



*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.

May 2023

The virtue of **ACCEPTANCE** this month aligns with our Catholic social teachings at the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board (DPCDSB) to create school environments that are safe, caring, healthy and inclusive. Our school communities are united in our Catholic faith and come together to promote equality, democracy, and solidarity for a better world.

The month of May is also dedicated to our Blessed Mother Mary. We celebrate the gift of Mary's maternal tenderness and love, as children of God. *"Mary is not only the bridge joining us to God; she is much more. She is the road God traveled in order to reach us, and the road that we must travel in order to reach Him."*
– Pope Francis

Catholic Education Week 2023 – Catholic Education Week (CEW) 2023 was held on April 30-May 5. The theme was *We are Many, We are One*. It provided unique opportunities to highlight what Catholic Education means, as well as to celebrate the identity and distinctive nature of our Catholic schools. Catholic Trustees are stewards and advocates of Catholic education and for the students entrusted to our care. In Ontario, we come together as 29 Catholic school boards and locally as 500 publicly funded Catholic schools across the Archdiocese of Toronto. We are grateful that our Catholic schools foster a learning environment rooted in our call to love and serve, inspired by our Catholic faith.

Thank you to all our administrators, students, teachers, and staff for another successful Catholic Education Week. Events included Snuggle-up Reading with Primary Grades, Beauty & the Beast Production, Crowning of Mary, Wellness Day, Grandparents Day, Line Dancing Production and many more.

May 1 - DPCDSB Staff Appreciation Day – We express our gratitude to all staff at the DPCDSB for the important work they do in the service of publicly funded Catholic education for the children and youth entrusted to our care.

May 9 –Helicopter Visit - proud moment for Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board - Major Antonio Gomez, a graduate of St. Martin Catholic Secondary School returned to his old high school flying helicopter. Please see the CTV coverage <https://toronto.ctvnews.ca/mobile/video?clipId=2684262>

Budget Update – On April 17, 2023, the Ministry of Education made announcements on Memorandum 2023: B04 - *2023-24 Grants for Student Needs (GSN) Funding*, 2023: B05 – *2023-24 Priorities and Partnerships Funding (PPF)* and Bill 98, *The Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act (Bill 98)*. To improve outcomes for students, the Ministry has announced new PPF funding for math, de-streaming and reading. These new targeted funding announcements are closely aligned with the proposed amendments coming out of Bill 98. It is important to note that PPF funds are time-limited for specific funding areas, with restrictions and accountability measures. It is also critically important to highlight that time-limited funding from the current 2022-2023 year is expiring: the COVID-19 Learning Recovery Fund and the Tutoring Grant will not continue into next year. It is the Ministry's expectation that school board operations will normalize following the pandemic and therefore, this targeted funding is no longer required.

GSN funding is projected to increase by 2.7 percent provincially, accounting for salary compensation increases, enrolment changes across the province and adjustments in the student transportation funding model. Bill 98, if passed, has potential to significantly change the education system in Ontario and ensure a unified focus on student achievement, particularly in reading, writing and math. The Ministry believes the proposed amendments would ensure students graduate with a competitive advantage while learning modern curricula in modern schools, preparing them for jobs of the future. For more information, please visit the April 24, 2023 – Board of Trustees Meeting Agenda on the DPCDSB website.

School Dress Codes – All DPCDSB students are guided by the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations. As such, our students are expected to dress in a way that is appropriate for a Catholic school. We ask that parents/guardians please speak with your child(ren) about dress choices that reflect a Catholic school, that promote safe, respectful, and inclusive places to learn and honour the Catholic Social Teaching of Life and Dignity of the Human Person. DPCDSB will be speaking with school communities about dress codes, which will be consistent with the Ontario Human Rights Code. A [Community Information Bulletin](#) regarding school dress codes was shared with all DPCDSB families on April 14, through School Messenger and is available on the board website.

Long-term Facilities Master Plan (LTFMP) – DPCDSB student enrolment trends over the past 20-year period from 2012 to 2032 are used to inform the development of the LTFMP, which will serve as a roadmap to guide DPCDSB in planning for the facility accommodation needs, including future capital investments, to support all students in the future. The LTFMP identifies areas of enrolment growth and decline within DPCDSB, as well as potential strategies our Board of Trustees may wish to consider to address future enrolment changes.

Across Ontario, all school boards have experienced varying trends in enrolment over the last few years. It has been widely reported that families are moving from areas such as Peel Region to other communities outside of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), where housing costs are not as limiting. DPCDSB has experienced continued enrolment decline from the 2021-2022 to 2022-2023 school years. A decline of over 1,354 students over this twelve-month period can be attributed to many factors, including admission and demission of students year-over-year, families emigrating from the jurisdiction of DPCDSB and the changing demographics in Peel Region. Overall, DPCDSB is expected to experience a net enrolment decline of approximately -7.76% (-5,621 total students) over the next ten years, which is comprised of a projected decline in the elementary panel of approximately -3.91% (-1,664 elementary students) and a projected decline in the secondary panel of -13.24% (-3,957 secondary students). For more information, please see

the April 11, 2023 Administration and Finance Committee Meeting Agenda on the DPCDSB website. [Board and Committee Meeting webpage.](#)

Student Transportation of Peel Region (STOPR) Update – STOPR continues to monitor all contracted bus operators through monthly reporting to ensure an adequate number of drivers to operate all routes. Recruiting, training, and hiring new drivers is ongoing to ensure routes have assigned drivers, spare drivers, and vehicles to meet the required service levels. While the number of available spare drivers has declined in some areas, STOPR continues to work with bus companies to support them with ongoing recruitment and training efforts for new drivers. This will assist them operationally while they continue to ramp up their driver recruitment and training efforts.

As of March 2023, online school bus safety sessions have been delivered to more than 75 DPCDSB schools. These online safety sessions are funded by the Ministry of Education and are especially designed for primary-aged students (JK to grade 3) and Junior/Intermediate students (Grades 4 to 8).

A new customer service enhancement from STOPR is the introduction and staged implementation plan of a new school bus tracking application known as the *Chipmunk App*. The *Chipmunk App* will provide real-time data about the arrival time of a school bus at a bus stop to students and families. It is compatible with all mobile device platforms and allows parents/guardians and students the ability to track the location of a school bus. STOPR will phase-in the introduction *at* one DPCDSB school per week, beginning the week of April 17, 2023 to ensure that the technology and user interface are functioning appropriately. STOPR staff will communicate with each participating school prior to the rollout to provide administrators and families with information on how to use the *Chipmunk App* and enroll.

School Messenger – In response to feedback from our DPCDSB parent/guardian communities using the School Messenger App, an open field will be added to indicate more details for a student’s absence. This new feature will be available for September, 2023.

In terms of timelines for reporting attendance, following are system standards which cannot be altered:

- Elementary Schools: Schools have been advised to instruct parents and guardians to report their child’s absence before or by the local school bell time. After this threshold is met, parents and guardians can no longer use the School Messenger app or the Toll-Free number to report their child’s absence and must call the school directly.
- Secondary Schools: No deadlines; parents and guardians can report absences throughout the school day. A courtesy call to parents and guardians is delivered around 6:00 pm to indicate unexplained absences.

Retired Principals and Vice Principals – Restrictions from the Ontario Teachers’ Pension Plan regarding the number of days a retired administrator can work in a school, limit the time that a retiree can stay in any given school. Up until recently, retirees could only work a total of 50 school days per school year. This has now been changed to 95 days per school year. The DPCDSB’s Instructional Services team continues to monitor retirement notices, however, there is a provincial shortage of principals and vice principals in Catholic and Public School Boards. There has also been a reduction in the number of interested candidates for the roles. Similar to other boards, DPCDSB has and continues to go through significant turnover in leadership as many of our principals in the last few years have chosen to retire. Principal transfers may occur as a result of a number of factors, including retirements, leaves of absence due to personal or

medical reasons, or responding to the needs of the system. All of our Principals and Vice Principals are assigned centrally and deployed to schools based on a variety of factors, but always with the best intent to serve our students and our communities. While coverage is ideally filled with permanent principal and vice principal positions, DPCDSB ensures there is always a solid transition. The Family of Schools Superintendent is always in close contact with the retiree to support the operation of the school.

Last weekend was Mother's Day. I hope all our mothers, guardians, grandmothers, and female mentors were blessed with a day full of love with their children, grandchildren, and those that look up to you. May God continue to uphold you today, and bless you always.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns you may have.

Take care and God bless.

Your Trustees,

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