

**MARIO PASCUCCI**  
TRUSTEE - MISSISSAUGA, WARDS 1 AND 3



"Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths." Psalm 25:4

**October 2021**

This month's virtue of EMPATHY reminds us of the dignity in ourselves, and the ability to recognize it in others. As a Catholic community, we believe that the cross is the ultimate sign of compassion and forgiveness. As we embark on a new school year, we will focus on rebuilding, restoring and renewing together, to support our Catholic community of learners.

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.

**Mental Health**: Schools provide an optimal setting for supporting positive mental health for students. We endeavour to provide school environments that are compassionate, just, and inclusive of diverse students. This is evident in the DPCDSB Board of Trustees' *Multi-Year Strategic Plan (2019-2023)*, the *Catholic Board Improvement Learning Cycle* and the *Mental Health and Well-Being Guiding Framework (2018-2021)*. For more information, parents/guardians can review the September 21, 2021, DPCDSB Faith and Program Committee Meeting agenda item G3 - [Together we are Resilient: Support for a Mentally Healthy Back to School](#).

**PRO Grants**: The Ministry of Education has informed school boards they will receive a predetermined funding amount for Parents Reaching Out (PRO) Grants. \$82,657.37 has been allocated to the DPCDSB for the 2021-2022 school year. Proposed projects will be required to demonstrate a commitment to respecting the roles of parents in students' educational experiences by working with parents or seeking parent input on how schools can:

- Address social inclusion and racism, specifically anti-Asian, anti-Black, and anti-Indigenous racism and other prejudices toward racialized and marginalized groups.
- Create a safe and welcoming environment.
- Demonstrate respect for parents as valued partners within the education system regarding decisions about their child's education.
- Enhance communication with teachers.
- Inform parents about the expectations of the Ontario Curriculum and supporting resources.

Our Central Committee for Catholic School Councils (CCCSC) and Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) will be consulted to provide feedback on how funds could be distributed and shared with our schools. More information will be communicated to schools regarding the allocation of the PRO Grant funds for this school year.

**Photography Protocol**: To support our cautious re-opening and a safe return to normal school practices, photography vendors were not permitted in schools during September. Schools have been instructed to book dates for photos to be taken at the school into October, November and later, with the following disclaimer: *The photography vendor onsite will be cancelled should the conditions of COVID-19 worsen, the community has a high positive case count and/or Provincial Government/Public Health Authorities issue a recommendation against any visitor in the schools.* Photography vendors will be expected to follow all DPCDSB health & safety protocols, in addition to their own protocols. Only individual photos will be taken for all grades. No class photos will be taken at this time. Students learning remote-only will be provided an opportunity to attend their home school for photos.

**Extraordinary lives start with a great Catholic education.**

Principals will establish a plan to allow remote-only students to attend their home school, either at the end of the school day or during a time reserved for remote-only learners to avoid mixing cohorts of students. In addition, grade composites can be created that will include remote-only learners as part of the home school community.

**Athletics and Extra-curricular Activities:** Peel Public Health (PPH) supports extra-curricular sports and school-based clubs. Preliminary plans are in place to begin a variety of athletic seasons under the safety protocols recommended by PPH. Schools are permitted to move forward with extra-curricular activities, contingent on the provision that they have staff volunteers to supervise and coach school teams. Spectators/parents will not be permitted at this time, so teams can focus on our student athletes. However, in open field situations, the host school is responsible for ensuring there are no spectators congregating at the facility who are not involved in the activity.

Regarding secondary school athletics, in collaboration with Region of Peel Secondary School Athletic Association (ROPSSAA), and under the direction of PPH, DPCDSB has created guidelines for the provision of athletics for the Fall and Winter seasons. As per the guidelines, PPH is strongly recommending that all eligible coaching staff and students have received full vaccination. A letter from PPH will be shared with any student(s) and parents who wish to participate in athletics this year providing more information.

I extend my sincere appreciation to all of our staff who give of their time and share their enthusiasm for providing our students with enriching and fun extracurricular school experiences.

**Flu Prevention** – Flu Prevention Week takes place during October. Some of the symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to the flu and it may be hard to tell the difference based on symptoms alone. You may need a COVID-19 test to help confirm a diagnosis. Together, we can help protect the health of our children and ensure healthy school environments. To prevent getting and/or spreading the flu, please remember:

- Flu shot vaccination is the best defense.
- Keep children home when they are sick or showing flu-like symptoms (e.g., fever, vomiting or diarrhea).
- Wash hands frequently. Cover your cough or sneeze. The flu can spread up to six feet away.

For more information, please visit: [www.peelregion.ca/flu](http://www.peelregion.ca/flu) or call Peel Public Health at 905-799-7700, or you can call Telehealth at 1-866-797-0000 to speak with a Registered Nurse 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**Eden Food for Change:** Serving families in western Mississauga, Eden Food for Change is committed to increasing access to good food in a dignified manner, developing food skills to encourage healthy eating and empowering the community through education, outreach and advocacy. Need for food continues in our community. Many of our local schools have upcoming food drive events. If you have an opportunity to donate food and essential items this month, please visit Eden Food for Change [edenffc.org](http://edenffc.org) for most needed items or call 905-785-3651. Drop off locations: 3185 Unity Drive, Unit 2, or 3051 Battleford Rd in Mississauga. Thank you for your support.

I would like to thank Parents/Guardians, Students, Ratepayers, all school and administrative support staff, for your continued support during these unique times.

Wishing everyone a wonderful and blessed time of worship and thanksgiving. You are welcome to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have.

**Trustee Mario Pascucci**

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