership development. Perhaps the clearest example is found in CISND’s structured literacy initiative, which reported that more than 80% of Tier 2 students returned to the average range by mid-year. CISVA continues to deepen assessment literacy, school improvement planning, inclusive education training, and system-wide professional learning. CISPG has expanded its Learning Services Team and teacher-leader pathways. Island Catholic Schools has strengthened teacher formation and vice-principal capacity, while Kamloops has aligned operational modernization with stronger system supports.

What is becoming increasingly evident across the province is that educational excellence is understood not as a secular metric detached from mission, but as an expression of stewardship



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and fidelity. Catholic schools are pursuing strong outcomes because they are called to form the whole child with care, competence, and conviction.

4. Leadership formation and governance are becoming more intentional and more systemic

Another notable provincial trend is the strengthening of leadership structures. Across the dioceses, there is clear investment in principal formation, vice-principal appointments, district and diocesan leadership roles, and teacher-leader networks. Governance renewal is also evident in strategic planning, updated financial policies, centralized administrative systems, digital transformation, and stronger alignment between school-level practice and diocesan direction.

This reflects an important maturation in Catholic education across British Columbia. Faithful vision alone is not sufficient; Catholic education also requires disciplined governance, prudent stewardship, and intentional formation of leaders capable of carrying the mission forward in complex times. The increasing attention given to leadership and governance demonstrates that the systems are planning not only for present needs, but for future resilience.

5. Provincial collaboration continues to deepen

The shared work of the superintendents, bishops, and the Catholic Independent Schools of British Columbia continues to foster a stronger provincial voice. This is visible in common professional learning, the annual Catholic Educators' Conference, collaboration through FISA, and the growing exchange of ideas and practice across diocesan lines. British Columbia's Catholic systems vary considerably in geography, scale, and context, yet they are increasingly acting with a shared provincial consciousness.

This matters. Provincial collaboration strengthens advocacy, enriches professional practice, and enables smaller systems to benefit from shared wisdom and mutual support. It is also a sign of ecclesial maturity: diverse systems working together in service of a common mission.

6. Highlights by Jurisdiction

Vancouver Archdiocese (CISVA)

CISVA continues to lead in scale, recruitment reach, and system infrastructure. Highlights include strong enrolment, a 91% returning educator rate, significant advances in digital communications and intranet systems, targeted inclusive education professional development, and broad international recruitment through 170 university networks. CISVA also continued to invest in leadership formation for principals, deepen truth and reconciliation efforts, and strengthen system-wide school improvement planning.

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Diocese of Nelson (CISND)

CISND’s distinctive provincial contribution lies in its integration of faith, literacy, and coherent diocesan leadership. The system combined a Jubilee Year of Hope with pilgrimages, retreats, and service while advancing structured literacy across K–12, strengthening morphology and phonics instruction, and building authentic professional learning communities. Enrolment has grown by 14% since 2020, and governance, finance, and digital systems have been modernized to support consistency, transparency, and mission clarity.

Diocese of Victoria – Island Catholic Schools

Island Catholic Schools demonstrated notable growth, increasing from 1,514 to 1,600 students in one year. The system launched a renewed strategic plan, emphasized synodal listening, expanded teacher formation through Foundations of the Faith, and added new vice-principal capacity in response to growth. The expansion of early learning programming and sustained community listening reflect a system that is attentive, responsive, and forward-looking.

Kamloops Diocese (CISKD)

Kamloops has shown renewed stability and clear momentum. Significant faith formation experiences with Fr. Leo Patalinghug energized staff, students, youth, and parish communities. At the same time, the system modernized accounting and human resources processes, and the turnaround of Sacred Heart—from near closure to renewed viability—stands as a noteworthy example of local resilience, disciplined budgeting, and community mobilization.

Diocese of Prince George (CISPG)

Prince George continues to demonstrate that mission-centred Catholic education can flourish across a vast northern geography. Its eight schools in six communities serve 1,621 students and are guided by the strategic anchors of bold, intentional faith formation; innovative learning; and building healthy community. CISPG has expanded Learning Services Team leadership, maintained strong enrolment, and continued refining recruitment through practicum pathways, leadership opportunities, and wider provincial and international connections.

7. Shared Provincial Challenges

- **Recruitment and retention of Catholic educators.** Every system identified staffing as a central concern, particularly with respect to Catholic teacher recruitment, on-call personnel, educational assistants, and early learning roles. The challenge is not simply to fill vacancies, but to attract and retain educators who are professionally strong, relationally capable, and deeply aligned with the mission of Catholic education.
- **Increasing complexity in student needs.** Inclusive education, early learning, mental health, behaviour support, and culturally responsive practice all require greater expertise and stronger capacity. Systems are responding with care and seriousness, but the complexity of student need is growing more quickly than staffing and funding structures can always support.

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- **Financial pressure and long-term sustainability.** Rising wages, capital needs, tuition sensitivity, ageing facilities, and diminished parish capacity in some regions continue to place pressure on diocesan planning. Even where enrolment is increasing, sustainability requires disciplined stewardship, infrastructure planning, and coordinated advocacy.

8. Outlook for 2026

Looking ahead, the Catholic Independent Schools of British Columbia remain steadfast in hope and while joyfully enthusiastic in their assessment of the work ahead. The priorities before us are clear: to deepen the Catholic identity and evangelizing mission of our schools; to strengthen literacy, inclusive education, and student support in a manner that reflects both excellence and human dignity; to form educators and leaders whose professional competence is matched by wisdom, faith, and witness; to renew the partnership of family, parish, and school; and to ensure prudent stewardship so that these institutions remain sustainable and accessible for generations to come. What is emerging across British Columbia is more than institutional growth. It is an alignment between mission and practice, a mature culture of collaboration and accountability, and a shared commitment to forming young people who can contribute faithfully and responsibly to both the life of the Church and the common good.

Closing Reflection

Across mountains, islands, cities, interior valleys, and northern communities, the story of Catholic education in British Columbia is one of fidelity, resilience, and shared mission. Our schools continue to form young people who are rooted in Christ, formed in virtue, capable in learning, and prepared to serve both the Church and the common good. For CCSTA and Catholic education partners across Canada, British Columbia offers a compelling witness: systems that differ in context and scale, yet remain united in purpose—to educate, to evangelize, and to accompany the next generation with courage, wisdom, and hope.

Prepared from diocesan and provincial reports submitted by CISVA, CISND, Island Catholic Schools, CISKD, CISPG, and prior CISBC provincial summaries.

1 (Leo XIV, 2025, para. 5.2)

2025-2026 ACSTA Provincial Report to CCSTA

Leadership and Staff Updates

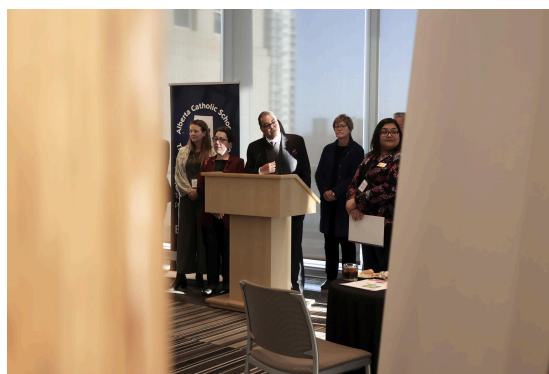
At our November 2025 AGM, Kelly Whalen (Holy Family CSRD) was re-elected as President, and Andrew Gustafson was elected as Vice-President. In August 2025, we welcomed Dawn Miller as our new Governance Manager, bringing two decades of governance and leadership experience. We also welcomed Jenny Connelly as our new Communications Coordinator, who has taken on full communications responsibilities while Charlotte Taillon, our Director of Communications and Government Relations, is on maternity leave.

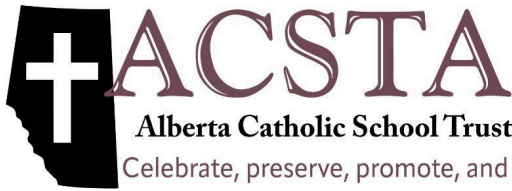
ACSTA Advocacy

ACSTA continues to actively advocate to protect the rights and interests of Catholic schools, ensuring strong governance, funding, and curriculum protections. ACSTA is currently engaged in several provincial advocacy efforts, including advocating for constitutional protections of denominational separate schools in the provincial social studies curriculum, funding mechanisms like the Education Property Tax, and supporting member boards through the October 2025 municipal election while orienting incoming trustees. Additionally, ACSTA continues to back Catholic education in the Yukon alongside CCSSA and assists Catholic education partners in navigating ongoing political and legal challenges.

4th Annual ACSTA MLA Reception

On March 30, 2026, we hosted our annual ACSTA MLA Reception at the Queen Elizabeth II Building in Edmonton, with 36 MLAs and representatives from Catholic school districts across Alberta in attendance. A special thank you to Minister of Education Demetrios Nicolaidis and NDP Leader Naheed Nenshi, who both offered beautiful remarks in support of publicly funded Catholic education.





Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association

Celebrate, preserve, promote, and enhance Catholic education

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ACSTA Events

2025 AGM & Trustee Orientation

On November 14, 2025, our AGM featured a keynote from Fr. Kris Schmidt on Christ-centred leadership, along with presentations from Fr. Cristino Bouvette, Justice Ana Loparco, and Dr. Dwayne Zarichny. The weekend included our Awards Banquet and a beautiful Commissioning Mass. Earlier that week, our Trustee Orientation featured presentations from Brendan Cavanagh, Michael Hauptman, Fr. Philip Creurer, and Stacy McNeil-Ayeh.

Board Meetings and Executive Visits to Member Boards

The ACSTA Board gathered in Leduc (September 11-12, 2025), in Edmonton (November 14), and online (February 2-3, 2026). The Executive also renewed its tradition of visiting member boards across the province, fostering meaningful dialogue and collaboration in service of publicly funded Catholic education.

Catholic Ed Talks

ACSTA continues to advance its professional development series, Catholic Ed Talks. Recent sessions have included:

- September 10, 2025: Fr. Stefano Penna, Chaplain of CCSTA, "*Verso l'Alto*"
- December 10, 2025: Teresa Haykowsky, McLennan Ross, "*Codes of Conduct and the Catholicity of Catholic Schools*"
- January 14, 2026: Dr. Scott Morrison, "*5 High-Impact Governance Practices*"
- February 25, 2026: Peter Csillag, "*The Do's and Don'ts of Advocating to the Provincial Government*"
- March 18, 2026: John Brahier, Longbeard AI, "*Principles Before Policy: A Catholic Vision for AI Use in Schools*"
- April 15, 2026: Dr. Dan Guernsey, Cardinal Newman Society, "*Mission is King: Catholic Leadership and the 5 Marks of a Catholic School*"

Grand Openings and the Installation of Archbishop Stephen Hero

On September 24, 2025, we attended the grand opening of St. Carlo Acutis Catholic School in Camrose (Elk Island Catholic Schools). On January 23, 2026, we were honoured to attend the installation of Archbishop Stephen Hero at St. Joseph's Cathedral Basilica in Edmonton. On January 29, we attended the grand opening and blessing of St. Josephine Bakhita Elementary and Junior High School in Edmonton Catholic School Division.

Alberta Speech from the Throne

On October 23, 2025, we were honoured to attend the Speech from the Throne opening the second session of the 31st Alberta Legislature, where President Kelly Whalen and Executive Director Brendan Cavanagh had meaningful conversations with colleagues from our provincial government.

SASKATCHEWAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

CCSTA REPORT

June 2026 Newsletter Report

Teacher Formation:

The Education Committee of the SCSBA, made up of Directors of Education from the 8 Catholic School divisions, have created a draft Common Faith Framework Document meant to support new and experienced teachers. The draft will be reviewed by the 8 Catholic divisions and the document will be revised to capture that feedback.

Teacher Negotiations:

Bargaining for a new provincial teacher bargaining agreement will begin in May 2026. The hope is that this round of bargaining will take place at the bargaining table.

Communications:

A website review has been completed and the SCSBA website has undergone extensive revisions. The focus will still be on telling the Good News of Catholic Education in the province of Saskatchewan.

Good News stories are still being posted to the SCSBA website. More detailed Good News Articles together with a "Hero Image" will continue to be posted on the SCSBA website, and these will also be forwarded to the CCSTA for posting on the CCSTA website.

The Government of Saskatchewan has again been asked to proclaim Catholic Education Week for May 10 - 17, 2026. We are grateful for the support we receive from the Government of Saskatchewan for Catholic Education.

Advocacy:

A meeting with the Education Minister has been requested but has not yet occurred. One of the concerns is still the August 2023 ministerial directive which prevents third party providers of sexual education to be in the classroom. Groups such as Teen Aid are still not allowed in the classroom.

A meeting of the Executives of the SCSBA and the public section of the Saskatchewan School Boards Association (SSBA) occurred on April 17, 2026, at the SSBA Spring Assembly. The discussions were productive and there was a recognition that "us and them" attitudes needed to change. The discussions cleared up some unfortunate misunderstandings of respective positions and should help to foster cooperative work on common issues.

Faith Development:

The Catholic Education Coordinators/Consultants Association of Saskatchewan (CECAS) is continuing to review the Blessed and Beloved replacement for Fully Alive to determine how the resource will fit with the Saskatchewan curriculum. Since Saskatchewan was not involved in the development of the materials, CECAS and the Catholic Directors of Education want to review

the grades 4, 5 and 6 materials for 2026 as well as the grades 7-8 materials in 2027 before committing to the Blessed and Beloved resource.

2026 SCSBA AGM and Convention:

Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools will be hosting the SCSBA 2026 AGM and Convention in Saskatoon October 23-25, 2026.

Indigenous Leadership Team:

In our ongoing efforts to address calls to action under the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the 8 Catholic School Divisions created a group called the Indigenous Leadership Team made up of division representatives for indigenous education. The team has completed work on their 4th video. A video campaign will be posted to the SCSBA website during Catholic Education Week. The video will also be shared with CCSTA, SSBA and the Saskatchewan Knights of Columbus Charitable Foundation for posting to their respective websites. Special thanks to the Foundation for providing a grant to cover the cost of the video production.

Saskatchewan Congress:

The SCSBA has been supportive of an initiative from Saskatchewan Catholic Connections to host a Saskatchewan Congress. This has been talked about for several years and now is set to be held in October 2027. The SCSBA 2027 AGM and Convention will be held at the same time and will be hosted by Prince Albert Catholic Schools.



Leadership

Manitoba Catholic Schools (MCS) operates under the direct authority and leadership of Archbishop Murray Chatlain, Archbishop of Winnipeg, and Archbishop Albert LeGatt, Archbishop of Saint Boniface. Both archbishops are actively involved in the governance and operations of Catholic schools in Manitoba and are supported in this role by a Board of Consultors, who act as trustees in an advisory capacity.

The Manitoba Catholic Schools Office, including the Office of the Superintendent, operates directly under the authority of the Archbishops. The Superintendent serves as their delegate in all matters related to Catholic education and reports directly to them. The MCS offices are located within the Catholic Centre of the Archdiocese of Winnipeg and work in close collaboration with diocesan staff.

The Archbishops are advised by the Manitoba Catholic Schools Board of Consultors, which they jointly co-chair. This board provides recommendations in areas such as vision and strategic planning, policy development, public relations, and political advocacy.



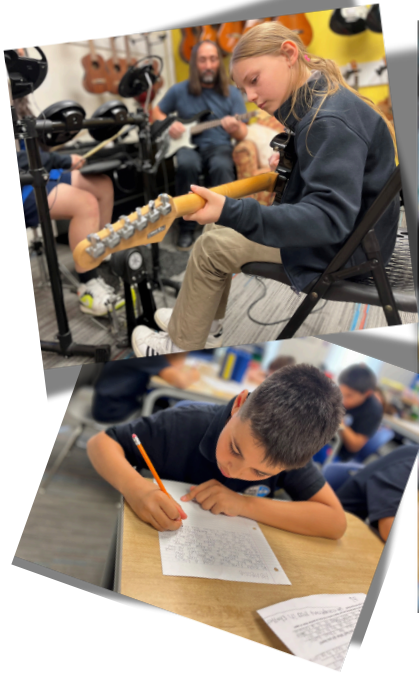
Manitoba does not have a centralized Catholic school board. Instead, each Catholic school is separately incorporated and governed by its own board of directors, which is responsible for the governance of the individual school. These local boards act as trustees for their respective schools. Local pastors serve as representatives of the Archbishops at the school level and are automatic members of each school's board of directors.

Funding

Manitoba Catholic Schools are funded differently from Catholic schools in Ontario, Saskatchewan, and Alberta, as our schools are classified as independent schools. The original funding agreement for independent schools was negotiated in 1990 between the Progressive Conservative Government of Premier Gary Filmon, the Manitoba Federation of Independent Schools, and Manitoba Catholic Schools. A condition of this agreement required Manitoba Catholic Schools to discontinue their legal challenge for full funding of a separate Catholic school system under the Manitoba Act of 1870. A second funding agreement, also negotiated with the Filmon government, increased provincial funding to 50% of the average cost of educating a student in the public school system. The provincial support grant is calculated using a formula based on actual public school division costs, resulting in a two-year time lag between public education expenditures and funding provided to independent schools. In the 2026–27 school year, the provincial support grant will be \$7,549 per full-time student, reflecting 50% of the cost of educating a public-school student in the 2023–24 school year.

In addition to the support grant, Manitoba Catholic Schools receive a textbook grant of \$60 per student, as well as full funding for Level II and Level III special needs students on a case-by-case basis. Prior to these funding agreements, Manitoba Catholic Schools received no operational support grants from the Government of Manitoba. The province also provides public school divisions grants to provide independent schools with clinical support services and shops programming through shared service agreements. The River East Transcona School Division and Winnipeg School Division stopped offering shared service agreements. The Province opted to provide schools for the next two years with the \$75 FTE grant directly to provide these services which are being done through private clinicians. We are currently negotiating with the Minister of Education, Tracy Schmidt, so that the provincial funds will be automatically provided directly to a school that cannot enter into a shared agreement.

Enrolment



As of September 30, 2025, Manitoba's Catholic Schools reported an enrolment of 5,932 students (K-12) to the provincial government, representing a 2.7% increase from the previous year. We are optimistic that this positive growth trend will continue.

As we receive only partial government funding, careful attention must be given to balancing operational costs and tuition rates to ensure Catholic education remains accessible to a broad range of families. In addition, our ability to expand enrolment is constrained by limited physical space, as we do not receive provincial capital funding. While we are exploring ways to support schools in increasing capacity to meet the growing demand for Catholic education, rising construction costs are making expansion increasingly challenging.

Initiatives

On Catholic Schools Day in February, a system-wide in-service was held for all staff with a focus on Sensitive Topics. The session was presented by Stacey MacNeil-Ahey of the Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association (ACSTA). We are grateful to ACSTA and the Alberta bishops for permitting Stacey to share her expertise with our staff. This presentation is part of our ongoing commitment to supporting students and staff as they navigate increasingly complex social and cultural realities.

Teacher recruitment was also a key focus for Manitoba Catholic Schools during the past year. A committee of volunteer administrators was formed to explore innovative strategies for attracting Catholic educators to our system. As part of this initiative, a recruitment video was commissioned and is now featured on our website and shared within parishes. Additional efforts included participation in university job fairs and the active recruitment of student teachers.

Manitoba continues to experience a teacher shortage that began during the COVID-19 pandemic. In response, MCS has focused its recruitment efforts on young teachers within our strong ethnic Catholic communities, graduates of our Catholic schools, and recently retired public school teachers.

CCSTA Winnipeg 2026

We extend our sincere thanks to all delegates who travelled to Winnipeg to join us in celebrating Catholic education. We are deeply grateful to Jean Gilbert, Anita Vander Aa, the members of the organizing committee, and our school administrators, staff, and students, whose dedication and efforts in countless ways made this convention a success. Our appreciation also extends to all presenters and sponsors who shared their time, expertise, and support throughout the conference.

We are truly blessed to have gathered as a community to celebrate our shared faith and mission, united in the theme "We are all one in Christ Jesus."

We wish all delegates safe travels as they return home and look forward to seeing many of you again in Vancouver next June.

Robert Praznik
Superintendent



MANITOBA
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
PARTNERING IN FAITH

OCSTA Report to CCSTA – May 2026

Bill 101 – *Putting Student Achievement First Act, 2026* – OCSTA Submission

On April 27, OCSTA President Michael Bellmore and Executive Director Patrick Daly appeared on behalf of Ontario’s 29 Catholic District School Boards before the provincial government’s Standing Committee on Social Policy to share the Association’s deep concerns regarding *Bill 101 – Putting Student Achievement First Act, 2026*.

OCSTA 96th AGM and Conference



OCSTA President Michael Bellmore

The OCSTA’s 96th Annual General Meeting and Conference was held this year at the Windsor Convention Centre in Windsor, Ontario. Over 200 delegates and guests attended the opening liturgy which celebrated the Conference theme “Pilgrims of Hope: On the Path to Holiness” and featured Trustees, students and staff of the Windsor-Essex CDSB.

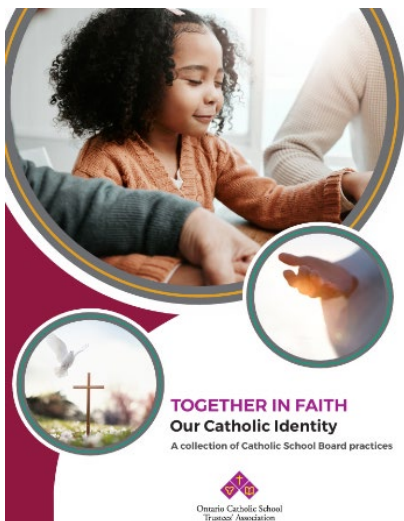


“Our path to Holiness is grounded in Hope when we anchor it in the person of Jesus Christ.”

AGM President’s Report

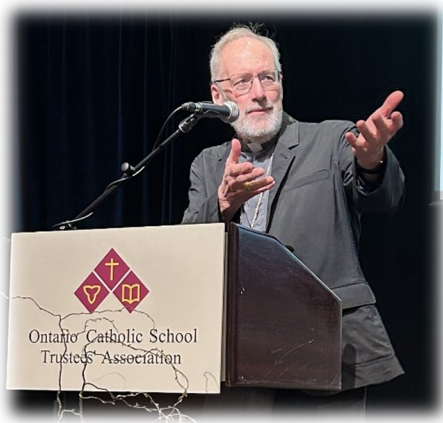
The Annual General Meeting opened with the President’s Report delivered by OCSTA President Michael Bellmore. During this address, President Bellmore discussed OCSTA’s key advocacy and operational priorities which included:

- **Addressing the concerns of the proposed legislation that would substantially change education governance structure in Ontario - *Bill 101, Putting Student Achievement First, Act, 2026.***
- **Engaging with Catholic partners.** The annual FACE Lobby Day for Catholic Education at Queen’s Park is an example of an effective joint advocacy initiative involving OCSTA and representatives from the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario, and the Ontario English Catholic Teachers’ Association.
- **Developing and promoting Catholic Virtual Ontario (CVO).** Launched 2 years ago, this OCSTA eLearning initiative has grown significantly. During the 2025-2026 school year, more than 18,000 Catholic secondary school students have registered for courses offered through CVO.
- **Together in Faith Series** – OCSTA recently released the newest publication in the Association’s *Together in Faith* resource entitled: “Our Catholic Identity: A Collection of Catholic School Board Practices”.



“A prayerful reading of the signs of the times suggests that a commitment to ensuring the authentic Catholic identity of publicly funded Catholic education in Ontario is at the same time our greatest challenge and opportunity. It is our hope that this resource assists in that discernment and the sharing of amazing practices contained in it is of assistance to schools within our 29 Catholic District School Boards.”

Keynote Address: Pilgrims of Hope: On the Path of Holiness



The Most Reverend Paul-André Durocher, Archbishop of Gatineau, delivered the keynote presentation on the Conference theme “Pilgrims of Hope: On the Path to Holiness”. Archbishop Durocher’s inspiring talk included interactive discussions on the meaning of hope in our lives.

Bill 101, *Putting Student Achievement First Act, 2026*

Executive Director, Patrick Daly provided an overview of Bill 101 and commented on OCSTA’s immediate short and long-term planned actions regarding the legislation. He and President, Michael Bellmore responded to a number of questions put forward by Catholic Trustees during the Plenary Session.

Closing Address: Leading with Hope



The Most Reverend Daniel Miehm, Bishop-Designate of the Diocese of London, expressed deep appreciation on behalf of the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario (ACBO) for the dedicated service of Catholic School Trustees and their important role as advocates for Catholic education in Ontario.

Throughout his presentation, Bishop Miehm referenced Pope Leo XIV's Apostolic letter, ***Drawing New Maps of Hope***, published last October on the 60th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council's declaration on Catholic education. Bishop Miehm encouraged delegates to read the letter, noting Pope Leo's assertion that Catholic education is at the heart of the Church's mission.

Bishop Miehm reflected on the Church's longstanding commitment to scholarship and learning, referencing educational pioneers ranging from St. John Bosco to St. Marie-Marguerite d'Youville and St. Marguerite Bourgeoys in our own country.

Highlights from Bishop Miehm's hope filled presentation included references to Pope Leo's comments that:

- Christian education is not a solo endeavour, but a collective mission involving teachers, students, parents, administrators, support staff, pastors, and civil society working together to nurture life and faith.
- Catholic education itself as an expression of hope — an act renewed each day because it reflects the promise we see in the future of humanity.
- Catholic education forms children as disciples who will carry forward the work of the Church and prepare for eternal life. Hope remains at the very centre of Catholic education.
- Catholic education recognizes and cherishes the unique story of every child. Authentic education is grounded in relationships and in seeing the whole person.
- Catholic schools collaborate closely with parents, reflecting the Church's recognition of the essential role of the family.

OCSTA is most grateful to the Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board for cohosting what was a most successful and memorable conference.

Catholic Education Week and Ontario Catholic Student Youth Day



The 2026 annual Catholic Education Week sponsored by the OCSTA was celebrated May 3rd to 8th.

Curriculum content, liturgies, prayers, music, additional resources, book lists, and graphic design/marketing assets for Catholic school board use were distributed throughout the school year. These activities and school programming culminated with the Catholic Education Week observance May 3-8 in parishes and Catholic school communities across Ontario.

Ontario Catholic Student Youth Day – May 6



Michael Bellmore, OCSTA President

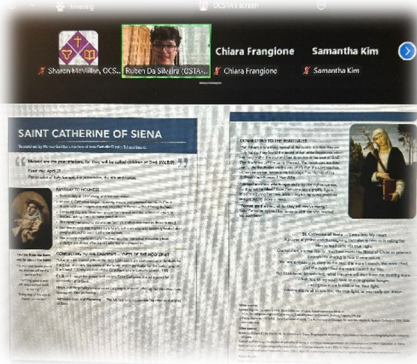


Ruben Da Silveira, OSTA-AECO VP
Catholic Student Trustee Council

The 2026 Ontario Catholic Student Youth Day (OCSYD) opened with welcoming remarks from OCSTA President Michael Bellmore and OCSYD Host, Vice President for the Catholic Student Trustee Council of the Ontario Student Trustees' Association, Ruben Da Silveira. The Seminar included a number of outstanding presentations including:

- **“Balancing the Heart & Mind: Reflections for Catholic School Trustee Well-Being”** presented by Fr. Jim Mockler, OCSTA Chaplain, and Kelly Lazure-Valconi, Senior Manager, Employee & Family Assistance Program & Pastoral Services, Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic DSB.
- **“Pilgrims of Hope: Sowers of Seeds”** presented by Karen Kiefer, Director, The Church in the 21st Century Center, Boston College.
- **“Charisms of Saints”** presented by student trustees at CDSBs across the province.

During this presentation students prepared presentations on selected saints. In these presentations students described each saint's path to Holiness, special miracles, Catholic symbols and patronage, and specific connections to the Beatitudes and the particular charism(s) of the saint.

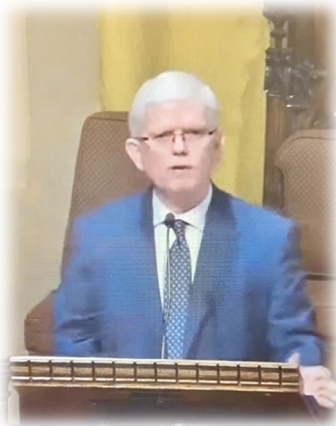


Example of Charism of Saints card prepared for St. Catherine of Siena.



Student Samantha Kim discusses Charism of Saints presentation.

Province Wide Mass – May 6



Patrick Daly, OCSTA Executive Director



OCSYD Mass at the Cathedral of St. Peter-in-Chains Peterborough, Presider: The Most Rev. Daniel Miehm, Bishop-Designate, Diocese of London

The province-wide Catholic Education Week Mass is live streamed each year on Ontario Catholic Student Youth Day (OCSYD) which this year was May 6th. The OCSTA recognizes and expressed deep appreciation to The Most Rev. Daniel Miehm, Bishop-Designate, Diocese of London for presiding at the Mass and for his inspiring homily. The Mass took place at the beautiful Cathedral of St. Peter-in-Chains in Peterborough.

Opening remarks prior to Mass were delivered by:

- OCSTA Executive Director Patrick Daly
- OSTA-AECO VP for the Catholic Student Trustee Council, Ruben Da Silveira.

2026-2027 Core Education Funding

The 2026-2027 Core Education Funding was released to school boards on May 13, 2026. While OCSTA continues to analyze the details of the announcement, and consult with Catholic School Boards, it is clear that a number of on-going financial pressures including; Special Education, sick leave costs and student transportation remain insufficiently funded.

ACTIVITY REPORT FOR ONTARIO ACCEC / CCSTA 2025-2026

Annual Conference – May 2025 – Toronto

Congratulations and thank you to all participants of the AFOCSC Annual Conference, its 27th edition, held in Toronto from May 28 to 30, 2025!

This year, the Conference was organized around the theme “Pilgrims of Hope,” an invitation to walk together with faith and conviction toward a meaningful future for French-language Catholic education in Ontario. Rooted in the spirit of the 2025 Jubilee, this theme inspired discussions and reflections throughout the three days.

Opening Evening: 5 to 7 at Queen’s Park

The opening evening of the 2025 Conference took place at the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, in the magnificent historic Ninoododadiwin Hall at Queen’s Park. This early evening reception offered an excellent networking opportunity in a warm and festive atmosphere, allowing our members to connect informally with colleagues, Francophone and Catholic partners, as well as Members of Provincial Parliament.

The event welcomed 11 special guests from our Francophone and Catholic education partners, nearly 24 Members of Provincial Parliament, and 76 members, including school board trustees, directors of education, and student trustees. It was a great success and highly appreciated by all participants.

We extend our special thanks to the representatives of the political parties who spoke at the event: Ms. Jess Dixon, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Education (Progressive Conservative Party); Ms. Chandra Pasma, Opposition Critic for Education (New Democratic Party); and Ms. Lucille Collard, Opposition Critic for French-language Education (Ontario Liberal Party).





Conferences and Workshops

During the Conference, our participants had the opportunity to benefit from the expertise of several speakers who delivered presentations and workshops on current and inspiring topics:

- “Catholic Engagement” – Bishop Pierre-Olivier Tremblay (May 29, 2025)
- “Community Engagement” – Bernard Letendre (May 29, 2025)
- “Presentation of the Centre Jules-Léger Consortium” – Jean-François Boulanger (May 30, 2025)
- “Presentation of the 2025–2028 Strategic Plan” – Mirela Lonian, Executive Director of AFOCSC (May 30, 2025)

These workshops sparked rich discussions about our collective vision for French-language Catholic education in Ontario, helping us look toward the future with hope and determination.

2025 Award of Excellence in Catholic Education

Each year, the AFOCSC presents an Award of Excellence in Catholic Education. This award recognizes the outstanding contribution of a French-speaking Catholic school trustee who has contributed, or continues to contribute in a remarkable way, to the advancement of French-language Catholic education in Ontario.

The Association franco-ontarienne des conseils scolaires catholiques was pleased to announce that Jean Lemay was the 2025 recipient of the Award of Excellence.



Recognition of Years of Service 2025

The AFOCSC's Years of Service Recognition aims to highlight the contribution and dedication of school trustees across the province. Each year, an award is presented at the AFOCSC Annual Congress to recipients who have accumulated 15 years of service.

Mr. Dominique Janssens was the recipient of the 2025 Years of Service Recognition Award.



Knowledge Cup 2025

The Knowledge Cup is an initiative by Claudette Gleeson, trustee at the Conseil scolaire de district catholique des Aurores boréales, launched in 2022 to encourage members to actively participate in the various training sessions offered throughout the year. The school board with the highest number of participations wins the trophy, and each member of the winning board receives a miniature version to keep.

For a third consecutive year, the Conseil scolaire catholique Providence is the proud winner of the Knowledge Cup! This remarkable consistency reflects the exemplary commitment of its members to ongoing professional development.

However, 2025 will mark the final edition of this initiative, which has helped strengthen the culture of professional learning within member school boards over several years.

Election of the President and Vice-President

The Annual Conference is also an opportunity for the AFOCSC to elect, among the members of its Board of Directors, the individuals who will serve as President and Vice-President for the coming year. At the 27th Annual General Meeting held on May 30, 2025, Mr. Robert Demers, President of the Conseil scolaire catholique Providence, was re-elected as President of the AFOCSC. As for the Vice-President position, Ms. Suzanne Salituri, President of the Conseil scolaire catholique de district Nouvelon, will support Mr. Demers in leading the Association for the 2025–2026 term.



Board Members 2025–2026

For the 2025–2026 year, AFOCSC was pleased to present the members who make up its Board of Directors:

- Mr. Robert Demers, President of AFOCSC and CSC Providence
- Ms. Suzanne Salituri, Vice-President of AFOCSC and President of CSC Nouvelon
- Ms. Melinda Chartrand, Representative of the Centre Jules-Léger Consortium
- Most Rev. Marcel Damphousse, Episcopal Liaison of AFOCSC and Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Ottawa–Cornwall
- Mr. Ronald Demers, CSC Franco-Nord
- Ms. Claudette Gleeson, CSDC Aurores Boréales
- Mr. Roger Grégoire, CSC Grandes Rivières
- Mr. Jacques Héroux (until November 2025), Mr. Jean Lemay (as of November 2025), CSDC de l'Est ontarien
- Mr. Dominique Janssens, CSC MonAvenir
- Ms. Johanne Lacombe, Conseil des écoles catholiques du Centre-Est (CEC Centre-Est)



Student Panel

During the last day of the Conference, the student trustees took part in their own panel where they were able to share their perspectives on their French-language Catholic school experience and make their voices heard.



Strategic Plan 2025–2028

Developed collaboratively with AFOCSC members and partners, the 2025–2028 multi-year Strategic Plan serves as the Association’s roadmap for the next three years. It addresses challenges that may weaken the organization and prioritizes opportunities to be seized, while providing clear direction regarding AFOCSC’s desired positioning.

School trustees, student trustees, and numerous partners contributed to the Mission and Vision statements, as well as to the strategic objectives for the 2025–2028 period.

AFOCSC’s Mission:

AFOCSC promotes French-language Catholic education in Ontario and serves as its voice.

The four strategic pillars guiding the association’s actions are:

- Strategic Pillar 1: Political advocacy and awareness
- Strategic Pillar 2: Collaboration
- Strategic Pillar 3: Organizational strengthening
- Strategic Pillar 4: Sustainability

The four values guiding daily decision-making are Collaboration, Engagement, Inclusion, and Integrity.

AFOCSC’s priority actions are monitored by the Board of Directors through a dashboard that includes eleven (11) performance indicators.

AFOCSC ASSOCIATION FRANCO-ONTARIENNE
 DES CONSEILS SCOLAIRES CATHOLIQUES



Planification stratégique 2025-2028

Fondements

Mission
 L'AFOCSC fait rayonner l'éducation catholique de langue française en Ontario et en est porte-parole.

Vision
 Par son leadership, l'AFOCSC affirme la vitalité du système d'éducation catholique de langue française en Ontario.

Valeurs

- Collaboration
- Engagement
- Inclusion
- Intégrité

Orientations stratégiques

Démarchage et sensibilisation politiques	Collaboration	Renforcement organisationnel	Pérennité
Accroître l'influence politique de l'AFOCSC	Renforcer les relations avec les membres et partenaires	Former et outiller les conseillers scolaires et le personnel	Assurer le renouvellement de la membres

Training

AFOCSC is proud to offer its members a series of training sessions tailored to the realities of French-language Catholic school boards.

Here is an overview of the programs offered:

Essential Governance Program 2025 (CSÉO)

- “Effective Community Engagement to Promote Student Success,” led by Denis Poirier, Guylaine Scherer, and Sébastien Lorquet (May 7, 2025)
- “Mediation and Conflict Resolution,” led by François Laperle, Véronique-Anne Towner-Sarault, and Sébastien Lorquet (May 14, 2025)
- “Financial Management of School Boards,” led by Jason Rodrigue and Cathy Modesto (May 23, 2025)
- “Performance Evaluation of the Director of Education,” led by François Laperle, Véronique-Anne Towner-Sarault, and Sébastien Lorquet (June 2, 2025)



AFOCSC Training 2025–2026

- “Analysis of the 2025 Act to Support Children, Pupils and Students,” led by Steve Tametong, Manager of Political Affairs and Communications, AFOCSC (January 22, 2026)
- “Crisis Communication,” led by Daniel Proulx, Project Manager, Catalyst Communications (March 5, 2026)

For your information and interest, we invite you to visit the [Training tab](#) on our website. This will give you access to the materials shared with our members and the training videos on our [YouTube channel](#).

Political Climate

The political climate of 2025–2026 was marked by significant changes at both the federal and provincial levels, with direct impacts on the French-language Catholic education sector in Ontario.

Provincial Level

Following its victory in the provincial election on February 27, 2025, the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party, led by Premier Doug Ford, formed its third consecutive majority government. On March 19, 2025, Doug Ford unveiled his new cabinet, appointing Paul Calandra as Minister of Education.

The most significant legislative development for education this year was the adoption and coming into force of the 2025 Act to Support Children, Pupils and Students (Bill 33). This legislation grants broad powers to the Ontario Ministry of Education (EDU), allowing it to intervene in the day-to-day management of school boards through supervisory measures.

AFOCSC is pleased that, throughout the year, no French-language Catholic school board was placed under ministerial supervision, demonstrating transparent governance by trustees who are fully aware of their role in managing education locally, by and for their communities.

However, the essential role of school trustees is being questioned by the Ministry, which is considering a reform of the school board governance model without elected representatives. AFOCSC stands ready to defend the right to management and control of French-language school boards, as guaranteed under Section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and upheld by the Supreme Court of Canada.

Federal Level

At the federal level, Prime Minister Mark Carney called a snap election for April 28, 2025, seeking a strong mandate to address economic challenges and trade tensions with the United States. This federal context also influenced discussions around funding for French-language education across the country.

AFOCSC Priorities and Meeting with the Minister of Education

The meeting held on July 24, 2025, between AFOCSC representatives and Minister of Education Paul Calandra highlighted the excellent results of French-language Catholic school boards, including a record graduation rate and strong performance on provincial assessments—achievements the Minister praised with pride.

Discussions focused on four priority issues: the ongoing shortage of French-speaking teaching staff, challenges related to school infrastructure and the moratorium on capital projects, inequities in school transportation funding, and school governance. Overall, the meeting took place in a constructive atmosphere, marked by a shared willingness to collaborate.



Teacher Shortage

The shortage of qualified French-speaking teaching staff remained one of the most pressing issues for French-language Catholic school boards in Ontario. AFOCSC continued to play an influential role in promoting qualified, committed francophone candidates to teach in French across the province.

The Association actively participated in consultations and working groups in collaboration with the Association des enseignantes et enseignants franco-ontariens (AEFO), the Association des conseils scolaires des écoles publiques de l'Ontario (ACÉPO), and the Ministry of Education. Adjustments to initial teacher education were announced in April 2026 by the Ministry to help mitigate the effects of this ongoing shortage.

Capital Projects

AFOCSC remained a key partner of the Ministry of Education in identifying solutions to advance capital projects and meet the needs of students and school communities.



School Transportation

AFOCSC emphasized that the school transportation funding formula must reflect the realities of French-language school boards and the needs of students and their families.

Governance

In response to proposed reforms to the school board governance model raised by the Ministry of Education, AFOCSC maintains a firm position: local management of education by elected representatives is a fundamental right guaranteed by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The Association submitted four (4) briefs over the course of the year to advocate this position to decision-makers.

Advocacy Activities

In planning its advocacy efforts, AFOCSC focused primarily on its four priority issues: teacher shortages, capital projects, school transportation, and school board governance.

On May 28, 2025, AFOCSC organized an advocacy day at the Legislative Assembly of Ontario at Queen's Park. This event enabled members of the Board of Directors, AFOCSC's executive leadership, school trustees, student trustees, and Directors of Education to engage directly with Members of Provincial Parliament on priority issues affecting French-language Catholic education in Ontario.

A total of 19 meetings were held with 21 elected officials from all political parties represented in the Ontario Legislature. This was an excellent opportunity to strengthen advocacy efforts aimed at preserving the identity of French-language Catholic education in Ontario.

Teacher Education Bursary Program (TEBP)

In 2025–2026, the Teacher Education Bursary Program supported the training of future teachers within French-language schools in Ontario, particularly targeting individuals holding an interim letter of permission.

In total, 54 recipients were awarded bursaries through this initiative, representing an overall investment of approximately \$1,050,000, including scholarships of \$10,000 and \$30,000. Among the recipients, 29 have already completed their training, while 25 are currently in the process of doing so. In addition, 35 recipients are already employed within French-language school boards, in permanent teaching positions or long-term occasional roles.

These encouraging results demonstrate the positive impact of the program on recruitment and integration of new teachers, thereby strengthening the capacity of the francophone education system to meet current and future needs.

Order of La Pléiade

AFOCSC is pleased to congratulate Ms. Johanne Lacombe, a member of its Board of Directors, on officially receiving the medal of the Order of La Pléiade, an honour recognizing her outstanding commitment at the provincial level.

This recognition is well deserved and reflects her remarkable work, from which we have had the privilege of benefiting for many years. What makes Johanne a true pillar of Ontario's francophone community is her wholehearted dedication, great generosity, and humility. At AFOCSC, we are sincerely delighted for her and proud to see her receive this well-deserved honour.



Political Column

To strengthen its capacity for information-sharing and mobilization, AFOCSC launched a monthly political column at the end of 2025, written by Steve Tametong, Manager of Political Affairs and Communications. This column aims to inform AFOCSC members about political developments in the education sector, draw connections to issues affecting French-language Catholic education, and encourage reflection. Four columns were published on the AFOCSC website during the 2025–2026 year.

AFOCSC Conference – May 2026 in Toronto

The highlight event of AFOCSC will take place during its Annual Conference on May 21 and 22, 2026, marking its 28th edition. Nearly one hundred Catholic school trustees, student trustees, and Directors of Education will gather in Toronto under the theme “Pilgrims of Hope on the Path to Holiness.”

This will be an opportunity not only to celebrate achievements but also to reflect on the future of French-language Catholic education in Ontario.



The reunion evening is scheduled for May 21 starting at 7:00 p.m. at the Courtyard by Marriott hotel in downtown Toronto, while the annual gala will take place on the evening of May 22 at the same venue, following a full day of conferences, activities, and enriching discussions.

All the activities planned during the conference will help us reflect on today's Catholic school and envision the future. We will leave this event renewed and ready to continue our work in our communities.



Melinda Chartrand

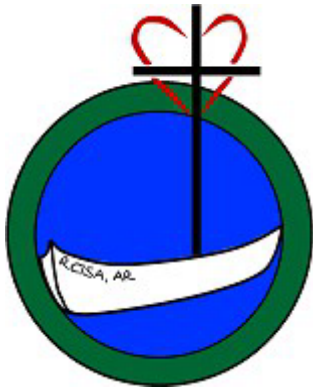
AFOCSC Board Member
ACCEC/CCSTA Representative

Mirela Lonian

Executive Director
AFOCSC

Celebrating its 25th anniversary, the Association franco-ontarienne des conseils scolaires catholiques is the voice of Ontario's eight French-language Catholic school boards and the Consortium Center Jules-Léger serving nearly 81, 000 Franco-Ontarian students. across the province. Our school boards employ more than 11,000 support and teaching staff who work diligently in nearly 300 schools to provide the best French-language Catholic education possible.

Report prepared by Mirela Lonian, Executive Director AFOCSC, April 30th, 2026



Roman Catholic Independent Schools Association - Atlantic Region

2A Bonaventure Ave. St. John', NL, A1C -6B3

RCISA-AR April Report 2026

Sacred Heart School Halifax



Sacred Heart School of Halifax will be turning 177 years, a testament to our enduring mission and educational excellence. From our start in 1849 with just 13 students, we have flourished into a vibrant community of 500. This year marks a particularly exciting chapter as we officially transitioned to our [full-school diamond model](#), a unique structure that reflects our commitment to academic excellence and personal growth.

Snapshot

- **Historic Milestones:** We are celebrating our largest graduating class on record, with 50 students set to join our global alumni network.
- **Academic Innovation:** Building on our [current AP offerings](#), we are officially transitioning to the AP Capstone™ program, further enhancing our students' advanced research, critical thinking, and communication skills to display they are prepared for high-level university work.
- **Global Perspectives:** Through the Sacred Heart Network Exchange, our students continue to engage with the world, recently hosting and visiting sister schools in Austria, France, Australia, and the USA. We also have international students from Germany, Austria, China, South Korea, Japan, Mexico, hosted by our homestay families and join us for a school year or through graduation.
- **Community Leadership:** As part of our commitment to diversity and belonging, Sacred Heart proudly sponsored the Most Inspiring Immigrants Gala in Atlantic Canada for the fifth time.
- **Empowering Future Leaders:** We were thrilled to sponsor the 2026 MSVU Girls Conference, *Lead to Inspire*. Our students attended and volunteered, embodying the Conference's themes of kindness and courage.
- **Navigating the Future:** We hosted an essential parent community session, "*Raising Explorers, Not Passengers*," featuring guest speakers from Ontario to discuss guiding children through the **evolution of AI** with integrity and wisdom.
- **Professional Excellence:** Our faculty looks to stay at the forefront of modern pedagogy with ongoing professional development. This April, we had guest speakers from Ontario ensuring our faculty on best practices, trials and tribulations of incorporating Artificial Intelligence (AI) into our school. They learned how to set the right conditions for success, as AI has arrived quickly and we must learn to be effective educators with the tools that AI provides us.

On another note, I'd like to share this video, [watch here](#). Our Elementary School Choir enjoyed a wonderful visit to Parkland, where they spent the afternoon using the power of music to bring generations together.

Thank you for your support of our school in the Atlantic Region and CCSTA!







St. Bonaventure's College



St. Bon's has been enjoying many successes this semester. After Christmas, we held our mid-term examinations for Grades 7-12 and students celebrated excellent academic results.

Our Jr. and Sr. High students competed in the Regional Science Fair and took home a multitude of gold, silver, bronze medals, prizes for best projects and we also earned two seats on the National Science Fair panel. Only 6 seats are awarded to Newfoundland and Labrador and St. Bon's won two of them! We also hosted our Oratorical showcase and listened to a variety of topics from the voices of our youth.

Our Senior students involved in our Computers for Seniors program took the program to a nearby nursing home to help those seniors who cannot come to the school because of mobility limitations. What a success! Great friendships were formed and our students were able to support the seniors with their technology needs.

We felt deep gratitude to Fr. Hans Zollner, S.J., and Gemma Hickey from the Pathways Foundation for spending time with our Grade 10–12 students. Their compassion, honesty, and courage in speaking about safeguarding and healing left a meaningful imprint on our school community.

We celebrated two services during Holy Week. Our Grades 7-12 participated in the Stations for the Cross and our Grades K-6 participated in a breaking bread celebration. Both were held in our beautiful chapel.

Our hockey program has grown again this year, and we are looking forward to hosting the regional Jr. High hockey tournament for the first time.

Our amazing music program is touring Greece and has over 120 students, faculty and staff. They are enjoying performances in communities and exchanges with local schools, all while soaking up the sun and culture of Greece.

We are thrilled to announce the completion of our sponsorship renewal process with the Jesuits of Canada and celebrated our renewal with a mass and reception with our Provincial Father Jeffrey Burwell SJ.

An announcement was made in April that Annette Mallay has been appointed the interim president of St. Bon's effective June 27th. This appointment allows the school's search committee more time to do an in-depth search for the next school president.





THE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FAIR
BEST IN FAIR 2026 (EASTERN)



Olumoroti Adegboyega - St. Bonaventure's College

ECOFERROQUATICS An Experimental Investigation of Ferrofluid-Assisted Plastic Pollutant Remediation Using an Autonomous AI-Piloted Aquatic Robot



cenovus
ENERGY



SCIENCE TEAM NL
CANADA WIDE FINALISTS 2026



The following students are conditionally accepted as finalists to join Team NL in representing the province at the 2026 Canada Wide Science Fair, hosted by the University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB from May 23-May 30



Congratulations!





Immaculate Heart of Mary



This year, we are celebrating our 26th Anniversary. We did a school wide 26th Anniversary T- shirt Design Contest. The designs were phenomenal. On October 2nd, wearing our beautiful 26th anniversary t- shirt we hosted our first ever walk- a-thon which was a resounding success. Lunch was provided for staff and students followed by outdoor activities: Bouncy Castle, Axe and Balloon Bubbles Blow - Up. It was an event to remember.

Our Cross-Country Running Team had a most successful fall season winning medals locally, regionally and provincially.

Our Grade 7 and 8 students participated in the Youth Apprenticeship Summer Program Video Contest. We had teams participate in all three categories of the contest. A team of four girls won provincially the theme: Breaking the Mould Category: Encouraging Women to Consider Skilled Trades as a Viable and Exciting Career Option. The girls were the recipient of a \$1000 to be used on Skills Resources.

Our Grade 5- Level III students participated in a Responsible Money Session. It was a most valuable experience for our students who enjoyed it immensely.

Halloween was as exciting as ever. We hosted our first ever 'Trunk or Treat' which was organized by parents with all money going to our 'Gym Floor Project.' We also hosted a costume day with classes setting up 'trick or treat' stations outside their classroom since our gym was under renos.

Our Grade 5 and 6 students participated in the Arts and Aging Pen Pal Program; organizing pen pals at a Seniors' Complex. This was a very special initiative for our students. They are visiting their pen pals this week. They are so excited!

One of our Grade 6 boys won the annual Peace Week Speak- off. Three of our girls won the Lion's Club Peace Week Poster Contest; winning first, second and third place.

Our Grade 7-9 students participated at the annual Provincial intermediate Skills Competition. There were 18 categories and our students participated in 17 out of the 18 categories. They won so many medals and placed first out of twenty teams again this year provincially.

For the first time in the history of our school, our Christmas Concert took place at the Arts and Culture since our gymnasium was not ready. It was a beautiful evening.

Our first ever Junior High Girls' Volleyball Team were Tier II silver medalists at the CBI Invitational. This was another proud moment for our girls and school.

Our Grade 6 Class won the Kinsmen Theme Parade Contest and were invited to ride on a bus during the parade.

The Knights of Columbus sponsored its annual Christmas skating party and treats. It was so much

fun! They also sponsored their annual Christmas Primary Poster Colouring Contest with three children from each grade level placing.

We had a strong number of students who placed First, Second or Third in the annual Royal Canadian Legion Poster and Literary Contest.

Our Prayer Group was very active during the first term as well. They meet every Friday after school and host different celebrations throughout Term I.

Our Grade 7- Level III students wrote exams in January.

Our students were most positive contributors to their community by donating to the annual Thanksgiving Day Food Drive, donating to the Janeway, Stockings for Seniors, the Toy Drive, the Christmas Food Drive, the Western Memorial Radiothon and Mary's Kitchen.

Divine Mercy Catholic School



We do have some big news at our school! Our Grade 4 teacher and Kindergarten teacher, who were married last year, just welcomed their first baby, a boy, last week.

We are also beginning to wind down the school year, and all the children are hard at work preparing for our end-of-year Arts Gala. The children in Drama are preparing a musical.

Most of our students are also getting ready to perform in the festival this week. Our Grades 3–5 will be singing three songs, and our Grades 6–8 will be performing three songs as well. Our Celtic Band will also be performing at the music festival.

Our Lady of Grace Private Catholic School



Hello friends of Our Lady of Grace School,

We hope this message finds you well as we look ahead to a busy and exciting spring season at our school.

Our Christmas concert was a wonderful success. Our older students delivered a beautiful performance of a play called *The Vision*.





In January, we were honored to welcome a visit from the Bishop. It was a special occasion for our school community.



We have our Spring carnival coming up. We have a games day, Limbo contest and Culture Day. It is always a highlight for students and teachers alike. We also have a few field trips planned for the spring. But our favorite two events of the latter part of the year are The Crowning of Mary in May-every student and teacher brings a rose to Mary and a special student gets to crown her as we all sing "Bring Flowers

of the Fairest”.

Finally, on the last day of school, we gather for a special year-end celebration. Each class performs a selection of songs for parents and grandparents, and as report cards are distributed, every teacher shares a personal message about each child. It is a beautiful way to end the year.



Frassati Academy remains deeply grateful for the continued support and encouragement of the Archdiocese of Halifax-Yarmouth and for the pastoral care and leadership of Archbishop Brian Dunn. Since the submission of our previous report on October 7, 2025, the school has continued to grow in its spiritual, communal, and educational life.

Summary of Activities Completed

Growth in Mission and Service

In the spirit of our patron, Saint Pier Giorgio Frassati, whose life was marked by joyful faith and concrete service to the poor, our teachers and students partnered with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul during the Advent season. Students created handmade Christmas cards for individuals and families served by SSVP.

The response from SSVP volunteers affirmed the meaningful impact of this act of mercy:

“The Christmas Cards were a hit. You could tell some folks haven't received a Christmas Card in a really long time and it touched their hearts to read the message and admire the artwork from the students.”

This simple but profound initiative allowed our students to practice charity in a tangible way and reinforced the integration of faith and action at the heart of our educational mission.

Liturgical and Community Life

Frassati Academy celebrated its Official Opening Mass with Archbishop Dunn, welcoming over 150 attendees, including families, parishioners, clergy, and supporters. The Mass, followed by a time of welcome, prayer, and tours of the school, marked a significant milestone in the life of the Academy. We are deeply grateful for the Archbishop's presence and encouragement.

Throughout the fall and early winter, students participated in a rich liturgical life, including celebrations of All Saints Day, Epiphany, and a joyful Spirit Week leading into Christmas break.

These moments helped root the rhythm of the school year in the liturgical calendar of the Church.

Advent–Christmas Concert

The school hosted its first Advent–Christmas Concert, which was a great success. Students shared songs and Scripture readings, followed by a reception that welcomed the wider community. The evening was a beautiful expression of student growth, confidence, and joy, and a testament to the strong collaboration between teachers, students, and families.

Academic Development

In November, first-term report cards were issued. The process was fruitful and affirming, strengthening professional practice and communication with families.

Historical and Cultural Formation

Plans are currently underway for a field trip to the Sisters of Charity Caritas Residence, which will introduce students to the roots of Catholic education in Halifax. This experience is intended to help students understand their place within the broader history and mission of Catholic education in the region.

Fundraising and Financial Support

A year-end matching gift campaign proved highly successful. A donor offered \$20,000 in matching funds, and nearly \$30,000 was raised by the community, resulting in approximately \$50,000 raised before year-end. We give thanks to God for the generosity of our benefactors and the strong support of our school community.

Frassati Academy has just received official notice that we are now a Registered Charity with the CRA. Thanks be to God!

Other Milestones

- The school is operating steadily with strong enrollment and consistent attendance.
- Liturgical, academic, and community life are now well established.
- Parent and community engagement continues to grow through events, service initiatives, and worship.
- Financial support has strengthened through successful fundraising efforts.

Overall, Frassati Academy has moved from the excitement of launch into the steady, grace-filled work of daily school life. We remain committed to forming young disciples who seek holiness, excellence, and service, and we are profoundly grateful for the support that makes this mission possible.

Enrollment

- Families Represented: 21
- Children Enrolled: 35
- Grades: Pre-Primary to Grade 7

Testimonials

“My husband and I could not be happier with Frassati Academy. We believe that the Catholic faith isn't an optional add-on to a well-rounded education; it is essential. So we are thrilled that Frassati offers our son a Christ-centered education and is forming him as a whole person; not just academically, but emotionally and spiritually as well. We love the small class sizes, frequent one-on-one interactions with educators, and a classical-style education—all of which have helped our son mature so much in reading, numbers, and even critical-thinking skills in such a short period of time. We highly recommend Frassati Academy to any family who seeks a faith-filled, well-rounded educational path for their children!”

“Frassati Academy has been a tremendous blessing to our family. The joyful integration of faith, academics, and virtue has helped our children grow not only intellectually, but spiritually and morally as well. The sense of community, dedication of the teachers, and clear commitment to forming our kids have made this school feel like a true extension of our home. One great thing is every kid/teacher knows each other and there is a true sense of community here”

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."
Jeremiah 29:11

2026 - 2027 Executive:

HARRY SALM - President

GIUSEPPI CALIGIURI - Vice President

TERESITA CHIARELLA - Past President

FR. STEFANO PENNA - Chaplain

ROSE BURTON SPOHN - Executive Director

2026 - 2027 Directors:

British Columbia: **Mike Doyle**

Alberta/NWT/Yukon: **Kelly Whalen**

Saskatchewan: **Bruno Tuchscherer**

Manitoba: **Tammy Narynski**

Ontario French: **Melinda Chartrand**

Ontario English: **Bev Eckensweiler**

Ontario English: **Glenn Sheculski**

Atlantic Region: **Annette Mallay**

*Wishing you a joyful and
restful summer break!*



Connect with us!



communications@ccsta.ca

