

News Release

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For Immediate Release

Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board selected to receive prestigious HP Innovations in Education Grant

US\$100,000 grant aims to improve student interest and achievement in math and science

The Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board was selected as one of eight school systems in Canada to receive a highly competitive 2009 HP Innovations in Education grant. Targeted at school systems serving students in grades 8 through 12, the grant program is designed to help educators address the need for raising student achievement in math and science, and increase student awareness in high-tech college and career opportunities.

Ascension of Our Lord Secondary School will receive an HP Innovations in Education award package of HP technology, cash and professional services, valued at more than US\$100,000. Technologies such as SMART Boards, wireless HP Tablet PCs, mini-notebook computers and LaserJet and wide-format DesignJet printers will be used in innovative ways to fundamentally redesign the student learning experience.

The project involves integrating effective pedagogical strategies with technology and support to transform teaching and learning at Ascension of Our Lord Secondary School. The gifts provided by the Grant will be used by key stakeholders in the school as well as selected school board personnel. The board will augment the grant technology to ensure that similar products and services are available to additional Ascension of Our Lord staff and students, as well as the three Grade 8 classes at Ascension's two elementary feeder schools: Holy Cross and St. Raphael. This will ensure a seamless transition for the Grade 8 students in these schools who choose to attend Ascension, starting in Grade 9. The primary objective is to significantly improve student achievement in mathematics and science. The instructional strategies used in this project will also assist in developing 21st Century literacy skills.

All of Ascension's mathematics and science teachers and all Grade 8 teachers in its two feeder schools will be provided with technology, professional development, and training. The impact of this project will be measured for all students at Ascension, and the progress of a cohort of Grade 8 students will be tracked for the duration of their time at this secondary school. The educational environment will be transformed into one that is rich in collaboration and interdisciplinary project-based activities that reflect our students' real-world experiences.

Teachers will shift from instructor-led to instructor-facilitated pedagogy. Students will be engaged as active learners, and will be intrinsically motivated to study mathematics and science. One objective is to build leadership capacity so that the teachers can share their experiences and expertise with their colleagues.

John Steele, Chief Information Officer at Dufferin-Peel, is very optimistic that the project will be highly successful. "I feel privileged to be involved in this initiative. All of the teachers and support staff are excited about their opportunities to use technology effectively to assist in developing a classroom ambience that is highly conducive to learning. Through our collective efforts, our students will be engaged as active learners and highly motivated to succeed. The impact will be transformational, as the primary role of the teacher changes to that of learning facilitator, rather than a deliverer of content."

Dufferin-Peel CDSB receives HP grant

Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Boards News Release – Oct. 6/09

“The HP Grant provides students and teachers with the capacity to engage in the learning process in an entirely new way,” said Marianne Mazzorato, Dufferin-Peel’s Superintendent of Program. “In many cases, the development of student learning will be conducted using real-time resources, databases and activities not available in the more traditional classroom setting. This clearly has implications for teachers to further develop their practice of differentiated instruction based on readiness, preferences and interests.”

“Supporting the teachers at the three schools involved in the Malton Technology Initiative (MTi) to shift their instructional practices to engage the visual and kinesthetic learners in their classes is one of the primary goals,” said Dwight Stead, Dufferin-Peel Mathematical Literacy Consultant, Grades 7-12. “Once teachers begin to effectively use the technology in their classrooms, we should see lasting improvements in student engagement in mathematics and science.”

“The students in Malton are thrilled to receive this technology”, said Barry Carolan, Science and Technology Department Head at Ascension of Our Lord Secondary School. “But, once the veneer wears off, it will be the shift in the teaching that will have enduring effects on students in math and science. It means that the teachers in this community have bought into re-thinking and re-tooling their delivery of lessons. For some, it means that they are catching up to the digital age that the students already have embraced, while for others it involves incorporating the technology in ways that elevate the level of understanding for students. Early observations already show that students are way more engaged in their learning processes in math and science by using the technology provided by the grant”.

Worldwide, HP is investing more than \$17 million in mobile technology, cash and professional development as part of the global 2009 HP Innovations in Education grant initiative. This initiative follows HP’s five-year, \$60M investment in HP Technology for Teaching grants to more than 1,000 schools and universities in 41 countries. During the past 20 years, HP has contributed more than \$1 billion in cash and equipment to schools, universities, community organizations and other non-profit organizations around the world.

“Innovation is key to expanding education opportunity – and HP is privileged to collaborate with educators around the world who are committed to exploring the exciting possibilities that exist at the intersection of teaching, learning, and technology,” said Leyland Brown, Vice President, Personal Systems Group, Commercial Business. “Emerging evidence from the last five years is very positive – excellent instruction combined with the right technologies is measurably improving student academic success.”

More information about the 2009 HP Innovations in Education initiative and other Canadian social investments is available at www.hp.ca.

The Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board is one of the largest and most diverse school boards in Ontario. It serves approximately 88,000 students in 145 schools located throughout Mississauga, Brampton, Caledon and Orangeville. With over 10,000 employees, the board is also one of the largest employers in the region. More information about the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board is available at www.dpcdsb.org.

- 30 -

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