



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.

March 2023

The virtue of **KINDNESS** this month reminds us that it costs nothing to share the gift of kindness with others.

Season of Lent – As we take our Lenten journey of 40 days leading up to the feast and joy of Easter, may we turn to God in prayer, remembering the gift of His mercy and forgiveness. We are grateful for the continued partnership of our parish priests who support our students in Catholic education.

World Day of Prayer: March 4, 2023 - The motto of the World Day of Prayer movement is *"Informed Prayer and Prayerful Action."* The World Day of Prayer, observed annually on the first Friday of March, is an invitation for Christians to pray together ecumenically for the concerns of our world, our country, and community. It is sponsored by the *Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada* and its international counterparts around the world.

Interim Financial Report – The Interim Financial Report for the four (4) month period September 1, 2022, to December 31, 2022, was presented at the February Administration and Finance committee meeting. DPCDSB has projected a deficit of \$55.7 million for the 2022-2023 year, impacted primarily by the fully funded Long Term Disability (LTD) plan. LTD costs are projected to be \$49.4M for the year. Additional pressures include increased costs and inflationary pressures on natural gas and operational expenditures. Please refer to the February 7, 2023 Administration & Finance Committee agenda for more information.

To find referenced reports in Board and Committee agendas, please visit the [Board and Committee Meeting webpage](#).

Student Transportation of Peel Region (STOPR) Update – Compared to almost all transportation consortia across the province, STOPR is in a relatively favourable position with respect to the number of drivers available to provide service. STOPR continues to monitor the performance of all bus operators and meet with them on a regular basis to ensure safe and effective service is provided to all schools and school communities. Please refer to the Student Transportation Update and Service Delivery Report in the February 7, 2023 - Administration & Finance Committee Meeting agenda for more information.

STOPR has recently updated the [First Time Rider Safety Parent Booklet](#), designed for parents and students who are new to school busing. It is an excellent resource for parents/guardians who are now enrolling their children in kindergarten and/or for students that will be riding a school bus for the first-time in September 2023. This booklet has been sent out to all elementary schools and is also available on STOPR's website. STOPR's *First Time Rider Safety Program* will be held on Saturday, August 26, 2023. More information is available on the [STOPR website](#).

2023-2024 Budget Development Process – The Grants for Student Needs (GSN) announcement for 2023-2024 is expected to be released by the end of March 2023. It is important to note that DPCDSB will have to plan a budget for 2023-2024 while having an accumulated deficit position and operating within a Multi-Year Financial Recovery Plan (MYFRP). The annual budget development process is a continuous cycle that involves stages of review, analysis, stakeholder input, consultation, and calculation. DPCDSB continues to embrace public webcasts, interactive sessions and online data collection and reporting. The proposed date for the public budget webcast and consultation opportunity is April 26, 2023 and will be shared with schools to support planning around Catholic School Council (CSC) meetings.

Remote-Only Learning for 2023-2024 School Year – The Ministry of Education has yet to provide direction to school boards regarding requirements to offer remote only learning for the 2023-2024 year. The direction is expected to be provided soon. To that end, and to ensure that there is time to support student transitions and staffing timelines, communication was sent appropriately and adequately to all DPCDSB families on Monday, February 20 of our board's commitment to offer remote only learning for elementary and secondary students and how the remote-only learning option will operate. Parents/guardians are to confirm their interest by March 3, 2023.

Updated Science Curriculum – In September 2022, all science and technology programs for Grades 1 to 9 received new curriculum expectations, as outlined in the new Ministry Science curriculum policy. With the ongoing advancements in science, it is important that our education system supports learning that is relevant and current. The focus of the updated science and technology curriculum is for students to acquire and develop the knowledge and transferable skills to thrive in a changing world.

Key changes were implemented in both the elementary and secondary curriculum to emphasize Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM). STEM application to the skilled trades and other careers is also a focus in the curriculum. Coding and the Engineering Design Process were important additions to the curriculum since they are pivotal to the recent advancements in science and technologies.

The new science curriculum encourages Culturally Responsive and Relevant Pedagogy (CRRP), which is a framework that supports students seeing themselves reflected in the curriculum, including their racial, cultural, and social identities. Changes in both the elementary and secondary curriculum provide continuity and a smooth transition from elementary to secondary programs, as it prepares students for deeper levels of science and technology learning as they move into secondary school and beyond. Grade 9 science became a de-streamed course this school year (replacing grade 9 applied science and grade 9 academic science).

Data has shown that streaming prolongs the systemic inequities in the education system and so the government has shifted to de-streaming grade 9 courses, starting with math last year, and science this school year. De-streaming aims to break down some of these systemic barriers, so that every student has

an equal opportunity to thrive, excel and reach their full potential. More information is provided in the February 14, 2023 – Faith and Program Committee Meeting agenda.

Care for Creation Resource Kit – In alignment with Pope Francis’ urgent appeal to us to create a new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet, the Program and Learning Services department will provide each school with a resource kit that is inspired by St. Francis and his love and care for nature and the animals. The intention of this kit is to inspire our students to recognize and appreciate the connection between God and all of God’s creation. It includes resources to promote our DPCDSB’s Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP), Catholic Board Improvement Learning Cycle (CBILC) goals and Eco-School initiatives.

The lessons and activities are faith-centered, cross-curricular, and designed to support students in meeting curriculum expectations and the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations (OCSGE). Students will learn more about the environment, our common home with a focus on Catholic Social Teaching, in particular stewardship of the environment. More information is provided in the February 14, 2023 – Faith and Program Committee Meeting agenda.

Multi-Year Strategic Planning (MYSP) Committee – Msgr. Michael Busch, of St. Jerome Parish in Brampton and Msgr. Gigi Philip, of Sts. Martha and Mary Parish in Mississauga have kindly agreed to represent the Archdiocese of Toronto on the DPCDSB MYSP Committee. They will join our MYSP committee meetings on behalf of Bishop Camilleri.

Secondary School Tutoring – The Ministry of Education provided Ontario school boards with funding for tutoring programs. DPCDSB used a portion of the Ministry’s funds to implement tutoring in our secondary schools. Tutoring was provided for students in Grades 9 through 12 for the following courses: English, Study Skills, Math, Science, Biology, Chemistry and Physics. There was a total of 1,247 students who participated in the various tutoring courses.

Catholic School Councils – Our CSC play an integral role in influencing the educational and faith formation experiences of students, as they journey together in Catholic education. In alignment with the Education Act, R.S.O. 1990 c. E. 2, as amended, school principals engage our CSC regarding recommendations on school policies, initiatives, and action plans. The Central Committee for Catholic School Councils (CCCSC) communicates with and supports CSC by undertaking activities to help parents support their children’s learning at home and at school.

The CCCSC works in collaboration with the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) to ensure Ministry funding supports both parent/guardian initiatives and engagement. The CCCSC and SEAC is comprised of parent/guardian representation, community partnerships, administrators, and association representatives.

The DPCDSB is committed to supporting parent engagement systemwide. Moving forward, staff will send monthly communication to all CSC Chairs and provide all relevant board and committee information from both CCCSC and SEAC. CSC Chairs can share this information at their local CSC meetings, ensuring parent/guardians are up to date on all relevant information. More on Board Policy 4.01 - Catholic School Councils is available on the Board of Trustees’ February 21, 2023 - Bylaw and Policy Review Committee Meeting agenda.

Safety of Pupils – The DPCDSB is committed to ensuring student safety. One aspect of this commitment is the establishment and maintenance of a Safe Arrivals Program for Kindergarten through Grade 12. DPCDSB Policy 6.56: Safety of Pupils: Attendance Verification Program (Safe Arrival) and General Administrative Procedures (GAP) 502.16 – Safety of Pupils: Attendance Verification Program (Safe Arrival) and GAP 512.00 – Closing of Schools/Early Dismissal of Pupils establishes the scope and procedures related to supporting safe arrival of students at school. The report is available on the Board of Trustees' February 21, 2023 - Bylaw and Policy Review Committee Meeting agenda and summarizes recent revisions to this policy and its associated GAPs as part of the regular DPCDSB policy review cycle.

Contact Sports – At the January 31, 2023, regular meeting of the Board of Trustees, six delegations were received related to concerns regarding “violent sports” specifically, football and rugby. A report was shared with trustees providing an overview of contact sports in DPCDSB as it relates to risk management, compliance with Ministry and other policy and procedure, and our response to emerging research regarding the impact of contact sports.

DPCDSB remains compliant with all regulation and direction from the Ministry of Education, OPHEA and OSBIE with respect to offering contact sports in secondary schools. As per trustee motion, a letter has been sent by our Chair of the Board on behalf of our Board of Trustees to the Ministry of Education, requesting a Ministry review of the emerging evidence and research and to provide direction for school boards regarding preventative actions for contact sports in schools. We are committed to review ongoing, any new or updated position statements and recommendations from expert medical panels such as the Canadian Medical Association and the Canadian Pediatric Society. More information is provided in the February 14, 2023 – Faith and Program Committee Meeting agenda.

World Down Syndrome Day (WDSD) – On March 21, we raise awareness of the uniqueness of the triplication (trisomy) of the 21st chromosome which causes Down Syndrome. Please join our students, families, and staff in celebrating Rock Our Socks for WDSD!

Student Trustees – Our newly elected DPCDSB Student Trustees for the 2023-2024 school year are:

North: **Nathan Nguyen**, Notre Dame C.S.S. (currently in Grade 11)

South: **Kristen Balisi**, St. Joan of Arc C.S.S. (currently in Grade 11)

Congratulations to Nathan and Kristen! We look forward to working with you both as you serve to elevate student voice and advocate for student achievement, in partnership with our DPCDSB Board of Trustees.

Distinguished Alumni – Every year, the DPCDSB selects alumni from our secondary schools and celebrates them through our *Distinguished Alumni* campaign. This campaign recognizes DPCDSB graduates who are making valuable and unique contributions in their respective careers, pathways, and communities.

Our alumni make a positive contribution to our communities and represent the image of the Catholic learner in the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations. DPCDSB is currently accepting nominations for its 2023 *Distinguished Alumni*. If you know of a DPCDSB graduate who fits the established criteria, please nominate them online at [DPCDSB Distinguished Alumni Nominations](#). Nominations are reviewed by a committee comprised of trustees, staff, and students.

Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) – Statement on Code Obligations of Education Officials.

“The OHRC is aware and concerned about the increasing violence targeted at education officials for doing human rights work, adhering to the obligations set under the Ontario Human Rights Code (Code) and implementing government policy.

*The OHRC’s revitalized strategic plan, **Human Rights First: A plan for belonging in Ontario**, commits to improving the accountability of duty-holders in the education sector and building public awareness of and capacity to respond to manifestations of hate. The OHRC is firmly committed to improving public understanding of human rights to foster a human rights culture in the province of Ontario.*

The OHRC is aware that many duty-holders across the public school system have made efforts toward advancing and maintaining the human rights of everyone by using resources which address discrimination, including anti-Black racism, homophobia, and hate. However, it continues to hear about the increasing violence targeted at education officials for doing human rights work.

Duty-holders, such as the Ministry of Education and school boards, have a legal duty to ensure that education is provided in manner consistent with the Code. Also, the Code requires that people engaged in this work be able to do so without being subjected to discrimination and harassment and without fear for their safety and security.”

Wishing you and your loved ones a wonderful March Break (March 13-19). Thank you for choosing a Catholic education for your child(ren). May God bless you.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns you may have with regards to you child/ren’s school.

Take care and God bless.

Your Trustees,

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