



*From Your Catholic School Trustee Sharon Hobin, BA, Bed.
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“For the promise is for you, for your children and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him.” – Acts 2:39

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 2022

This month, the virtue of KINDNESS is a reminder that it costs us nothing to be kind to each other. Every act of kindness, regardless of how small, matters and has an impact.

Season of Lent – The season of Lent has begun on March 2. As we take a Lenten journey of the 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. Consider the 40 days of Lent. What are you giving up? What will you gain? The sacrifice does not have to be the giving up of a loved food, but it could be an action such as going out of our way to be helpful, kind or understanding.

World Day of Prayer - is on March 4th "Informed Prayer and Prayerful Action" is the motto of the World Day of Prayer movement. The World Day of Prayer is observed annually on the first Friday of March. It 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. Our prayers continue to be with the people of Ukraine and those impacted by this war.

CREDO FOR PEACE

We believe in God: A communion of three Persons, A communion of Life, A communion of Love, A communion of Peace.

We believe in Jesus: God and human Prince of Peace

We believe in his Gospel The Good News, God's message of peace.

We believe Jesus died, rose and sent us the Holy Spirit so we could live in his peace.

We believe in Baptism that makes us one family in Jesus, crucified and raised from the dead to lead us to eternal peace.

He is our hope. Through Him, we pray for peace; With Him, we work for peace. In Him, we live for peace: The peace of God's children to the glory of God. Amen

Loving and merciful God, you sent your Son Jesus into the world that we might enjoy your peace always. Give us the strength to live as your children and be makers of peace.

Grant that all aggression and violence is put aside as unity in your Kingdom is sought.

We make this prayer to you in Jesus' name. Amen.

Parent Engagement and Parent Reaching Out Grants – On an annual basis, school boards receive funds from the Ministry of Education to support the implementation of programs, strategies and initiatives that involve parents.

Parent engagement funding is provided to support the parent engagement activities of the school board's Parent Involvement Committee and school councils. At DPCDSB, we have the Central Committee for Catholic School Councils (CCCSC) and local Catholic School Councils (CSC) at each elementary and secondary school. These groups support the implementation of a wide range of programs, strategies and initiatives that involve parents.

The **Parent Engagement** allocation is provided through the **Grants for Student Needs (GSN)** and includes a base amount for central initiatives as well as \$500 for each CSC. The CSC has full control over the spending of initiatives with these funds, which means the decisions for use of the funds belong to the CSC. Because the funding is through GSN, the use of these funds must be reported to the Ministry at year-end. In previous years, funds were transferred from the central board budget to all local CSC bank accounts. As an interim measure during the COVID-19 pandemic, the funds were loaded directly into a dedicated Parent Engagement account within the school budget to facilitate ease of transactions at the school level during closure periods. This continues to be in place for the 2021-2022 year, however, will be revisited for 2022-2023.

Messaging was sent to school administrators to ensure this temporary change in process was shared with Catholic School Councils. It is important to note that nothing changes the control that CSCs have over the use of these funds.

We continue to offer **Parent Engagement opportunities** for parents to attend from the comfort of their homes. We have been blessed to have had so many wonderful speakers who have brought information, discussion, and new and enlightened ideas to the world of health and education. I encourage if you have the opportunity, to attend these sessions. More are being planned for the very near future.

The Parents Reaching Out (PRO) grant is provided through the Partnerships and Priorities Funding (PPF) program. These grants are provided to school boards during the fiscal year, in addition to GSN funding. PRO grants support school boards to identify barriers to parent engagement in their school communities and find solutions to help more parents get involved in their children's education. The funds are central and decisions on the use come from consultation with the Central Committee for Catholic School Councils (CCCSC), the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), the Indigenous Education Council (IEC) and Catholic School Councils. Some examples of use of the funding over the last few years include parent engagement sessions, information sessions, parent resources and workshops.

Budget Development Process – DPCDSB's annual budget development process is a continuous cycle that involves stages of review, analysis, stakeholder input, consultation, and calculation. COVID-19 has had a significant impact on budget development over the last two years. To manage the different restrictions and public health recommendations, changes were made to consultation options, public input procedures and reporting. The budget development process has embraced public webcasts, interactive sessions and online data collection and reporting, which will continue with the 2022-2023 process. The DPCDSB will have to plan for 2022-2023 while operating within a **Multi-Year Financial Recovery Plan (MYFRP)**.

On February 17, 2022, the Ministry of Education released **Memorandum 2022: B03 – 2022-2023 Grants for Student Needs (GSN) Funding**. This is the earliest release date that the GSN has ever been announced. A report was presented to the March 1 Administration and Finance Committee meeting which provided details regarding the funding announcement and impacts to DPCDSB. Highlights of the announcement include supports for student learning needs and priority investments in mental health and special education. The investment to support student learning needs is based on one-time funding that was available in 2021-2022 as COVID-19 funding. A portion will continue in 2022-2023 to further support learning recovery for students. Changes can be made to the way funding was utilized, including the option to continue providing remote learning to students based on local demand. The priority investment funding will support student mental health and foster continued learning and well-being of students.

A component of the funding will need to be used for evidence-based mental health programs and resources to support student resilience and mental well-being. There will also be an increase to the Special Equipment Amount (SEA) through the Special Education grant to help support more assistive technology for students with special education needs. This announcement is good news as it relates to student supports. However, until the technical paper is released, it will be difficult to know if other adjustments have been made to the funding formula overall. The final budget for DPCDSB will be expected to be approved and filed with the Ministry of Education by the end of June 2022.

Ventilation Update – The Ministry of Education is now moving forward with the next phase of ventilation upgrades, which will allocate portable HEPA filter units for mechanically ventilated schools. The ministry has announced an additional 40,000 HEPA filter units for school boards to deploy to mechanically ventilated learning spaces without MERV 13 filters that do not already

have HEPA units to cover all occupied learning spaces, including classrooms, portables, gyms, libraries, and lunchrooms. For DPCDSB, the Ministry has allocated an additional 1002 units. To date we have received 1900 units. We have 151 schools in DPCDSB.

Changes to Ministry of Education Mandates – COVID 19. While mandates may change within a community, this does not mean that those restrictions will change for school boards. Any changes to mandates and restrictions will be communicated to our school communities. On March 1, the provincial government lifted some of the COVID-19 broader community restrictions previously in place. It is important to note that while there are changes to some restrictions in the province, school boards must continue to follow the health and safety and operational guidelines for schools established by the provincial government until such time as the Ministry of Education provides direction.

Until further notice, all students in Kindergarten to Grade 12 must properly wear a non-medical or cloth mask while inside the school. Please note: THIS IS A MINISTRY MANDATE. Changes to federal travel restrictions that came into effect on February 28 apply to students attending DPCDSB schools. These changes include the following:

- Children under 12 years old, travelling with fully vaccinated adults, are exempt from quarantine, without any prescribed conditions limiting their activities. In addition, they no longer need to wait 14 days before attending school, camp, or daycare.
- Unvaccinated travelers ages 12+ continue to be required to quarantine for 14 days and cannot attend school, camp, or daycare during that time.

Please note that students are not required to wear masks while outside in the school yard but must continue to cohort as per ministry mandate. We wait to see if there are any changes to this direction.

Thank you for your continued patience, support, and commitment to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in our schools and communities and please be assured that we will continue to update you on any additional changes as they apply to schools when information becomes available.

Extracurricular Clubs and Athletics – Effective immediately and aligned to the provincial guidance of removing vaccine mandates in public settings, elementary and secondary students involved in any extra-curricular club or athletic activity will not be required to provide proof of vaccination.

Volunteers in Our Schools – Effective March 21, following the March Break, volunteers will be welcomed back into schools with adherence to the board's vaccination attestation requirements. Further information will be available from your local school.

Graduation and Proms – We are still awaiting direction from the Ministry of Education regarding Proms and Graduations; however, we would anticipate that there will be some opportunity for in-person year-end celebrations. We will continue to provide you with updates as more information becomes available.

Student Trustees – Congratulations to our DPCDSB Student Trustees, Dea Sokoli and Leroy Onuoha, who have been re-elected for the 2022-2023 school year. Our Board of Trustees extends its appreciation to both of our Student Trustees for sharing the gift of their time and dedication to the students of DPCDSB. We welcome Dea and Leroy as colleagues and important contributors to the vital work of our school board and Catholic Education. A Student Trustee Election report will be presented at the Faith and Program Committee Meeting on March 8.

Student Transportation – Student transportation services provided by both STOPR and STWDSTS continue to operate in a safe manner following appropriate public health protocols during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the contagious nature of the Omicron variant has led to a higher than anticipated number of driver absences, resulting in temporary route cancellations as there were not enough spare drivers available to cover these routes. As the level of transmission continues to improve in the community, it is expected that service levels will continue to improve over the near future. Both consortia continue to rely on regular communication with our school boards, school bus operators, local public health units and school communities. Courtesy Ridership has been re-instituted for Catholic Secondary Students. Contact local schools for more information about courtesy requests. Courtesy Ridership for elementary students has not been reintroduced as the cohort mandates have not changed. When the mandates change, then courtesy ridership will be reexamined.

CCCSC Survey – The Central Committee for Catholic School Councils (CCCSC) will be surveying all Catholic School Council members this month to receive feedback from our parents/guardians on presentations and/or discussions they would like to have with DPCDSB staff. Once CCCSC receives this information, staff will begin planning our spring sessions for our Families of Schools meetings with all parents and trustees.

DPCDSB Indigenous Resource – Lessons from the Earth and Beyond is a comprehensive resource that aims to engender important conversations and critical inquiries into the importance of Indigenous knowledge systems. These systems of knowledge are complex, diverse, and sophisticated, just like the Indigenous civilizations they come from. This resource presents many opportunities to engage in critical explorations and consider how multiple knowledge systems can come into dialogue with one another. The resource contains several videos co-produced by Isaac Murdoch and DPCDSB staff. Shaw television will be showcasing these videos in upcoming programming, crediting DPCDSB, and uplifting the work of the board. <https://www.lessonsfromearthandbeyond.ca/>

Peel Public Health Update – Peel Public Health has notified DPCDSB that regular school immunizations, which were paused during the pandemic, will resume effective March 7 in Peel Region, beginning with current Grade 11 and 12 students. Immunizations for students in Grade 7 to 10 will start in mid-to-late March. Students who have not received or completed their Human Papilloma Virus (HPV), Hepatitis B, and/or Meningococcal ACYW-135 vaccine(s) are eligible.

Cafeteria Update – The phased-in approach to secondary cafeteria re-openings has been ongoing throughout this school year. By the end of February, five (5) phases have been completed for a total of 15 schools with cafeterias in full operation. DPCDSB is one of only a few school boards in Ontario that proceeded with re-opening cafeterias during this school year. DPCDSB staff continues to meet regularly with our cafeteria provider, Aramark, to review results of operations, maintain oversight of processes and protocols and address any issues that arise. Discussions also cover any new information that comes from the Ministry and/or public health authorities.

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 Distinguished Alumni have made a positive contribution to their communities and represent the image of the Catholic learner as described by the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations. DPCDSB is currently accepting nominations for its 2022 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. Nominations are due by April 1.

World Down Syndrome Day (WDSD) March 21 – World Down Syndrome Day (WDSD) is an annual day of global awareness and it was selected to signify the uniqueness of the triplication (trisomy) of the 21st chromosome which causes Down Syndrome. Please join our students, families, and staff in celebrating Let's Rock Our Socks for WDSD! Share your pictures, videos, or artwork with Down Syndrome Association of Peel to win a Chapters Gift Card for your class. Submissions must be sent to info@dsap.ca by March 25, 2022, to be entered into the draw.

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

Wishing you and your loved ones a wonderful, safe March Break (March 14-18). Thank you for choosing a Catholic education for your child(ren).

May the good Lord always hold you in the palm of His hand.