



# CENTRAL NEWS

## Message from Your Chair

I know that this has been a very busy year for you as members of Catholic School Councils. We have been challenged to go beyond our scope of advocates for our school and the school community. We have been advocating for our Catholic School Board and the budget that is key to the delivery of quality education to our children. Thanks to those of you who have been diligent to write and email our political leaders to voice your concerns. We hope that the new minister of education will have an open ear to listen to our concerns and an honest intent to bring fair and equitable funding to our children and their schools.

Congratulations to all of you who attended WEAVE 3. You had the opportunity to hear our wonderful Mayor McCallion speak about the time, treasure, and talent contributed to our schools, our communities, and country and how important it is that we do this and that we receive the proper recognition for our contributions. Our workshops brought diverse information to our delegates along with the Marketplace and a tasty lunch. All the surveys point to CCCSC repeating the full day In-service again. The In-Service committee, comprised of parents and administrators who managed three events this year for school councils, will meet to make recommendations for next year. Special thanks to our committee and Sandi Ham who was our constant support.

**Sharon Hobin, Chair**

## Update from the Superintendent Nick Milanetti

Another school year is close upon us and again where did the time go? On behalf of the school board, I want to thank all members of CCCSC and School Councils for all of their efforts this year. You have stood by the Board of Trustees with strong support and have assisted them immensely as they deal with issues relating to the budget. We, in Dufferin-Peel, are very fortunate to have strong parental support not only at the school level but at the board level as well. We applaud and appreciate all that you have done at the school level to get information out to your communities and to galvanize their support of the board as we deal with the Ministry.

I would also like to thank all members of CCCSC under the leadership of Sharon Hobin for all that they have accomplished this year. We have held several events, workshops and in-services and they have been well received and well attended. Please continue to support these events and bring out new Council members and parents so that they see what else there is offered beyond the school and it may spark their interest to be involved. Once again, thank you for your interest in and support of all that CCCSC does throughout the year.

### CCCSC Prayer

Almighty Father,

Be with us, Lord, for you are our guide and our light

Be with us, Lord; give us the wisdom to remember you in our work

Be with us, Lord; help us to share our knowledge and experience

So we may work together with generous spirits

Be with us, Lord, to remember our goals and help us make just and fair decisions

With strength from the Holy Spirit.

Be with us, Lord, thank you for this opportunity to contribute to the education of our children.

Bless us this day as we open our hearts and our minds to continue your work in this special vocation.

Be with us, Lord, and guide us in all we do, in Your name. AMEN

## **CCCSC WEB NEWS**

We are so happy to report to you that the CCCSC Web Site is up and running! This has been a 2-year CCCSC project so we are happy to bring this information to you. You may access our web site by clicking on the Dufferin –Peel site at [www.dpccdsb.org](http://www.dpccdsb.org) and click on CCCSC. Eventually we will have the Catholic School Council Handbook on the site with access to all. Give it a try!

## **School Council Survey**

In the past, the school council survey was completed and returned to the school board in January. We have recommended that this survey be held back to reassess the need for the survey and what we do with the information. We will be providing a template for school councils to prepare a document that they would write when a principal has been moved. The document would be a school and community profile to give the superintendents a glimpse into the needs and characteristics of the community. This profile would be used when selecting a new principal. As well, it will also help administrators to view the school through the eyes of the parents, for school improvement and for long-term goal setting and planning on behalf of the school administrator. More information will follow.

## **Parish Representatives Meet**

Over 30 parish representatives met in April to discuss best practices and to share ideas and concerns they have around Catholic education and its future. The group agreed to meet again before the school year ends. Our thanks to Rosemary Shields, Clair Budziak, Roseanne Reech, and Gabriel Ogundele for leading the way with this initiative. The group has agreed to plan the Volunteer Mass for October and will meet again on May 24<sup>th</sup>. The time and place will be confirmed to school councils. We encourage all parish reps, and interested school council members to attend the next meeting.

## **Ontario Parent Involvement Grants**

As you know, monies have been sent from the ministry of education to school councils for development of the council and to encourage more parent involvement in the school. We are happy to see so many schools applying for the extra funding. We hope that these initiatives will help you bring more parents into the school as volunteers and participants. We also hope that you will spend some of the funding dollars on the development of your members of council through retreats and conferences. This money could be used, for instance, to send delegates to Ottawa to the OAPCE conference in May.

## **Family of School Meetings**

All Families met in April to discuss the potential for cuts to the Dufferin-Peel budget. We would expect that your Family of Schools will meet at least one more time to evaluate the year for school councils; discuss future meetings (where, when, timing) and plan for next year. Your family of schools should plan to meet very soon after school council elections in September. You should elect one elementary rep. and one secondary rep. who work with the superintendent to plan and chair family meetings for the year. Of course, the reps. also sit on CCCSC. We encourage members of councils to think about these positions on CCCSC. You do not have to be a school council chair to be a CCCSC rep. You do have to be a parent rep. and a member of a school council. Other representatives come from our principals/vice principals both secondary and elementary, OAPCE, SEAC, the diocese, students, elementary and secondary teachers, trustees and superintendents.

## **Student Council Constitutions**

A sub committee has developed a template for elementary and secondary student councils which can be used to write their student council constitution or perhaps update the old bylaws. The committee has completed its work and has circulated the proposed template to various representative groups. It is the hope of the committee that the Student Council Constitution Template will be available to DP Student councils in the new school year.

## Money Money Money

Over the last few months, we have had enquiries about how school councils should determine their expenditures in their schools. CCCSC, over the years, has always recommended that the school council strike a budget based upon input from parents, committees and the principal. The budget should always be one that covers expenditures, which are appropriate. That may cover a myriad of things. We do recommend that this money, which is raised in the community be spent on extracurricular, be that events, sports or educational resource material. The budget should be voted upon early in the year and of course would be evaluated and reported upon over the year. While the principal does have veto on all activities of the council as per GAP and the Education Act, if there is a concern on expenditures or income, those concerns should be discussed in an open forum. If the principal must veto a decision of the council, then the principal is expected to advise the council as to the justification of the veto. Hopefully, all decisions will be made by consensus. It is expected that the council will report all financial activity to the community through newsletter explaining how, why and what the expenditures are for the year. This is not only a financial expectation; it is a great communication tool to encourage parent involvement in the future.

## Goals and Evaluation

It is getting close to the time that you should be thinking about how you will evaluate your work as a school council, this year. If you made some goals in the beginning, this should be easy. Review your list and discuss how you have done. Sometimes, people would rather answer a series of questions or participate in a small group discussion. You know what will work best for your council. Whatever you do, evaluate your goals and lay the groundwork for setting goals for next year. At CCCSC, we always evaluate our goals in order to set new goals for next year. We usually participate in small discussion groups with some kind of an evaluation to follow. We highly recommend it. Don't forget to give yourselves a pat on the back for having the heart to step forward to participate on council.

## Centre for Addition and Mental Health (CAMH) Report (Printed with permission from CAMH)

May 2, 2006 (Toronto, ON)– A report released on May 2, 2006 by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH), the 2005 OSDUS Mental Health and Well-Being Report shows that about 11% of students surveyed (representing about 114,000 Ontario youth in grades 7 to 12) report that they seriously considered suicide during the 12 months before the survey. This proportion is significantly higher among girls (at 16%) than boys (7%). One-in-twelve students (representing 86,200) report multiple problems, including psychological distress, hazardous drinking, drug problems and delinquent behaviour. About 12% of students visited a mental health professional at least once during the past 12 months.

This survey also revealed surprising numbers on the prevalence of both gambling and bullying amongst Ontario students from grades 7-12:

- The percentage of all students that played cards for money significantly increased between 2003 (24%) and 2005 (33%).
- About 4% (approximately 45,800 students) are at risk for a gambling problem.
- About one-third (31%) of all students had been bullied since September. The most prevalent form of bullying reported was verbal abuse (25%), while 4% were primarily bullied physically and 2% were victims of theft/vandalism.
- Approximately 27% of all students report bullying other students.

Dr. Adlaf, one of the authors of the study says “given the increased activity of poker playing generally, it is not surprising to find an increase in card playing among students. Fortunately at the moment, this increase has not resulted in increases in heavy gambling activity or in gambling problems, although, for some, future gambling problems are likely.”

This study, which is the first Canadian study to probe fire setting among students, revealed that approximately 27% of students reported setting something on fire that they weren't supposed to at least once during the 12 months before the survey. Moreover, 14% set something on fire three or more times. Males were significantly more likely to set something on fire compared to females.

The study also found that low parental supervision and a poor relationship with parents are related to most outcomes, including emotional and behavioural difficulties. Dr. David Wolfe, RBC Investments Chair in Children's Mental Health and Development Psychopathology at CAMH says, "These findings emphasize the importance of parents being informed about the challenges faced by teens, and the need to take an active role in guiding and monitoring their adolescent's behavior."

**Other highlights from this survey include:**

- About 10% report low self-esteem, with females more likely to do so than males (11% vs. 8%).
- About 5% of students are at elevated risk for depression. This number remained stable between 1997 and 2005.
- Over the past decade, violent and other delinquent behaviours have declined. For example, reports of weapon carrying declined between 1993 (16%) and 2005 (9%).
- New 2005 data show that the least reported delinquent activity was carrying a handgun (2%), whereas vandalism is the most reported activity (15%).
- New 2005 data show that about 2% of students have called a telephone crisis helpline at least once in the past 12 months to talk to someone about a problem.

CAMH provides treatment services and has implemented a number of clinical, educational, research and program development initiatives for adolescents with addiction and/or mental health issues. A list of these initiatives and the executive summary of the mental health report is available at [www.camh.net](http://www.camh.net).

CAMH's Ontario Student Drug Use Survey (OSDUS) is the longest running school survey of adolescents in Canada. In the spring of 2005, 7,726 students in grades 7 to 12 participated in the survey administered by the Institute for Social Research, York University. The 2005 OSDUS Mental Health and Well-Being

The report describes the physical and mental health of students in 2005 and changes since 1991. This report is a companion document to the report *Drug Use Among Ontario Students, 1977-2005*. CAMH released the results of the drug use survey in the fall of 2005. A copy of the 2005 OSDUS Mental Health and Well-Being Report is available at: [www.camh.net/research/osdus.html](http://www.camh.net/research/osdus.html)

### **SEAC – Special Education Advisory Committee**

We all strive for a sense of Belonging. Inclusion rewards us with that belonging. When we welcome people with developmental disabilities in our schools, in our homes, in our parishes etc. we build relationships in our community. As we recognize that we belong to one another and indeed, need one another, compassion unfolds and Joy flows. God sets the plan but we must do the legwork. Last month S. Kendrick (Vice Principal of Special Education) and I presented to CCCSC members. We focused on parental involvement and the model of inclusion. We provided an overview of SEAC, the spectrum of services, program and supports in Dufferin-Peel, the child's needs and strengths and the silent needs of siblings.

For School Council Chairs, in collaboration with school administrators, to continue the support of all parents/guardians, including those of students with special education needs, we ask you to please consider:

- Sharing the copy of the DPCDSB Parent Guide to Programs and Services;
- Posting the Special Education newsletter "Especially Yours" on a Council Bulletin Board. The newsletter is available on line <http://www.dpccsb.org/pr/speced-newsletter.html>;
- Facilitating information sharing materials at curriculum or parent/guardian interview evenings;
- Reviewing the board's AODA policy; (Annual Ontarians Disabilities Act)

- Liaising through your school administrator on how to share information on programs and services (i.e. through Special Education Consultant) and community groups at the school (Example: What are supports for special services and how do you access in the community?);
- Attend a future SEAC meeting
- Check out some special education related links:
  - <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/> - Ministry of Education Web Page – Look for *Education for All: The Expert Panel Report on Literacy and Numeracy for Students with Special Education Needs K-6*
  - <http://snow.utoronto.ca/> - (U of T) Special Needs Opportunities Web Page
  - <http://www.seaclearning.ca/> - SEAC Information Web Page

God Bless,  
Cathy Turco  
SEAC Representative on CCCSC

### Student Council Constitutions

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### Central Committee Meetings

- *June 15, 2006*
- *September 14, 2007 (Final meeting for the 2005-2006 CCCSC)*

#### Contact Patrol

The following are a few web sites, which may be positive resources for you.

- Dufferin-Peel Web Site [www.dpdsb.org](http://www.dpdsb.org)
- [openlist@edu.gov.on.ca](mailto:openlist@edu.gov.on.ca) (Ontario Provincial Education Network)
- OAPCE [www.oapce.on.ca](http://www.oapce.on.ca)
- Peel Health [www.region.peel.on.ca](http://www.region.peel.on.ca) and [www.pinet.on.ca](http://www.pinet.on.ca)
- EQAO – [www.eqao.com](http://www.eqao.com)
- Ontario School Advocate (Newspaper for School Councils) – <http://www.school-advocate.ca/editor@schooladvocate.ca>
- [dmcguinty@premier.gov.on.ca](mailto:dmcguinty@premier.gov.on.ca)
- CCCSC Web Site: Click on Dufferin-Peel
- SEAC: click on Dufferin-Peel web site

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