



ANNA DA SILVA
TRUSTEE BRAMPTON WARDS 1,3 &4

"For he has said, I will never leave you nor forsake you."

Hebrews13:5

June 2020

Hello everyone,

It's hard to believe that we have come to the end of another school year. So much has happened in the last 12 weeks that it almost seems like September was in a different lifetime. I know that you have all been doing your best to manage life, your children's education along with your own work requirements during the pandemic. I want to thank you all for supporting our teachers, our staff, and the board as they work hard to transition to teaching in a virtual world. Thank you for your continued support as we all do our best to meet the educational, social, and emotional challenges of meeting the needs of 80,000 students.

In June, the virtue of **FAIRNESS** calls us, as a Catholic community, to treat others with mercy, to be open-minded, and to act justly. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have a moral obligation to contribute to the common good. Cardinal Collins offered us a special message of Igniting Hope which is rooted in Catholic Education Week: "...that's really what Catholic education is all about; it lifts us beyond ourselves and sends us out to serve our neighbour and, in doing that, to serve our Lord God." As is my practice, I would like to provide you with some updates on issues, events, and activities affecting the DPCDSB and our school communities.

School Closure

Education Minister, Stephen Lecce has announced that all publicly funded schools in Ontario will remain closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. This decision is based on the expertise of the Chief Medical Officer of Health, the COVID-19 Command Table and medical professionals at the Hospital for Sick Children. The provincial government has referenced that it will communicate the plan for the safe reopening of schools. Parents can anticipate an update prior to the end of June. [Visit our COVID-19 webpage page for information.](#)

Retrieving Student Belongings

DPCDSB has communicated the needs of parents/guardians and families to the Ministry of Education, in regards to obtaining students' belongings from their school. The Ministry is supportive of working with school boards and our local public health units, and is currently developing a provincial template protocol to allow controlled re-entry for staff, parents, and students to retrieve their personal items. We anticipate that schools will be able to schedule access by mid to late June, depending on the size of the school.

Report Cards

Student report cards will be distributed electronically prior to end of the current school year. Hard copies of transcripts, diplomas, and awards will be available to students when the graduation ceremonies can be scheduled. The Ministry of Education has assured school boards that all students who were on track to graduate from secondary school will be able to graduate.

Synchronous Learning

We recognize the dedication of our DPCDSB Catholic parents/guardians, students, educators, and staff in supporting Catholic education. The collaborative work of everyone has helped to ensure the delivery of Continuity of Catholic Learning for our students and children. We know that learning is enriched by interaction in meaningful ways. The Ministry of Education and the DPCDSB is supportive of synchronous delivery for teacher-led learning and providing support for educators and families. On May 19, a guide for parents/guardians was released to the system which outlined DPCDSB's expectations for safe and secure distance learning. Our approach to Synchronous

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Learning provides a reciprocal framework where students have direct interaction with their educators to receive instruction and assessment/evaluation in an authentic and timely manner. Teachers may use multiple formats and flexibility of instruction as related to set times and scheduling to address the needs of their students. All educators have been encouraged to use DPCDSB-approved platforms to ensure that synchronous learning is occurring during this Continuity of Catholic Learning. In addition, the DPCDSB has also recently purchased licenses to the secure the *Zoom videoconferencing* platform.

Wellbeing

“When the well-being of children and students is supported...we are meeting the conditions needed to help them learn, grow, and develop a positive sense of self.” (Ontario’s Well-Being Strategy for Education).

Supporting well-being and mental health is so integral to the work we do. It is also articulated clearly and explicitly within the core principles in the Board of Trustees’ *Multi-Year Strategic Plan (2019-2023)*. DPCDSB continues to meet regularly with our partners to ensure we are aligned with the provincial direction, and aware of the supports available to our students and the changes in service delivery models, given the pandemic. For more information please refer to the report in the [May 19 Faith and Program Committee Meeting](#) agenda. We continue to meet and partner with:

- School Mental Health Ontario;
- The Youth Task Force for the City of Brampton;
- Community Safety and Well-Being Committee in Peel;
- Suicide Awareness Council of Wellington-Dufferin;
- Peel Children’s Centre;
- Associated Youth Services of Peel;
- The Regional Community Response Team;
- Service Resolution Peel Child Review Committee;
- Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Peel;
- Erinoak Kids Centre for Treatment and Development;
- Central West Local Health Integration Networks Mental Health and Addiction Nurses (MHANs);
- Transition Advisory Committee Peel.

Broader Public Sector Redeployment

With the most recent emergency order by the province, the voluntary redeployment of support staff, such as custodians and maintenance workers can assist in the critical staffing shortages in long term care homes, hospitals and other healthcare settings. This opportunity is available to education employees who are not currently working during the school closure period. We have been assured that only those individuals who are not directly supporting students will be approved by the board. The agreement between boards, unions, workers and the ministry will end when the emergency orders are removed. This initiative is not intended to disrupt the operations of school boards.

Summer Learning

The Ministry intends to support the usual range of summer programming as well as additional programming. Funding will be supported through the Provincial Priority Funding grants. More information to follow.

Secondary Summer School Registration

Online registration is open for secondary students. Due to COVID-19, whether classes will be offered in person, online or a combination of both has not yet been confirmed. The decision will be made later in June. It is suggested that students register as soon as possible.

PRO-Grant Funding

Due to the significant decrease in Parent Reaching Out (PRO) Grant funding by the Ministry of Education, schools did not receive any PRO-Grant funds. Central Committee for Catholic School Councils (CCCSC) members decided to

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use all PRO-Grant funds to support a variety of system-wide parent engagement opportunities. Unfortunately, three parent engagement events were cancelled in the spring, as a result of pandemic related school closures. We have not received any updates from the Ministry regarding unspent PRO-Grant funds for the 2019-2020 school year.

Childcare

School boards have been directed to refrain from charging childcare rent. In addition, the Ministry has mandated that childcare fees will not be charged to parents to hold their spots during the school closure period.

Grants for Student Needs (GSN)

The budget submission deadline for school boards will be extended given the delay in releasing the Ministry's release of the GSN.

OSSLT 2021

Students graduating in January 2021, who have not completed the literacy requirement, will have the option of adjudication or a literacy course. DPCDSB is working with the Ministry of Education to determine how to best address the double cohort. Parents/guardians and students will be informed when more information is available.

Parent Engagement Evening

We extend our appreciation to Dr. Pepler for providing our parent communities with an online presentation on cyberbullying. DPCDSB and the Board of Trustees have engaged the expertise of Dr. Pepler to inform our work on bullying prevention policies, procedures and practices. Dr. Pepler is a professor of psychology at York University and an expert on bullying. If you missed this virtual session on Wednesday May 27, it has also been recorded and will be posted in the [CCCSC section](#) of the DPCDSB website shortly.

The Fair Chance Learning (FCL)

An organization affiliated with Microsoft Canada, is forming an *Education Onward Tech Committee* to develop some key learnings from the overall remote learning plans that are in play in Ontario. They have reached out to four directors of education from across the province, including DPCDSB. We are so pleased to have DPCDSB represented on this committee.

13th Annual Volunteer of the Year Award

Volunteers play an important role in our schools, helping to build vibrant, caring, inclusive and faith-filled communities. The Central Committee for Catholic School Councils (CCCSC) acknowledges these dedicated individuals who make a significant contribution to supporting Catholic education. The Volunteer of the Year Award recognizes an individual who exemplifies volunteerism at DPCDSB. The award process is also a means to thank our volunteers for their continuous years of commitment and dedication. All Volunteer of the Year recipients and nominees will be recognized and celebrated at the Catholic School Council Chairs Meeting in the Fall. For more information on nomination criteria, eligibility and process, please contact your local school principal. The deadline for receiving nomination forms is June 19 at 4:00 p.m.

Graduates

Students - we know you are missing your friends. We know there is much disappointed about not celebrating this important milestone at this time with graduation ceremonies, proms, school trips and other special events that were planned. This was not how you envisioned completing your Grade 8 year in elementary or Grade 12 year in secondary school. We are proud of you, for the challenges you have overcome and the perseverance you have demonstrated in the midst of challenging and changing times. May you go forth as DPCDSB graduates and aspire to "change the world through Catholic Education."

The Institute for Catholic Education (ICE) has created a monograph series "A Curriculum for the Heart of Young People" which provides a framework for the Catholic curriculum and illustrates how the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations can both inspire and support curriculum development.

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May our youth also find strength in the words of Pope Francis, *“Dear young people, my joyful hope is to see you keep running the race before you, outstripping all those who are slow or fearful. Keep running, attracted by the face of Christ, whom we love so much, whom we adore in the Holy Eucharist and acknowledge in the flesh of our suffering brothers and sisters. May the Holy Spirit urge you on as you run this race. The Church needs your momentum, your intuitions, your faith. We need them! And when you arrive where we have not yet reached, have the patience to wait for us”.* (Christus Vivit, 2019)

During this time of physical distancing, even though there have been school closures, our faith continues to be evident and vibrantly celebrated across the board. We are not limited by the walls of our school buildings. Our Catholic school communities are defined by how we continue to teach, learn and build relationships. In *Christus Vivit*, 2019, when Pope Francis speaks about the art of accompaniment, the Holy Father is referring to the time to walk alongside one another, to listen and to teach, and in so doing to transform. This has been an extraordinary time and a unique opportunity for parents/guardians, educators, staff, administrators and trustees to partner in Catholic Education. We come together in the spirit of Igniting Hope as faithful people and disciples of Christ.

I would like to thank you for choosing Catholic education. It is my privilege to serve our Brampton DPCDSB school communities. Special thanks to our families for sharing the gift of your children with us. May God bless you!

Please contact me with any questions or concerns. I also invite you to follow me on my social media platforms. For parents/guardians, please ensure you have provided your child(ren)’s school with your current email address to receive Community Information Bulletins and other important communications directly from the DPCDSB.

Yours in learning, growing and leading with Christ,

Anna da Silva

Trustee -Brampton, Wards 1, 3, and 4

Chair Audit Committee and Strategic Planning

Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board

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