



THE WORD WAS
MADE **FLESH** AND
DWELT AMONG US
JOHN 1:14



#TooniesForTuition

We, though many, are one body in Christ.” Romans 12:5

This year’s Toonies for Tuition theme reminds us of the unity we have in Christ - despite varying funding structures, privileges and practices.

Let us remember those who are called to be part of this Canadian Catholic School mission but don’t have the means to afford tuition.



DONATE



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To: Canadian Catholic Educators

From: CCSTA



Did you know...

We have Catholic Education Resources written and curated *specifically* to encourage, affirm and strengthen the mission of Catholic Education in Canada?

Click the images below to read more and share with a Catholic Educator you know!



Specifically curated for Catholic Educators, we've compiled our favourite World Youth Day quotes from Pope Francis to encourage Catholic Educators in their mission!

← [Read more](#)



What can this man, who worked as an educator hundreds of years ago, thousands of miles away, have to teach us in twenty-first century Canada?

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Behind-the-scenes, we see hundreds of Canadian families wanting to choose a Catholic School for their children - but who are held back by financial restraints...

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Learning about such saints as Francis and Maria reminds us that our faith - and the passing on of it - is something that many have lived and died for over the centuries...

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You may know that in the fall of 2020, the CCCB had a series of virtual conversations with over 200 young people from across Canada between the ages 12 to 25...

← [Read More](#)



Journey with us across Canada to learn more about your Canadian Catholic Educator 'Neighbours' through this CCSTA Member Highlight series!

← [Read More](#)

"We will be good teachers if we remain disciples, called each day to serve with joy." - Pope Francis



A Heartfelt Thank You

Our executive director, Julian Hanlon, began his work with CCSTA in 2015. After 8 years of inspiring dedication to the mission of Catholic Education through leadership of CCSTA, Julian is officially retiring as of December 2023. His thoughtful, peace-filled leadership will be greatly missed at CCSTA!

JULIAN, I WISH YOU ALL THE BEST IN YOUR RETIREMENT. I HAVE ENJOYED WORKING WITH YOU OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS. YOUR DEDICATION TO CCSTA HAS BEEN FANTASTIC AND I THANK YOU FOR THIS. MAY GOD'S ABUNDANT BLESSINGS BE WITH YOU AS YOU CONTINUE ON YOUR JOURNEY. YOUR FRIEND ALWAYS, GERALD BERNAKEVITCH, AB

I HAVE VERY MUCH ENJOYED AND APPRECIATED JULIAN IN HIS ROLE AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR. HIS SENSE OF CALM, HIS PROFESSIONALISM AND THE DEPTH OF HIS FAITH HAVE TRULY MADE HIM A JOY TO ASSOCIATE WITH. HARRY SALM, VICE PRESIDENT

CONGRATULATIONS JULIAN ON YOUR RETIREMENT! IT HAS BEEN AN HONOUR AND A PRIVILEGE TO WORK WITH YOU AT CCSTA. YOUR LEADERSHIP, YOUR FAITH, YOUR DEDICATION TO CATHOLIC EDUCATION ALL ACROSS CANADA HAS BEEN INSPIRING. THANK YOU JULIAN! ENJOY THE NEXT ADVENTURE OF YOUR JOURNEY. GOD BLESS! BEV ECKENSWEILER, ON

JULIAN, IT'S BEEN A GIFT TO WORK WITH YOU OVER THESE PAST FEW YEARS. THANK YOU FOR YOUR BEAUTIFUL DEDICATION TO THE MISSION OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION. PRAYING FOR YOU AS YOU ENTER THIS NEW SEASON OF RETIRED LIFE! CATHERINE BURNHAM, COMMUNICATIONS

JULIAN IT HAS BEEN AN HONOUR AND PRIVILEGE TO WORK WITH YOU OVER THE PAST MANY YEARS AND A FEW AGM PLANNING. YOUR DEDICATION AND COMMITMENT TO CATHOLIC EDUCATION HAS BEEN A GODSEND FOR US ACROSS CANADA.! MELINDA CHARTRAND, ON

THANK YOU FOR THE EIGHT YEARS OF EXEMPLARY LEADERSHIP YOU DEDICATED TO CCSTA. I WISH YOU AND CLAIRE A FANTASTIC LIFE ADVENTURE IN THE YEARS AHEAD.

TERESITA CHIARELLA, CCSTA PRESIDENT

JULIAN, IT'S BEEN A PLEASURE X 2, NOW IT'S TIME TO ENJOY RETIREMENT!! MARK MULLAN, OCSTA



Julian Hanlon
CCSTA Executive
Director, 2015 - 2023

MAY GOD'S GRACE ACCOMPANY YOU IN YOUR WELL-DESERVED RETIREMENT. YOUR

DEDICATED SERVICE HAS BEEN A TRUE TESTAMENT TO FAITH IN ACTION, AND WE ARE IMMENSELY GRATEFUL FOR THE BLESSINGS YOU HAVE BROUGHT TO OUR COMMUNITIES.

LESLIE ROQUE, BC

JULIAN, IT WAS A PLEASURE TO GET TO KNOW YOU MORE CLOSELY IN THE LAST YEAR. I APPRECIATED THE WARM WELCOME TO THE BOARD. THANK-YOU FOR YOUR STRONG, FAITH-FILLED LEADERSHIP IN YOUR YEARS AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR. BEST WISHES AND MANY BLESSINGS TO YOU IN THE NEXT ADVENTURES IN LIFE. ENJOY RETIREMENT! JEROME NIEZGODA, SK

HELLO JULIAN! I HAVE TRULY APPRECIATED YOUR LEADERSHIP AND THE GUIDANCE YOU HAVE PROVIDED TO US. NO MATTER THE SITUATION, YOUR CALM AND PROFESSIONAL APPROACH WAS GREATLY APPRECIATED. ON A PERSONAL NOTE, YOU ARE SUCH A GENUINE INDIVIDUAL! GOD BLESS AND I SEND YOU BEST WISHES FOR A WONDERFUL SECOND RETIREMENT!. GIUSEPPI CALIGIURI, MB

ON BEHALF OF THE ATLANTIC PROVINCES, THANK YOU JULIAN, FOR YOUR DEDICATION AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF OUR SCHOOLS. WE TRULY APPRECIATE ALL YOUR HARD WORK AND WISH YOU ALL THE BEST IN THE FUTURE! MYRIAM DOBBELSTEYN, ATLANTIC CANADA



President's Message



TERESITA CHIARELLA
CCSTA President

As we prepare our homes, our hearts, and minds to be ready for Christmas, let us also fully experience the last weeks of Advent which is “meant to be a time of spiritual preparation for both the celebration of Jesus’ birthday and for the second coming of Christ at the end of the world. “

Our Catholic schools nationwide are busily preparing for Advent and Christmas concerts. It is a blessing that we can celebrate the core of our faith in the birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ, and let us not take this for granted.

In this, my first year as President, I am grateful for the invitation and the opportunity to have attended the annual general meeting and conventions of both the Saskatchewan Catholic School Boards and the Alberta Catholic Schools Trustees’ Association in October and November, respectively. It was a privilege to meet many Trustees of both provincial associations and to hear firsthand, the amazing dedication that these fine leaders exercise for the important work of guiding Catholic education along with the teachers and administration.



The CCSTA Board of Directors will be in Ottawa for our winter meeting, and more importantly, for our “lobby day”. Schedules are being organized for us to meet with as many Members of Parliament (MP) as possible. The meeting with MPs is the advocacy piece of CCSTA on behalf of our member associations across the country. Although education is a provincial jurisdiction, we help educate the MPs about parental rights to Catholic Education for our children in their constituents.

We are thrilled to have Calgary Catholic School District host the 2024 CCSTA AGM and Convention from May 30th to June 1st. We hope you will plan to attend this celebration of Catholic Education!

I wish to thank Julian Hanlon for his dedication and excellent service as our Executive Director for the last eight years. May God grant you abundant blessings and peace as you move forward to this new path in life. Please help us welcome Rose Burton Spohn as she takes on the role of CCSTA Executive Director in the new year!

As 2023 ends, let us reflect on both the blessings and challenges at this time of the year. As St. John Henry Newman said, “We have all of us experienced enough even of this life to know that the same seasons are often most joyful and also most painful.”

You guide me with your counsel, and afterward, you will receive me with honor. Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire other than you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. (Psalm 73:24-26)

On Christmas Day, let us rejoice - Emmanuel, God is with us, as we look forward to when He comes again!





From the Office Desk

JULIAN HANLON

CCSTA Executive Director

As I write this, my last “From the Office Desk” I find myself reflecting back on the past, eight and a half years, during which time I’ve had the pleasure of serving as Executive Director for CCSTA. The first thing that comes to mind is the commitment and dedication of those involved in promoting and preserving Catholic education. It’s been an absolute honour and privilege to work closely with the Board of Directors of CCSTA. As an organisation we’ve been blessed with strong leadership and very committed Directors. These individuals, from across the country, are one of the reasons Catholic education is alive and well. It’s also been a privilege to work with the Executive Directors of the provincial organizations and to meet trustees and appointed officials from the different provinces.

The issues and challenges that Catholic education faces are fairly similar across the country and one of the key roles of CCSTA is to help share issues and solutions with all our members. With the level of commitment from across the country, I feel very confident about the future of Catholic education. I’d also like to thank Jean Montminy and Michelle Collett, the Executive Assistants I’ve worked with. It goes without saying that they are a big part of the reason CCSTA continues to thrive.

Looking ahead to 2024, CCSTA remains in good hands with Rose Burton Spohn, the incoming Executive Director. We have been in regular contact and plans are well underway for the lobby day on Parliament Hill early February. The Toonies campaign has steadily gained momentum and last year was an excellent year. However as I have mentioned in the past, the request for tuition assistance is always greater than the monies available. CCSTA has numerous resources available and will certainly provide support for local campaigns. Lastly the planning committee for the 2024 AGM Convention in Calgary is hard at work planning another excellent convention. Last year’s AGM in Saskatoon, our first in person AGM in three years, was a huge success. 2024 looks to be another not to miss event.

As I reflect back on 40 years of work in Catholic education, I feel truly blessed. It’s been an honour and privilege to be part of this great enterprise.

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and the very best in 2024.

Julian Hanlon

Executive Director





2023 CCSTA 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 we continued to work on the development of our new CISCBC Strategic Plan. 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.

The Catholic Schools of BC welcomes two new Superintendents this year – Mrs. Sandra Marshall, Catholic Independent Schools of the Vancouver Archdiocese (CISVA), and Mrs. Pamela Guilbault, Catholic Independent Schools of Nelson Diocese (CISND).

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 tuition, 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. The *Toonies for Tuition* donations make a big difference here in BC, they are greatly appreciated.

BC Ministry of Education and Childcare

13.7% of students in BC attend Independent Schools (IS) and based on how IS are funded, we receive approximately 7.25% of the educational budget (up slightly from previous years). The provincial government provided \$ 500,000 Mental Health Grant to IS again for the 2023-2024 school year. 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 on a diocesan basis in order to focus on the local needs of our schools.



British Columbia (continued)

School Year Theme

The creation of a new theme is a wonderful community building activity that strives to integrate all that we do throughout the school year ahead. Following a process of discernment late last Spring “Living, Celebrating, and Proclaiming Our Faith” emerged as our new theme. It is our hope that it will inspire and challenge us and encourage both staff and students to deepen their faith, to grow in knowledge and understanding, and to build a sense of community and belonging within our school and parish communities. This year’s theme will provide wonderful opportunities for integration throughout the curriculum and faith practices as well as unite the Catholic School communities across the province.

Other News from Across the Province

The 52 Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Vancouver welcomed over 16 000 students back to school this September. This number is very close to our pre-COVID enrollment. Members of the CISVA Superintendent’s Office greeted our new teachers (62) to our August 28 ‘CISVA Jumpstart to Teaching’. The new teachers spent the day with our Educational Consultants, who introduced them to the CISVA and ‘how we do things here’. We continue to need to actively recruit Catholic teachers from across Canada as well as from other countries around the world (e.g., Ireland). Some ways that we are focusing our efforts on recruitment, selection, and retention include attending various Career/Job Fairs across Canada, subscribing to “Make a Future” (the marketing component of Apply to Education) presenting to our local provincial colleges and universities, and by providing this orientation and mentoring to our newest hires. At our annual Faith Development Day on August 30, our schools’ staffs gathered to ‘kick off’ the new school year. Over 1 300 teachers, education assistants, and principals spent the morning listening to our speaker Sister Clare Hunter, FSE, who focused on our theme for the year – Living Our Faith. The book “From Christendom to Apostolate Mission was used as the basis for her presentation which she encouraged all in attendance to read.

The Catholic Independent Schools of Nelson Diocese is enlivening its mission to educate the whole child. This is evidenced in the St. Joseph Elementary Kelowna school’s outdoor classroom and clubhouse farm partnership where through experiential learning students form deep understandings about the world around them and their role as stewards of creation. At Holy Cross Elementary school Penticton, the students learn the virtues of respect, compassion, reliance, excellence and determination through hockey and basketball sports academies. The students at Our Lady of Lourdes School in Kelowna celebrate and showcase their God given talents by singing in the annual West Kelowna light up festival. In Nelson families are served with an enhanced daycare facility. Finally, the high school, Immaculata Regional Catholic High School, was honoured as top private school in Kelowna for 2023. CISND continues its mission of service with the Gospel Message of Jesus as their foundation.

Prince George had its first CISPG Co-Missioning Day to begin the year together on September 1st, 2023 connecting staffs from over 1200kms, in person and virtually. We are pleased to have most of our staffing complete to begin the school year. With our part-time Principal of Learning we have developed a CISPG Learning Services Team - Teacher Lead position at each school. These 8 teachers and our seconded CISPG Christian Ed consultant work together with our Principal of Learning and Superintendent to connect, share and lead. It is a very exciting and rewarding initiative in our second year.

Respectfully submitted,

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





December 2023 Status Report Alberta-Northwest Territories-Yukon

At our September Board Meeting, we congratulated Eldon Wyant on his retirement from ACSTA. He fruitfully served ACSTA in the role of Executive Director since 2022, leading a number of important projects and initiatives during his tenure. Eldon will be missed by all our Directors and staff.

In October, following a nationwide search, the Board of Directors appointed our former Government Relations and Advocacy Director, Brendan Cavanagh, as the new Executive Director. We wish Brendan all the best and many fruitful years of service.

Governance Summit

On October 14th the Governance Committee hosted a Governance Summit to engage our members in discussions regarding the current and future possible governance structures for the Association. The Committee will be reporting the results from the Summit to the Board in February 2024.

2023 AGM & Convention

The 2023 AGM & Convention was held from November 17th through 19th. Our theme for the Convention, as well as for this 2023-2024 school year, is 'Courage to Lead', and the accompanying Scripture verse is from the first chapter of Joshua, verse nine: "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go." We were honoured to have three of our bishops among our special guests.

The event featured keynote speaker Dr. Brett Salkeld, theologian for the Archdiocese of Regina, as well as the author of the book *Educating for Eternity: A Teacher's*



Companion for Making Every Class Catholic. In his two presentations, Dr. Salkeld explained the role of Catholic anthropology in education and how our Faith should be integrated into all aspects of the curriculum.

One of the highlights of the Convention was the annual Awards Banquet, where we celebrated many individuals for their significant contributions towards Catholic education. These included His Excellency David Motiuk, Bishop of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Edmonton who was awarded the ACSTA Honorary Life Award and former CCSTA President, Ted Paszek who received the Meritorious Service Award.

At the AGM, the membership passed two resolutions related to two significant advocacy items:

Education Property Taxes: In her mandate letter to the Minister of Municipal Affairs, Premier Smith repeated her previous letter in 2022 that the Minister shall review and determine the feasibility of changing the Education Property Tax to help fund Municipalities. ACSTA will be requesting that the reference to reviewing "the feasibility of changes to the Education Property Tax to assist municipalities with retaining more funding for local priorities" be removed from the Mandate Letter to Alberta's Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Formation Regulations: Over the past decade there have been a number of failed formation attempts in Alberta, and our staff have conducted a careful review of these to identify any systemic problems with the provincial legislation and regulations governing this process. ACSTA was directed to request that the Minister of Education review and reform the Education Act and its subsidiary regulations regarding the establishment of separate school districts in the province of Alberta, so as to render the establishment process as facilitative as possible.



Alberta-Northwest Territories-Yukon (continued)

Resolutions related to the 2024 operating budget and the organization of a Symposium in 2025 on the role of Catholic Trusteeship were also approved.

This year was an election year for our Association President and Vice-President. Kelly Whalen (Holy Family CSRD) was elected as President and Dawn Miller (St. Thomas Aquinas RCSSD) was elected as Vice-President. The membership expressed their respect and gratitude to former President Harry Salm for his remarkable service to ACSTA over the past two years. Mr. Salm will continue to serve on the Board as the Past President.



Upcoming Events

On February 9-10 ACSTA is hosting a Symposium that will focus on the topic of 'Teachers as Missionary Disciples: Forming Witnesses for Catholic Schools'. Our keynote speaker is Dr. Roisin Coll, Director of the St. Andrew's Foundation for Catholic Teacher Education at the University of Glasgow. We anticipate approximately 200 delegates from a variety of different backgrounds will be in attendance. Data gathered from this event will be compiled into a provincial report for our membership and key stakeholders.

In addition, planning is well underway for our annual SPICE and Blueprints Retreats. Our guest speaker, Roy Petitfils, will be speaking on the theme "Rooted in Faith".



SASKATCHEWAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION CCSTA REPORT, DECEMBER 2023

Communications:

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. Work was done to improve the searchability of the Grade Level Permeation materials. If anyone has any feedback regarding searchability in practice, please do not hesitate to let us know.

The new SCSBA logo design has largely been incorporated into all Association business and promotional materials. A new stand-up banner is being created.

The Minister of Education for the Government of Saskatchewan has again been asked to proclaim Catholic Education Week which will be May 5-12, 2024.

The social media campaign highlighting the work being done by Saskatchewan Catholic Divisions in Indigenous Education took place during Catholic Education Week in 2023. Our Indigenous Leadership Team participated in the development of the campaign, including a video. The video was put on the front page of the SCSBA website in anticipation of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation on September 30.

Advocacy:

The SCSBA, which is a Section of the larger Saskatchewan School Boards Association (SSBA), is still expecting to negotiate a renewal of an agreement governing the relationship between the two parties. The new terms will be implemented in 2024.

Another edition of the Former Members Connection was sent out on November 30. 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. The former members are some of our strongest advocates for Catholic Education.

The Executive Committee of the SCSBA met with the newly appointed Minister of Education on October 21. As is our practice we will also meet with the Opposition Education Critic as part of our advocacy work. In particular, the new Parental Inclusion and Consent legislation was discussed. Catholic Boards are essentially doing what the new legislation requires. Our default position has always been to involve parents in all aspects of their child's education. Ever since "Fully Alive" began to be taught in Catholic schools, parents were informed and given the opportunity to opt out of the program. Requiring formal parental consent is new but should be workable. Our biggest concern was the safety of children, but the new legislation provides an exception if it is reasonably expected that obtaining consent is likely to result in physical, mental, or emotional harm to a child..



Saskatchewan (continued)

2023 SCSBA AGM:

For the first time since 2019, the SCSBA met for a full standalone conference and AGM in Lloydminster on October 20-22, 2023. The theme was “Engaging Together in Hope”. At the AGM, President Bruno Tuchscherer and Vice President Vicky Bonnell were acclaimed for a second term of office. Past President Jerome Niezgoda will remain as the Saskatchewan representative on the CCSTA Board of Directors. At the Awards Banquet, Appreciation Awards were awarded to Jodie Bzdel from Holy Trinity Catholic Schools and the Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools 2023 CCSTA Planning Committee. The Julian Paslawski Meritorious Service Award was awarded to Debora Berscheid (posthumously) from Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools and Maurice Chalifour from Prince Albert Catholic Schools, both long-time trustees with their respective divisions.

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 group has been working on a version of the SSBA’s Indigenous Education Accountability Framework for Catholic School Divisions. They also worked on the social media campaign highlighting the work being done by Catholic divisions in Indigenous Education. A similar campaign is being contemplated for the coming year.

Sexuality Pastoral Documents:

The Bishops’ Pastoral Guide is essentially complete. Professional development training on the Guide was paused with the onset of the Saskatchewan Government’s new Parental Inclusion and Consent policies. The Ministry of Education put a pause on all third-party providers with respect to sex education. Ironically, the government position is that teachers should be teaching the curriculum and they asked Catholic Boards to pause training for teachers to teach sex education from a Catholic worldview. It is our constitutional right to teach from a Catholic worldview, but Catholic Boards voluntarily paused using an Alberta presentation for professional development/faith development. Work is being done to get clarification from the Ministry regarding this presentation.

Court Case Challenging Government Parental Consent Policy

UR Pride began a court challenge of the Saskatchewan Government’s Parental Inclusion and Consent policies concerning the requirement for parental consent before a child under the age of 16 can change their name or use a different pronoun. UR Pride was seeking an injunction to prevent the implementation of the policy. An interim injunction pending the hearing on the main application was granted. In the meantime, the Government of Saskatchewan passed an amendment to the Education Act (Parents’ Bill of Rights) protected from a challenge under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms by the use of the “notwithstanding clause”. The Government then withdrew the policies effectively removing the substance of the court challenge by UR Pride. The status of the court case still needs to be determined. However, School Boards will be required to follow the legislation.



Report to the Canadian Catholic Schools Trustees' Association

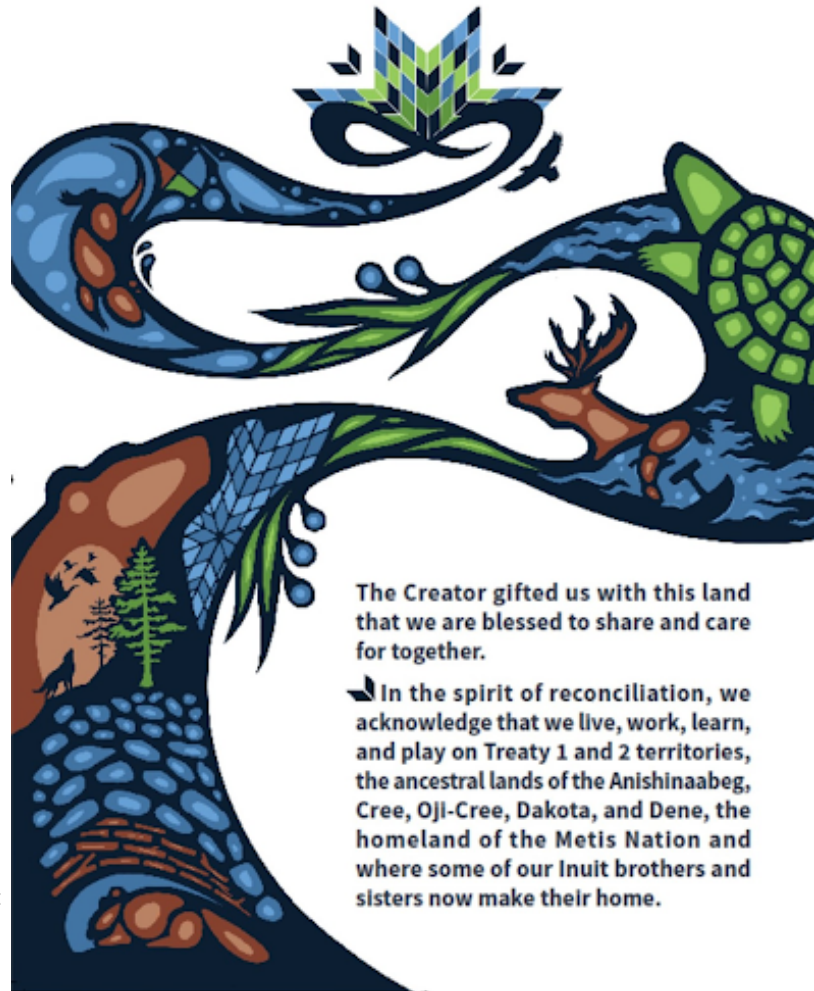


Truth and Reconciliation

MCS recognized National Truth and Reconciliation Day during the week of September 25th - 29th with educational activities in the schools and is part of the ongoing path towards Truth and Reconciliation. All teachers and support staff over the last four years have completed the online training program *4 Seasons of Reconciliation* that was developed by the First Nations University of Canada. An Advisory Committee to the Superintendent on Truth and Reconciliation was formed several years ago to help support the efforts of the Manitoba Catholic Schools Office as we continue this journey. They have been very active in developing a resource base for teachers, surveying employees, and directing and planning our journey. Our focus these next two years will be on Treaty Education. All teachers will be required to take the two-day program, and support staff a one day program by December 2025. Training is being provided through the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation which is based in Winnipeg.

Anishinaabe artist, Rosalyn Boucha was commissioned last year to illustrate our Land Acknowledgement. She Explains:

This illustration is my love letter to the land just as I believe a land acknowledgement should be; an act of reciprocity and a commitment to care for the land just as the land cares for us. Referencing the woodland style, I included flora and fauna from across Turtle Island that has been integral to Indigenous groups since time immemorial, as well as cultural references to First Nations, Inuit, and our Metis relatives. The overall shape of the design references water as our giver, flowing from the bottom of the page through to the infinity symbol and creator's eye at the centre of the star blanket. I choose not to include human shapes in this space. Not because we are not an integral part of the system, but because we are included as the viewer, within the words, and within the shapes and stories throughout the image. A gentle reminder that we are not separate from the land. We are the land and the story is about us.



The Creator gifted us with this land that we are blessed to share and care for together.

In the spirit of reconciliation, we acknowledge that we live, work, learn, and play on Treaty 1 and 2 territories, the ancestral lands of the Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene, the homeland of the Metis Nation and where some of our Inuit brothers and sisters now make their home.

This Land Acknowledgement is framed in every school and many classrooms. It is a visual reminder of our journey towards Truth and Reconciliation.

Political

The Manitoba provincial election will be held on October 3rd. The two main political parties are the Progressive Conservatives led by Heather Stefanson and the New Democrats led by Wab Kinew. The focus of the election has been on health care and the cost of living. The educational issue that has been raised is the PC commitment to legislating parental rights. There have been several large demonstrations at the legislature with different perspectives on this topic.

With the possible change in government and/or the minister of education, there may be a period of adjustment as new relationships are created and new mandates impact the schools. We look forward to working with all partners in education.

Robert Praznik
Superintendent
Manitoba Catholic Schools



OCSTA Report to CCSTA December 2023



Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association

Advocacy

Throughout the summer months and into the fall, OCSTA has continued to meet with government leaders, including the Minister of Education, Stephen Lecce; Deputy Minister, Kate Manson-Smith; Chief of Staff, Blair Hains, and a number of MPPs.

Conversations during these meetings focused on a number of Catholic school board priorities including:

- Bill 98 and providing input on the regulations flowing from the legislation
- Default 'public' mechanism in the municipal property assessment system
- Student transportation funding
- Multi-year funding in support of student learning recovery
- Rescinding the regulation freezing Executive Compensation
- Capital funding and lifting the moratorium on school consolidation
- Sick leave costs
- Teacher and support staff shortages.



OCSTA President Patrick Daly with His Grace, Archbishop Francis Leo and MPPs including The Hon. Stephen Lecce, Ontario Minister of Education (far right).

Catholic Virtual Ontario

Under the leadership of OCSTA Director of Catholic Education, Anne O'Brien there continues to be significant progress in the development of distinctly Catholic secondary school on-line learning courses and resources under OCSTA's Catholic Virtual Ontario.

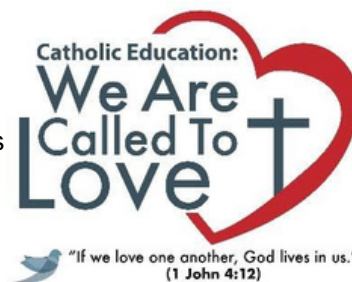
The development of CVO is to ensure that when students require an online course, distinctly Catholic courses developed by Catholic teachers and delivered by Catholic school boards are available. Our vision with regard to CVO in no way diminishes our belief that in-school learning is most beneficial to students.

At present, there are approximately 70 courses on the Catholic Virtual Ontario (CVO) platform and additional courses are expected to be added by the end of the year.

To learn more about Catholic Virtual Ontario please visit www.catholicvirtualontario.org.

Catholic Education Week Resources

The year-long Catholic Education Week (CEW) promotion and initiative includes resources for staff and students that are tailored to the season and liturgical calendar. In September, the "First of Week of School Kit" was among the popular CEW classroom resources provided to Catholic school boards, educators and students to help deepen understanding of the CEW theme and focus for this year - "We are Called to Love".



To access these resources please visit www.goodnewsforall.ca



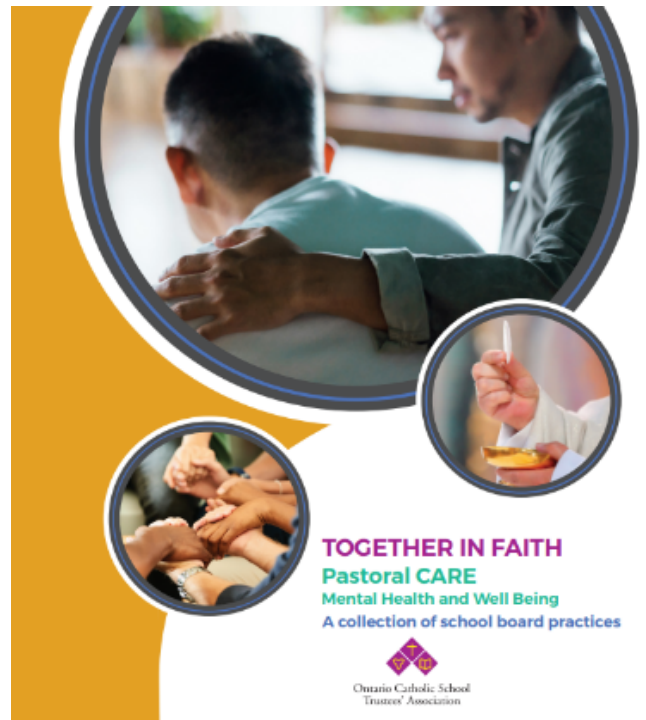
ONTARIO - OCSTA (continued)

Together in Faith Resources

OCSTA continues to place priority on the development of resources to support faith formation and the strengthening of Catholic identity throughout our school systems. The newest document in the "Together in Faith" series - Pastoral Care, Mental Health, and Well-Being - A Collection of Catholic School Board Practices provides timely and distinct examples of pastoral care and support within Ontario's 29 Catholic District School Boards.

To download this newest resource and the others in this series please visit:

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



OCSTA Short Video Contest for Students

The annual OCSTA Short Video Contest has been announced to all Catholic District School Boards and is now open for submissions. This year's initiative invites students from CDSB's in grades 4 - 12 to submit a 2-minute video on the Catholic Education Week theme for the year "We are called to Love". Details explaining the contest, submission forms and timelines for submission are available at <https://www.ocsta.on.ca/briefs-resources/2023-short-video-contest-guidelines/>

OCSTA Events

2023 Regional Meetings

The Association's annual Fall Regional Meetings were once again held in 5 regions throughout the province, between September 18 and October 6th. We wish to thank the following Catholic Boards for hosting these regional meetings and for their faith-filled support and hospitality. These gatherings continue to provide excellent learning and faith formation opportunities and fellowship for Catholic School Trustees:

Central Region: Hamilton-Wentworth CDSB; **East Region:** Peterborough Victoria Northumberland & Clarington CDSB; **North East Region:** Sudbury CDSB; **West Region:** Windsor-Essex CDSB, and; **North West Region:** Thunder Bay CDSB.

2024 OCSTA Catholic Trustees Seminar



January 19 - 20, 2024

Delta by Marriott Toronto Airport Hotel

Registration information to come

2024 OCSTA AGM and Conference



May 2 - 4, 2024

Sheraton Fallsview Hotel, Niagara Falls

Hosted by:

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ACTIVITY REPORT FOR ACCEC / CCSTA DECEMBER 2023



Hello everyone,

Following the last report, here is a summary of several activities conducted by the Association. The recap of recent activities is structured around the challenges encountered by French Catholic school boards in Ontario, along with plans for upcoming activities.

Effects of Bill 98:

Bill 98 - The 2023 School Improvement and Student Performance Act. Several articles of Bill 98 grant regulatory powers to the Minister of Education or the government. At the stage of Bill 98 adoption, the magnitude of forthcoming changes is uncertain, and their impact will only be felt when the regulations are enacted. Since these regulations may affect the constitutional rights of its members (protected by Article 93 of the LC1867 and Section 23 of the Charter), the AFOCSC requested to be consulted before they are actualised.

The revision of several parts of the Education Act ("Act") is a necessary exercise for the revitalization of various areas where the Act is applicable, and the AFOCSC will be a partner in implementing these changes to its excellence. Bill 98 indeed touches on multiple sectors, including early childhood, education, college of teachers, special education, board management and governance, and finally, school real estate.

Presentations of memorandum. The AFOCSC thanks the Ontario government for the opportunity to present its views, concerns, and some recommendations through the submission of memorandum to the minister and committee members. These documents are available on the Association's website in the "Priority Issues" section:

- 2023-05-09 - Mémoire de l'AFOCSC - projet de loi 98
- 2023-07-11 - Rétroaction sur règlements - Loi 98 - 23-EDU005 - Rendement élèves
- 2023-07-11 - Rétroaction sur règlements - Loi 98 - 23-EDU006 - Journées pédagogiques
- 2023-07-11 - Rétroaction sur règlements - Loi 98 - 23-EDU007 - Certificats transitoires
- 2023-10-19 - Rétroaction sur règlements - Loi 98 - 23-EDU009 - Écoles sur site partagé
- 2023-10-19 - Rétroaction sur règlements - Loi 98 - 23-EDU010 - Aliénation de biens immeubles excédentaires
- 2023-11-02 - Rétroaction sur règlements - Loi 98 - 23-EDU013 - Évaluation du rendement DÉ

The next step may impact the governance of school boards. The AFOCSC remains vigilant and is preparing to defend its rights to manage the French-language Catholic school boards in Ontario.

Training sessions:

Training organized by the Ministry of Education (MÉO): Once again, school trustees have been invited to participate in a training session on "Hateful activities within school boards". This training was presented by the Ministry of Education in partnership with Osgoode PD and the University of York.

Training planned by the AFOCSC in winter 2024: The Association's latest training sessions took place during the 25th-anniversary conference. We anticipate two sessions during the winter, one on multi-year strategic planning and a second on political outreach. A comprehensive program of four or five topics will be featured at our next conference at the end of May 2024. More details to follow.



Advocacy Activities:

October 6th Activity: Government advocacy on issues related to the potential impacts of collective negotiations continues, obtaining new schools to meet parental demands, ensuring fair provision of school transportation, and adding resources and funding for mental health needs for our students and staff. It is crucial to keep in mind that our educational mission is to ensure the well-being of everyone with respect and the faith that guides us.

Building on this idea and as part of the celebrations of the 25th anniversary of school boards in Ontario, the AFOCSC held an advocacy event at Queen's Park. The event concluded with a happy hour cocktail, where our board chairs, a few bishops, and Education Minister Stephen Lecce, along with several MPs and their staff, came together. As it was a great success, we are likely to organize a similar activity next year.

Priority Issues 2023-2024:

A) Teacher Shortage: On September 7, 2023, the Ontario and Canadian governments announced funding for a total of 110 new spaces for the educator French programme for the 2023-2024 school year. Of these, 40 additional spaces are for the University of Ontario French (UOF), while 70 additional spaces are available at the University of Ottawa for the 2023-2024 academic year.

These new spaces are welcomed to help alleviate the impact of the shortage of teachers in the province. The addition of these 110 new spaces is a first step by the government in response to the report submitted at the end of 2020 to find solutions to the shortage. The report emphasized at that time that it was necessary to increase the number of seats by at least 500 for the educator program in French. The shortage continues to worsen.

b) School Transportation: The AFOCSC has noted the deficits caused by the government's new funding formula. We continue to engage with the ministry, who seems not to have considered the reality of transporting students from French-language Catholic school boards into account—a situation that needs to be corrected urgently. The impact is significant, with more than \$14 million in deficit for our eight French-language Catholic school boards. Also, note that 53 out of the 73 school boards in Ontario show a deficit in this area. We are working tirelessly on this issue, and you will hear from us on this matter.

C) Capital Investment Projects: The AFOCSC remains a key partner of the Ministry of Education to provide solutions to advance property projects and meet the needs of students and school communities. The school boards submit annually a priority list to the Ministry of Education based on parents' requests for new facilities in our various communities. We continue to advocate for school boards to obtain the best possible location, and we demand that the government respect our constitutional rights to obtain and possess separate Catholic and French-language learning spaces.

D) Governance: Performance Review of Education Directions,

Section XI.1 of the 2023 Act adds certain staff members to a performance evaluation, namely directors of education, school principals, assistant principals, and supervisory officers. Essentially, the law empowers the government to determine the evaluation process for the education directors of each board, an approach deemed unacceptable.

The directors of education collaborate and work closely with the school board, their exclusive employer. The hiring, evaluation, goal adjustments, implementation of a succession plan, or dismissal fall under the responsibility of the elected member of the board.

Each school board already has a specific performance evaluation process. Our association and its school boards are open to the minister's suggestions to improve the performance evaluation process, but we will not tolerate interference in the governance of French-language Catholic school boards.

It is important to note that several other aspects of the governance of school boards are currently under review by the minister; more will be available in the upcoming year. We remain vigilant!

AFOCSC Offices:

A. **Holiday Schedule:** Please note that our office will be closed during the holiday season from December 22, 2023, to January 8, 2024.

B. **Season's Greetings:** In this festive season, we wish you wonderful moments with family and friends. May the holiday season bring you joy, serenity, and love with those dear to you. Wishing you a successful 2024 full of opportunities.

Happy holidays and happy New Year 2024!



Meilleurs Vœux du Temps des Fêtes

Happy Holiday Season !

Melinda Chartrand

Member of the boards of director
ACCEC/CCSTA Representative

Yves Lévesque

Executive Director
AFOCSC

The Franco-Ontarian Association of Catholic School Boards is the voice of the nine French-language Catholic school boards in Ontario, representing over 76,000 Franco-Ontarian students in nearly 300 schools, and supported by more than 11,200 employees.





RCISA-AR Report 2023

Greetings from Atlantic Canada!

The new school year has started well, in the five Atlantic schools. A new Catholic high school, Saint John Catholic Academy, has started in Saint John, NB. Two of our schools are celebrating anniversaries, and Divine Mercy Catholic School has experienced a major increase in their student population.

Enrolment 2023/24

- **St. Bonaventure's College** (St. John's, NFLD) - 274 students
- **Immaculate Heart of Mary** (Cornerbrook, NFLD) - 202 students
- **Sacred Heart School** (Halifax, NS) - 496 students. They are celebrating their 175th Anniversary this year.
- **Divine Mercy** (Saint John, NB) - 128 students (45 new students), and 3 new teachers on staff. They are also celebrating their 20th Anniversary this year.
- **Our Lady of Grace** (Fredericton, NB) - 31 students

We are very grateful for the generous donations that the Toonies for Tuition provides our schools, ensuring families the opportunity for Catholic education.

CCSTA
AGM & CONFERENCE

MAY 30 -
JUNE 1,
2024

CCSTA/ACCEC
CALGARY 2024

THANKS
BE to GOD
for HIS
incredible
GIFT!

GRÂCES
soient
RENDUES
À DIEU POUR
SON DON
ineffable!

- 2 Corinthians 9:15

2024 AGM

Mark your calendar
and join us in Calgary to
connect with the Catholic
trustees and administrators
from across Canada!

SAVE THE DATE

We'll be sending out
information on registration,
keynote speakers and
conference details soon!



MERRY
Christmas
AND
HAPPY NEW YEAR

CCSTA ONLINE     CONNECT WITH US!

ccstacommunications@gmail.com

2023 -2024 Executive:

TERESITA CHIARELLA - President
PAT DALY - Past President
HARRY SALM - Vice President
FR. STEFANO PENNA - Chaplain
JULIAN HANLON - Executive Director

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Alberta/NWT/Yukon: **Kelly Whalen**
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Manitoba: **Giuseppi Caligiuri**
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Ontario English: **Bev Eckensweiler**
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