



*From Your Catholic School Trustee Sharon Hobin, BA, Bed.
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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 2022

Welcome back!

❖ I apologize for the length of this newsletter but there is much to share!

As our Catholic school communities begin this 2022-2023 school year, we reflect on this year's theme for our Catholic Education Week: April 30 – May 5, 2023: We are Many, We are One. This is very timely as we face many challenges in our Catholic education system and so to recognize that while many have differences, we must work to preserve this precious Catholic education system.

Our DPCDSB Board of Trustees, administrators, and staff at all levels of the organization, have been working diligently to prepare for the reopening of schools to support a return to learning for our students. DPCDSB is committed to providing and sustaining safe, caring, inclusive, and healthy Catholic school communities, in which every student can succeed. The updated school year calendar for the 2022-2023 school year is available online with important dates for families:

<https://www.dpcdsb.org/Schools/School-Year-Calendar>

For some, this will be the first time students are attending school but for others, this return has been repeated many times. For the past few years, returns to school have been very different. Despite these differences, children are anxious and excited (we hope) to be in their schools. The Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board (DPCDSB) is based upon the foundation of our Catholic doctrine and inspired by the teachings of Jesus Christ who calls us to use His lessons in our everyday lives.

A little bit about

DPCDSB is one of the largest and most diverse school boards in Ontario. We serve approximately 74,000 students and employ over 11,000 staff throughout the regions of Mississauga, Brampton, Caledon, and Dufferin County. DPCDSB has grown from 23 founding schools to 151 Catholic 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 priests, clergy, and our Catholic church communities together with our students, families, and staff to enrich Catholic education and nurture the faith development of our students.

DPCDSB is overseen by a board of eleven elected Catholic School Trustees. We work collaboratively with our communities to shape a vision for the Board that is reflective of the input of parents, students, and community members. Two student trustee representatives are elected by their peers and sit with the Board in a non-voting capacity. Your Catholic Trustees play a key leadership role in setting the strategic

direction for our school. Together, we establish Board policies, oversee the corporate capital and operating budgets for effective financial stewardship, develop the Board's Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP) as well as promote and work to protect Catholic education. **I have been your Catholic trustee for sixteen years. I have decided not to put my name forward in the next municipal election. I will continue to be your trustee until November 21, 2022. It has been an honour to serve the students, parents, and staff in my schools as well as all the ratepayers in Wards 2 & 8. I thank you for your support. I will have more to say over the next few months.**

From a staff perspective, we are led operationally by our Director of Education, Dr. Marianne Mazzorato. There are two Associate Directors. David Amaral, Instructional Services and Daniel Del Bianco, Corporate Services as well as Julie Cherepacha, Executive Superintendent, CFO and Treasurer. There are seven Families of Schools comprised of both elementary and secondary schools that are led by Superintendents of Families of Schools, and there are Superintendents of various departments. All these wonderful people plus many more look after the operations of the Board on a daily basis.

Trustees are so pleased that you have chosen a Catholic education for your child(ren). We know the value and importance of a quality Catholic education for our families. As your locally elected DPCDSB Catholic Trustee it is crucial that I know our schools and our communities in order to represent our school communities at the Board table. Knowing my school communities and identifying the needs and priorities of the Catholic schools in Mississauga South as well as our three regional schools, is crucial to my involvement in the decision-making processes, as we focus on student achievement, wellbeing, and equity across the entire system. This has been a long tradition and expectation in DPCDSB. I hope this will be continued by the next elected trustee in Wards 2 & 8.

Updates

Clergy visits – We are so fortunate that we have so many of our priests who are partners in the Catholic education of our students. Our priests visit our classrooms and celebrate Masses on a regular basis. Many school communities are fortunate that students and staff are able to walk to the church to take part in the Mass as school buses are very expensive. It is our great hope that our students and their parents/ guardians attend Mass on a regular basis to contribute to the spiritual journey of our students. From time to time our Bishop Camilleri, who is a DPCDSB graduate, and our Cardinal Thomas Collins will visit our schools. Our faith is our foundation. Parents play a crucial role in the development of faith for their children.

Budget – On February 17, 2022, the Ministry of Education announced the Grants for Student Needs (GSN) as outlined in the 2022:B03 memorandum. The GSN and technical paper provided the funding details that allow school boards to plan for the 2022-2023 school year. Our Dufferin-Peel Board of Trustees received a preliminary analysis of the GSN information and potential impact to our Board at the Administration and Finance Committee meeting on March 1, 2022. The report highlighted that the Ministry would provide COVID-19 investment funding for one additional year. The COVID-19 Learning Recovery Funding (LRF) allows school boards to maintain the funding provided that supported needs during the 2021-2022 year. Changes could also be made to the way funding was utilized to help address: learning recovery, the implementation of the first year of de-streamed math, supports for special education and maintaining enhanced cleaning standards. School boards are required to utilize the funds to provide an option for remote learning, based on local demand. The needs across the entire system have been captured in the utilization plan for use of the COVID-19 LRF below and were approved by the Board of Trustees. We have approved both operational and capital budgets. We do have a deficit but

have made our classrooms a priority. The deficit comes from the LTD expense. The details of the budget can be accessed on our Board web site.

Ventilation Update – DPCDSB adheres to all requirements regarding ventilation and air quality from the Ministry of Education and local public health units to ensure the health and safety of students and staff in our schools. Significant improvements have been made by DPCDSB to ventilation and filtration through the implementation of various measures across all of our schools. This includes improvements to existing ventilation systems, deployment of standalone HEPA filter units, and upgrades to school ventilation infrastructure. DPCDSB will continue to review ongoing opportunities for investments for upgrades based on available funding from the Ministry of Education. Note: every penny allotted to us for ventilation in grants has been spent on ventilation. The Ministry of Education requires all school boards, including DPCDSB, to publicly post standardized ventilation measures report for the 2022-2023 school year. School-level information for all open and operating K-12 schools is available on DPCDSB's public website and has been posted since August 26, 2022.

Enrolment Update – The Ministry of Education mandates the submission of October 31st and March 31st enrolment and staffing data for the purposes of determining and/or verifying eligibility for most grant categories under the education funding model. Schools have reported 43,593 elementary students and 29,978 secondary students, for a total enrolment of 73,571 students on March 31, 2022. This represents an enrolment decrease of 2,089 elementary students (-4.6 %) and a decrease of 352 secondary students (-1.2 %) since March 31, 2021. The overall board-wide enrolment decreased by 2,441 students (-3.2 %) from a year ago. Many GTA school boards are experiencing declines. Many people are moving out of the GTA to seek more affordable housing, less crime and job opportunities. It must be noted that we are funded per pupil as per the very old funding model. Therefore, a reduction in enrolment means a reduction in funding.

Special Education – During the 2019-2020 year, the DPCDSB experienced the first in-year decline in enrolment. This decline effects the funding of grants as the grants are based upon total student enrolment. The Special Education per Pupil Amount (SEPPA) did not decrease, however the overall funding generated from the SEPPA calculation may continue to decrease, as a result of declining enrolment. We are fortunate in DPCDSB to have Educational Resource Workers (ERW) and additional support services at the schools through our Special Education Resource Teachers, Child and Youth Workers and Social Workers to assist in the needs of our students given the current funding model. We continue to move money from other budget lines to support our students who learn differently.

Class Size and Combined Classes – Every year parents ask about class size and combined classes. Here is what I can share to date. Your DPCDSB Trustees and our Catholic Trustees Association have lobbied the government for smaller class sizes. We do have talented, professional, and dedicated teachers and DECE's who are working hard every day to support student achievement. Class size is funded and regulated by the Ministry of Education.

It is important to note that the **legislation regarding class organization** compels school boards to organize and reorganize classes based on numbers that are taken on the school board's "count day."

For DPCDSB, **we have identified to the Ministry of Education that our "count day" was Thursday, September 8, 2022.** Should enrolments increase or decrease after the count day, schools are not required to reorganize any further. For example, although a class may be hard capped at 20 students in a primary grade on the count date, if there is a registration and admission on any day following the count day, the class will be reported to the Ministry in subsequent reporting cycles as having 21

students. In situations where significant enrolment changes occur, the staff works directly with the school to resolve.

Several factors play a role in determining the school organization of classes:

- * The number of students enrolled per grade level at each school
- * Class size guidelines as provided by the Ministry of Education
- * Adherence to collective agreements
- * Funding
- * Available space within the school

Full Day Kindergarten

The organization and staffing of Full Day Kindergarten classes is regulated by legislation specific to Full Day Kindergarten. The legislation states: * There can be three different types of classes:

“Full Class” which is staffed by (1.0 FTE) certified teacher and (1.0 FTE) Designated Early Childhood Educator (DECE). Full classes are defined as having more than 15 pupils.

“Half Class” which is staffed by (1.0 FTE) certified teacher only. This class cannot have more than 15 pupils. Once the ceiling of 15 is pierced, a DECE must be staffed to the class.

“Kindergarten/Grade One Combined” which is a class of Year Two Kindergarten and Grade One students. This class is hard capped at 20 students. The Board has made a commitment to keep the proportion in the class to 10 Year Two Kindergarten students and 10 Grade One students as much as possible.

* The overall, aggregate DPCDSB (Board wide) ratio in Full Day Kindergarten cannot exceed 26:1 as of the count date. Similar to junior classes, there will be classes that are smaller than 26 and there will be classes that are larger than 26.

* The DPCDSB is permitted to have 10% of its classes with 30 pupils or more, up to a maximum of 32 as of the count date.

* If a school has a “half class”, no other Full Day Kindergarten class in the school can be higher than 29 students.

* Year Two Kindergarten/Grade One Combined classes are recommended to be educated in an FDK classroom.

The Full Day Kindergarten Steering Committee, consisting of staff from various departments i.e., Instructional, Finance, Planning, Employee Relations, and Human Resources meets regularly to review enrollment. When enrolments in classes become substantially larger during the year, class reorganization may be considered. This is dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

Primary Classes (Grade 1-3)

* There is a hard cap of 20 pupils to one teacher in all primary classes as of the count date.

* As per legislation, the DPCDSB can have 10% of its primary classes “over the cap” to a maximum of 23 pupils in any one class as of the count date.

* All grade three/four combined classes have a hard cap of 23 pupils as of the count date.

* As a result of ensuring that 90% of the classes are staffed to 20:1 in the primary grades, reorganization at the local school occurs based on the count date in order that the entire Board is compliant with class size regulation.

* **As a result of the hard cap, there may be more combined classes in a particular school.** In most subject areas, teachers use resources specifically created for combined grades to deliver the curriculum. There is no DPCDSB policy that defines the number of consecutive years that a student can be in a combined grade; in some smaller schools, there are exclusively combined grades year after year.

Junior and Intermediate classes (Grade 4-8)

There is no hard cap in the Junior and Intermediate grades. The Board-wide aggregate ratio for Junior and Intermediate grades is 24.5:1 as of the count date. As such, some classes will have more than 24 or 25 students

Transportation – Many parents ask us about busing and why we do not have busing for certain programs or why walking distances cannot be shorter. We simply do not have the funding. If we had it, we would be delighted to bus more students especially in our programs like French Immersion and Regional Schools. But we want to continue to offer these amazing programs and so we do. Busing is provided through a consortium for Peel and Dufferin-Peel. All busing is managed by STOPR. We continue to support courtesy ridership (most boards do not) which is decided upon in October once all the eligible riders are settled in. The Ministry has been studying the funding of transportation for several years. We hope this becomes a priority. *“Schools will automatically receive information from STOPR through their Bus Planner system and will advise students of their transportation changes. Additionally, parents/guardians are encouraged to visit the STOPR website, <https://www.stopr.ca> to set up an account which will enable them to check their children’s transportation details. By setting up an account, parents will also receive delay, cancellation, and general notices. Parents are further encouraged to follow STOPR on Twitter, @STOPRinfo, to receive important transportation information and updates.*

Assessment Policy – As of the 2022-2023 school year, district school boards will resume following the policy on final evaluations outlined in [Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools](#). For Grades 9 to 12, a final grade (percentage mark) is recorded for every course. Final grades will be determined as follows: **Seventy per cent of the grade** will be based on evaluation conducted throughout the course. This portion of the grade should reflect the student’s most consistent level of achievement throughout the course, although special consideration should be given to more recent evidence of achievement. **Thirty per cent of the grade** will be based on a final evaluation administered at or towards the end of the course. This evaluation will be based on evidence from one or a combination of the following: an examination, a performance, an essay, and/or another method of evaluation suitable to the course content. The final evaluation allows the student an opportunity to demonstrate comprehensive achievement of the overall expectations for the course (Growing Success, p.41). (Ministry of Education - 2022)

Catholic School Councils – Catholic School Council (CSC) meetings share important information about updates, issues, and changes at your local school. It is my hope that you will consider joining a Catholic School Council at either elementary or secondary. **Both are excellent ways to hear the latest information from your trustee and principal and provide input.** DPCDSB has a long tradition of successful school councils. If you cannot be a voting member, I encourage you to attend anyway. Everyone is welcome. All schools are advised to provide their updated meeting minutes and agenda items on their own school websites to ensure all members of the school communities can stay informed. It is the policy of DPCDSB that each school has a CSC, which is advisory in nature, and governed by the Ontario Education Act. Catholic School Councils are empowered to make recommendations, in accordance with Regulation 612/00, to the principal of the school and to the school board. Sincere thanks to those of you who have stepped up to be wonderful volunteers on your Catholic School Councils. You are making a difference!!!!!!

Secondary E-Learning Credits – The Ministry of Education, through PPM 167, has mandated a secondary graduation requirement that students must earn four (4) eLearning credits. However, two (2) eLearning credits have been waived, as a result of the pandemic. This requirement applies to every student who entered Grade 9 in the 2020-2021 school year and thereafter. The Ontario Catholic Schools Trustees

Association (OCSTA) has been working to ensure that we receive equitable funding and the opportunity to provide high-quality Catholic courses, developed and taught by Catholic teachers employed by Catholic school boards. **Parents/guardians may choose to “opt out” their child from the mandatory eLearning courses. Students will receive an opt-out form from their secondary school, every year, starting when they are in Grade 9 which has been included as an annual course selection process for all Catholic secondary students. Parents/guardians can contact their child’s secondary school for more information.**

Again, so sorry for the length of this newsletter but there was much to share with you. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have. You are welcome to follow me on our social media platforms to stay updated and informed.

And as ever, may the good Lord always hold you in the palm of His hand.