



Trustee Mario Pascucci
Mississauga Wards 1 & 3



Trustee Stefano Pascucci
Mississauga Ward 4

Our DPCDSB **Mission**: Disciples of Christ, nurturing mind, body and soul to the fullness of life.
Our DPCDSB **Vision**: Changing the world through Catholic education.

September 2023

As our Catholic school communities journey back to school, we are guided by this year's theme for our Catholic Education Week for the 2023-2024 school year is: *We Are Called to Love*. More information is available on the Ontario Catholic Schools Trustees' Association (OCSTA) website: <https://www.ocsta.on.ca/project/we-are-called-to-love/>

We begin the 2023-2024 school year with the virtue of **FAITH**, which calls us to walk together, as we learn and grow, deepening our faith together. The Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board (DPCDSB) continues to be rooted in our Catholic doctrine and inspired by the life, gospel values, and teachings of Jesus Christ. Our personal relationship with Christ calls us to become more like Him.

DPCDSB is one of the largest and most diverse school boards in Ontario. We serve approximately 73,000 students and employ over 11,000 staff throughout the regions of Mississauga, Brampton, Caledon, and Dufferin County. DPCDSB has grown from 23 founding Catholic schools to 151 schools (125 elementary and 26 secondary) in over fifty years. We work closely and in partnership with 46 churches and missions. We are blessed to have the collaboration of our priests, clergy, and Catholic church communities together with our students, families, and staff to enrich Catholic education and nurture the faith development of our children.

Welcome Back

Our DPCDSB Board of Trustees, and staff at all levels of the organization welcome our new and returning students and families! We are committed to providing and sustaining safe, caring, inclusive, and healthy Catholic school communities, in which every student can learn, grow and succeed.

Your DPCDSB Trustees

We are so pleased that you have chosen a Catholic education for your child(ren). As your Catholic School Trustees, we value and understand the importance of a quality Catholic education for your family. We have and will continue to represent you and your child(ren) on the Board of Trustees, and knowing our school communities is crucial to our involvement in the decision-making process. Trustees work collaboratively with staff to ensure that any concerns from parents/guardians and students are addressed.

The DPCDSB is overseen by a board of eleven (11) elected Catholic School Trustees. As your DPCDSB Catholic School Trustees, we help to shape a vision for the board that is inclusive of the schools we serve and reflective of the input of parents, students, stakeholders and community members. Two student trustees are elected by their peers and sit with the board in a non-voting capacity. We welcome Kristen Balisi from St Joan of Arc and Nathan Nguy from Notre Dame Catholic Secondary Schools who were elected by their peers for the 2023-2024 school year.

Your Catholic Trustees play a key leadership role in setting the strategic direction for our school board and supporting efforts to enhance student achievement and well-being. Together, we develop board policy, approve the corporate capital and operating budgets, develop the Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP) as well as promote and protect Catholic education. The 2023-2024 goals are informed by an analyses of 2022-2023 and align to the core priorities of the Board of Trustees' *Multi-Year Strategic Plan*: **BELIEVE, EXCEL, RESPECT, THRIVE, and TRUST**. It is important to note that the Board of Trustees is currently engaged in the development of the next iteration of the Multi-year Strategic Plan (MYSP).

Catholic School Councils (CSCs) – Communication between home, school and parish is enhanced with active parent involvement in our schools and CSCs. It's an opportunity to share important information and updates, and contribute your voice in local school decisions. We encourage parents/guardians to attend your CSC meetings and volunteer to put your name forward to become a voting member of your council. All schools are advised to post their updated meeting minutes and agenda items on their own school websites to ensure all members of our school communities can stay informed. I provide monthly updates to my school communities by way of my monthly newsletters on the current board information that is important to you.

It is the policy of DPCDSB that each school has a CSC, which is advisory in nature, and governed by the Ontario Education Act. CSCs are empowered to make recommendations, in accordance with Regulation 612/00, to the school principal and the school board and serve to:

- Promote the mission, vision, and values of the board;
- Support the sacramental life and Catholic practices of the board;
- Promote and support co-operation and communication with the local parish and OAPCE;
- Be faithful to its' mission;
- Improve student well-being and achievement and;
- Enhance the accountability of the education system to parents.

Meetings of the Board of Trustees and Committees of the Board - Our board and committee meetings have returned in-person at the Catholic Education, 40 Matheson Boulevard West, Mississauga. Parent, school communities and external stakeholders are welcome to connect online via the board's YouTube channel. All board meetings are regularly scheduled on Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m. (unless otherwise noted). Meeting schedules, agendas and minutes are available on the board website.

Budget Update – The DPCDSB continues to operate under a Multi-Year Financial Recovery Plan with the Ministry of Education to address a significant expenditure concern with the Long Term Disability (LTD) benefit plan. The cost of the LTD has increased monumentally over the last three years and has created an accumulated deficit position. On June 20, 2023, the Board of Trustees approved the proposed Budget for the 2023-2024 year. The Ministry provides funding to school boards through the Grants for Student Needs (GSN) funding formula. DPCDSB is projecting an enrolment decline of 1.3% for the upcoming school

year, which impacts both grant revenues and our staffing levels. In addition, on April 17, 2023 the Ministry of Education's announcement of the GSN indicated the elimination of the COVID-19 Learning Recovery Funding. For DPCDSB, the impact of this funding amounts to \$10.4 million, which has supported over 100 staff positions.

2023 - 2024 Math Achievement – The Ministry of Education has selected priority elementary and secondary schools based on the most recent EQAO math assessment results. As communicated in B05 2023-24 Priorities and Partnerships Funding (PPF) on April 17, 2023, select priority schools will be allocated funding of 0.2 of an FTE. School Math Facilitators will work directly with students and teachers in each of the identified Grades 3, 6 and 9 classrooms. The Ministry aims to facilitate positive student achievement in math for the proposed schools.

Ontario Language Curriculum – The Ministry of Education has released a revised curriculum policy which replaces The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Language 2006 and was informed by the Ontario Human Rights Commission's *Right to Read* Inquiry Report. Beginning in September 2023, all language programs for Grades 1 to 8 will be based on the expectations of the revised curriculum. The curriculum emphasizes the foundational knowledge and skills in both oral and written language that are necessary to support more complex skills such as critical thinking and problem solving. The curriculum emphasizes evidence-based systematic and explicit instruction of foundational knowledge and skills, including oral language, word-level reading and spelling, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. Program planning also includes guiding principles and subject-specific instructional strategies for students with special education needs and students with disabilities. Key considerations and research-informed pedagogy have been added to support students who are culturally and linguistically diverse. Cross-curricular learning examples to align with recently released curricula, including mathematics and science and technology have also been updated. This publication is available on the Ministry of Education's website:
<https://www.dcp.edu.gov.on.ca/en/curriculum/elementary-language>

Cafeteria Updates – For the 2023-2024, every secondary school in DPCDSB will have full cafeteria services for the entire school year. All cafeterias will be open in September without a staggered start. Each school will receive 200 vouchers to provide meals to students in need. Each voucher can be exchanged for a daily meal valued at \$6. Vendors are required to have a daily value meal offered at \$6, however, other specials will also be available. Commission will be minimized to support our school communities. We have three (3) vendors that will service our secondary cafeterias - Just Catering, Aramark and Pina Foods which have been awarded by Zone. The Steering Committee that was involved through the entire process of the RFP and award, included a team inclusive of our DPCDSB Secondary School Principals, Family of School Superintendent, Supply Chain Management staff and Finance staff. Ongoing and continuous improvement of our cafeteria services will be informed by feedback from secondary school staff and students.

Get Ready Program – This DPCDSB Get Ready Program was offered in August for our students entering grade 9 in September 2023. It was revised during the 2020-2021 (COVID) school year and has since been updated to reflect the current learning conditions. The emphasis on the program has been to offer equitable, differentiated, and hands-on activities based on the grade 9 curriculum to support the transition of students from grade 8 to grade 9. Teachers chose activities to support their cohort after meeting their students and learning about their strengths and interests. Parents and students will have an opportunity to provide feedback regarding their experience via exit surveys at the end of the program to inform future planning.

The DPCDSB 2023-2024 school year calendar is available on the board website. This includes school holidays, professional activity days (PA days) and examination days for secondary schools: <https://www.dpcdsb.org/Schools/School-Year-Calendar>

We are proud to be your DPCDSB Catholic School Trustees. Parents and guardians are always welcome to contact us regarding any system-level concerns or questions about publicly funded Catholic education. Additionally, please do not hesitate to reach out to your child(ren)'s teacher(s), school administration and/or school staff should you require more information pertaining your local Catholic school.

We wish our students, families and staff a successful year ahead for the 2023-2024 school year! May God bless you in your journey of learning and faith formation.

Take care and God bless.

Your Trustees,

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