

COMMUNITY

Director's Update

QUALITY • INCLUSIVE • FAITH-BASED • EDUCATION

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2007/08 Off To A Great Start!

EQAO Scores Surpass The Provincial Average For 2nd Year Running

What better way to launch a new school year than with a celebration of our 2006-07 *Education Quality & Accountability Office (EQAO)* results for Grades 3, 6 & 9 – where we beat the provincial average in **all** assessment categories in **all three grades** for the second year in a row!

“Our strategies for students are working. Our Catholic Schools are the place to be!”

The assessments in grades three and six covered reading, writing and mathematics. The grade nine assessment covered mathematics alone – at both the “applied” and the “academic” levels. The figures provided below show the percentage of the Board’s students who scored at levels three and four on a scale of one to four – thereby meeting or exceeding government expectations.

Students in all publicly-funded elementary and secondary schools in Ontario -- including all 47 Catholic elementary schools and five Catholic high schools in Waterloo Region – participated in the assessments. The provincial average is noted in brackets beside the WCDSB score in each assessment category below:



“Our students’ performance bettered the provincial average in ALL grades and ALL assessment categories for the second consecutive year!”



WCDSB Grade 3 Results: *Reading 66%* (62%) ---- *Writing 69%* (64%) ---- *Mathematics 73%* (69%).
WCDSB Grade 6 Results: *Reading 65%* (64%) ---- *Writing 63%* (61%) ---- *Mathematics 61%* (59%).
WCDSB Grade 9 Applied Level Results: *Mathematics 41%* (35%)
WCDSB Grade 9 Academic Level Results: *Mathematics 73%* (71%)

The Board’s five-year assessment score trend is even more revealing of the Board’s success. The figure given below for each category shows the Board’s percentage improvement from 2002-03 to 2006-07:

Grade 3: *Reading +13%* ---- *Writing +12%* ---- *Mathematics +13%*.
Grade 6: *Reading +7%* ---- *Writing +9%* ---- *Mathematics +7%*.
Grade 9 (Applied): *Mathematics +9%*
Grade 9 (Academic): *Mathematics 0%* -- score remains steady at 73%

“This year’s results show the Ontario Government’s focus on literacy and numeracy is paying dividends -- and shows our strategies for students are working. Our Catholic Schools are the place to be!” said Heather Cullen, Superintendent of Instruction and Assessment.



September
2007

NOTABLE NOTES

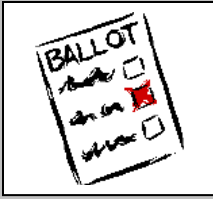
- ✓ *There was a 97% participation rate in this year’s tests;*
- ✓ *Waterloo Region is regarded as a demographic microcosm of the province as a whole – giving extra meaning to our success in surpassing the provincial average scores;*
- ✓ *EQAO scores are but one of many tools used to evaluate the progress of our students.*

See inside for more!



Waterloo Region's Catholic Schools

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Provincial Elections

Monday, October 10 is Provincial Election Day in Ontario. The **Waterloo Catholic District School Board** encourages Waterloo Region's Catholic community to study the issues carefully and, regardless of party preference, to take advantage of the opportunity to vote.

DID YOU KNOW...

*Seventy-seven percent of Waterloo Region's Catholic Elementary Schools and 80% of our Secondary Schools are proud **Junior Achievement** program supporters and participants!*



All WCDSB policies and procedures are available at:

www.wcdsb.edu.on.ca/ap_memos.html

Welcome Back To School!!!

Welcome to the 2007-2008 school year...and an extra special welcome to all our new students, families and staff. May the coming year be one of blessings and success for you – and for all our returning students, families and staff -- as we journey in Catholic education together.

During the coming year my staff and I hope to distribute timely newsletters in order to keep you updated on the many complex changes that we face in education today. In addition to timely tidbits about emerging issues, each newsletter will contain information on how our programs and services are working to achieve the goals of the **Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations** and the literacy/numeracy and graduation goals of the Ministry of Education.

If you have any suggestions for our newsletters please contact John Shewchuk, Senior Manager of Public Affairs at john.shewchuk@wcdsb.ca

BUDGET 2007/08 – INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE

On June 25th the Board of Trustees unanimously approved the 2007-2008 school year budget.

- **Total Operating:** \$191,125,354
- **Total Capital:** \$15,756,476
- **Total Operating & Capital:** \$206,881,830

Expenditures on **Special Education** have increased by \$337,000 over 2006-07, while expenditures on **Board Administration** – which comprises just three percent of the total operating budget -- have decreased by \$184,000 (3%). The **Capital** portion of the budget includes \$3.5 million for school renewal – a 17% increase over 2006-07. We're proud to be delivering a top value Catholic education while carefully managing every dollar.

When You Have Questions/Concerns At School...

We have very successful communication guidelines in place to facilitate communications between you and our school system. Please review these guidelines and use them when you have a concern or suggestion:

Step One: Speak to the staff member. (If the issue is not resolved, proceed to step two).

Step Two: Speak to the principal. If you have not yet spoken to the staff member involved, the principal will ask you to do so first.

The Role of the Principal:

The principal will involve the staff member in any discussions with the parent(s). The principal may request, at any step in the process, that concerns be put in writing. The principal may also involve others who may be helpful in resolving the concern; that is, supports from the school board, employee group representatives, the local parish, community agencies.

The Role of Trustees:

Parents may contact any Trustee at any time. The Trustee will direct the parent

to follow the process outlined above.

The Role of the School Council:

The role of the School Council is to provide a way for parents to provide advice to the Principal on the learning plan for the school. The School Council is not a forum to discuss parent-teacher-student issues. If these matters are brought to any School Council member or any School Council meeting, the concern is to be referred immediately to the principal who will ensure the proper process is followed.



Safety & Security Are Tops In Waterloo Region's Catholic Schools

We're very proud in Waterloo Region's Catholic Schools to be recognized for our academic excellence.

But, in some ways, we're even prouder of the work we do to make our schools as safe and secure as possible. Our motto "**Quality, Inclusive, Faith-Based Education**" could very easily include the word "**Safe**" as well.

Recently, the Ontario Government introduced changes to the **Safe Schools Act** making "bullying" an act for which students can be suspended.



Information is available on the Ministry of Education website at:

www.edu.gov.on.ca

While this was certainly a welcome move, our Catholic schools have been at the forefront of anti-bullying education for quite some time.

In fact, we have worked closely with our friends at the public school board and the Regional health department since 2003 to implement a program called "**Imagine a School Without Bullying**".

The program – which grew out of a three-year pilot project called "**Good Kid Sid**" provides schools with ongoing training and support to assist staff in creating an atmosphere where bullying and other types of disrespectful behaviour are discouraged and stopped.

We were delighted when "**Imagine**" was named a provincially significant "best practice" by the **Ontario Safe Schools Action Team**.

The Board also maintains a very close working relationship with the **Waterloo Regional Police Service**. We are particularly grateful for the assistance we receive from the police on the issue of "stranger danger".

Information on community safety issues ranging from

Internet safety to tips on streetproofing our children is available on the WRPS website at www.wrps.on.ca/safety.html

We also take pride in our extensive involvement at the Regional level on issues such as emergency planning and through our involvement with the **Community Safety and Crime Prevention Council**.



Information about the **Council** is available at:

www.preventingcrime.net

Finally, the Board was extensively involved over the last several years in creation of the **Regional Community Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Plan**. The plan is available at:

www.waterlooregionpandemic.ca



DID YOU KNOW...
The **Catholic School Board's Pandemic Plan and Emergency Response Plan** are both available on the Board's website at:

www.wcdsb.ca/about/emergency/emergency-management.html



WCDSB was a founding partner of the Waterloo Region Children's Safety Village

Japanese Students Visit WCDSB

On May 22, **St. Benedict** (Cambridge) and **St. David** (Waterloo) Catholic Secondary Schools hosted a group of 115 students and 10 teachers from the **Toyota Technical Skills Academy** in Japan. The school -- with students aged 15 to 19 -- prepares youth to become future supervisors in the mechanical, machining and other technical fields.

The academy opened in 1938, a year after the Toyota Motor Corporation was formed. The Japanese students spent two days in the high schools experiencing Canadian education and putting their English skills to use.

This was the sixth visit by students from the Toyota Technical Skills Academy to the Region. Their visits are an excellent opportunity for our Canadian students to experience another culture and make friends across an increasingly global community.



The Waterloo Region Catholic Schools Foundation is sponsoring a major production of the smash-hit Broadway play **42nd Street** – April 23-26, 2008 at the Centre in the Square in downtown Kitchener.

Your Catholic Schools Foundation

For more than 170 years, the Waterloo Catholic District School Board has been serving the educational needs of Waterloo Region. The Board, through committed community leaders and great staff, has always understood that our children's education consists of more than reading, writing and arithmetic – a true Catholic education incorporates growth and learning for the body, mind and soul.

The **Waterloo Region Catholic Schools**

Foundation has been created to bridge the gap between the government funding formula and the current fiscal realities faced by Catholic schools. The Schools Foundation is a registered charitable foundation, directed by a dynamic, proactive community-based board of directors from three sectors: business, community and education.

To bridge the gap, we need the help of you -- the Catholic community! For more information on the Foundation, go to: www.wrcsf.ca.



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Waterloo Catholic District School Board



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On August 1st our web and email addresses changed. We dropped the "edu.on" from our name. You can find us now at www.wcdsb.ca. Our email addresses are now firstname.lastname@wcdsb.ca

Robotics Team Strikes Gold

Last June the Trustees and Administration of Waterloo Region's Catholic Schools were thrilled to congratulate the student team of **Ian Hillier, Jamie Hobson, John Nguyen, Ken Nguyen**, their teacher advisor **Norm Dutrisac**, and the **Tech Department from Resurrection Catholic Secondary School** for their winning performance in the **Robotics Team Competition** at the **Skills Canada National Competition** held in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

The primary objective of the robotics challenge was for the students to (within a strict set of rules) adapt an existing piece of robotic equipment to enable it to control a soccer ball, navigate its way up a ramp, and deposit the ball into a goal.

Ontario's Skills Canada Team won a total of 42 medals competing against the best of the best from 10 provinces/3 territories.

The **Resurrection CSS Robotics Team** described their winning performance during a visit to the Catholic Education Centre in June.



DID YOU KNOW...
Ninety percent of the **St. Louis Adult Learning & Continuing Education Centres'** University applicants were accepted last year – as were 89% of St. Louis' 325 College applicants...an outstanding record of success!



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