

Director's Update

QUALITY • INCLUSIVE • FAITH-BASED • EDUCATION

www.wcdsb.ca



Roger D. Lawler
Director of Education

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Rev. Paul Voisin, C.R. –
Vicar General of the Diocese of Hamilton in Bermuda -- is this year's recipient of the **Distinguished Graduate Award.**

**September
2009**

Welcome Back! Our Catholic Schools: Needed Now...More Than Ever!

The 2009-2010 school year marks the **173rd year of Catholic schools in Waterloo Region.** We have a treasure indeed – one to hold, one to cherish. Welcome!

Our Catholic schools are an irreplaceable part of Ontario's publicly-funded education system. Public funding of our schools began in the 1840's and has been enhanced over the years to ensure that the rights we enjoy through the constitutional partnership that formed Canada are indeed lived as actively today as they were in the mid-1800s when Canada emerged as a nation.

How do we ensure our future? First, **ALL** English Catholic school supporters should designate on their property tax form their tax support as **English – Separate**. Second, in November 2010 Catholic school supporters will be able to vote for Catholic school trustees. In order to vote you must be on the voters list. To get on that list you should **check your property tax assessment form**. If you are not shown as English-Separate for school tax support, please contact our Assessment Officer, **Carol Glyn-Williams** at 519-578-3660 x2352 or by email – carol.glynwilliams@wcdsb.ca to secure the proper documentation.

Why support Catholic schools? We are, simply, but profoundly, the teaching arm of the Church. We are very fortunate to live in a province where we can chose to send our children to a faith-based publicly funded school system. In this setting we can expect to find a celebratory Eucharistic community focused on Christ as the role model for all we do. Similarly – as we form in community and celebrate – we can expect to find a community that focuses on preparing our students to be contributing members of society using their God-given talents to change the world. Their task as students and our task as parents and teachers is not an easy one. It takes time, commitment and, above all, prayer.

The timeless words of Archbishop Oscar Romero speak to us all:

*We plant seeds that one day will grow.
We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise.
We lay foundations that will need further development.
We provide yeast that produces effects beyond our capabilities.
We cannot do everything and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that.
This enables us to do something, and to do it very well.
It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way --
an opportunity for God's grace to enter and do the rest.*

*We may never see the end results,
but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker.
We are workers, not master builders – ministers, not messiahs.
We are prophets of a future not our own. Amen."*

Roger D. Lawler
Director of Education

*Available in colour @ www.wcdsb.ca
See inside for more!*





Marion Thomson Howell
Board Chair

Marion Thomson Howell



A Time of Great Opportunity

Welcome back to a new school year!!

The calendar may show January as the start of the year, but for most of us September marks the time when we begin new journeys. When September comes and the first day of school arrives, it doesn't seem to matter whether the past year was good or bad, successful or wanting, because the slate has been wiped clean and everything ahead is an opportunity.

This is a great time to reflect on what those opportunities mean for each of us. In some cases it may be the opportunity to apply ourselves to our work more diligently; in some cases it may be to remember to be patient with the people we spend our days with; in some cases it may be to incorporate daily reflection and prayer back into our routine; and it could also mean finding a challenge that gets us excited and makes us want to get out of bed each morning and face the world with a sparkle in our eyes.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, let me welcome you back and express our hope that the coming school year provides the opportunities you need to find joy and success.

If You Have Questions/Concerns At School...

...DID YOU KNOW...

*The first Catholic schools in Waterloo Region opened in 1836 in St. Agatha and Maryhill – that's **20 YEARS** before the Catholic Diocese of Hamilton (which includes Waterloo Region) was formed.*

...AND THAT...

3.6 million Ontarians (33%) -- are Roman Catholic

...AND...

There are 29 Catholic School Boards, approximately 1,500 Catholic schools and 600,000 Catholic students in Ontario!!

We have very successful communication guidelines in place to facilitate communications between you and your school system.

Please follow these guidelines when you have a concern regarding your school:

Step One: Speak directly to the staff member involved. (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.

If your concern involves **transportation**, please call the Transportation Consortium at 519-650-4934.

If your concern involves **Special Education**, you should first speak directly to your school Principal.

If the principal cannot assist, please contact the Superintendent of School Support Services.

The Role of Trustees: You may contact any Trustee at any time. The Trustee will direct you to follow the process outlined here.

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.

Our formal policy is online at: www.wcdsb.ca/AP_Memos/PDF/APC001.PDF

Fr. Fred Scinto: "It Takes The Whole Village to Educate a Child"

Welcome back to our employees who have a special vocation and calling in God to do this very important work! Welcome back to the students we are so privileged to serve! And welcome back to all those who are affiliated with us in this work of God: parents, families, church pastors and workers, our fellow Catholics in the community, and all our friends of Catholic education. Education -- especially Catholic Education -- is quite a challenge in today's society and the wisdom of the African saying that it takes the whole village to educate a child holds true.

Where today's society proclaims that life is all about grabbing everything we can for ourselves, we proclaim life has a God-given purpose that is glorious, exciting, and ennobling. In the face of extreme individualism and narcissism, we exalt the sense of true community and the glorious vocation of serving the common good and the helpless. Confronted by a materialism that has almost destroyed our economy, we create compassion and concern for all and the leaving behind of solid legacies for the future. Where today's society has left meaninglessness and emptiness in its wake, we leave people with real meaningfulness based on the knowledge and grace that we are children of God and brothers and sisters to Jesus Christ Our Risen Lord.

Can we do these great things for our students by ourselves? No -- we desperately need **your** help. It takes the whole village to educate our children. God bless you all always and thank you for all you do to help us in our task.

Father Fred Scinto, C.R., of the Resurrection Centre for Lifelong Learning, is Spiritual Animator of the WCDSB.



Waterloo Region's Catholic Schools

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“Specialist High Skills Major” Takes Off

Waterloo Region’s Catholic High Schools are leading the way in Ontario’s innovative new **Specialist High Skills Major** (SHSM) program.

The program helps students develop marketable skills in areas ranging from **Construction, Manufacturing and Transportation to Health & Wellness, Hospitality & Tourism, Arts & Culture and Information Communications Technology.**

The program began in WCDSB in 2007-08 with just **30 students** in two programs. In 2008-09 SHSM grew to **400 students** in 16 programs. This year, more than **800 students** are participating in 20 SHSM programs across the Region.



www.highskills.ca



On September 21, 2009 the **Hon. John Milloy** – Minister of Training, Colleges & Universities and Minister of Research & Innovation joined students and staff at **St. Mary’s High School** to announce a major expansion of the successful **Specialist High Skills Major** program. Dr. Milloy was the 2008 recipient of the WCDSB Distinguished Graduate Award.



New Elementary Instrumental Music Program

A new program will be implemented this year to support the music curriculum in elementary schools. All intermediate students will receive instruction on band instruments delivered by an Itinerant Music Specialist. Above – students from **Notre Dame CES** un-wrap their new band instruments!



Test Results For 2008/09 Meet or Exceed Provincial Averages in Seven of Eight Measures

(Provincial averages in brackets)

WCDSB Grade 3 Results:

Reading **65%** (61%) ---- Writing **72%** (68%) ----
Mathematics **73%** (70%).

WCDSB Grade 6 Results:

Reading **69%** (69%) ---- Writing **66%** (67%) ----
Mathematics **64%** (63%).

WCDSB Grade 9 Applied Level Results:

Mathematics **38%** (38%)

WCDSB Grade 9 Academic Level Results:

Mathematics **79%** (77%)



Board Chair **Marion Thomson Howell** thanks outgoing Student Trustee **Alex Chmura** (holding plaque) while welcoming returning Student Trustee **Thomas Slabon** (left) and new Student Trustee **Nicole Bigelow** (right).



Happy Thanksgiving – from the students, staff and Trustees of Waterloo Region’s Catholic Schools!!



Waterloo Region's Catholic Schools

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Help Fight The Flu!

Six Simple Steps to Help Keep You Healthy

1. Wash your hands often using soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

Ensure hands are washed:

- After coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose
- After shaking hands
- Before eating
- Before putting in contact lenses
- Before touching your face
- After using the washroom



2. Avoid touching your face as much as possible.
3. Cough and sneeze into a tissue or your elbow. Throw out used tissues right away.
4. Do not share objects that have been in other people's mouths, e.g. toothbrushes, drinks and water bottles, unwashed utensils, cigarettes, lip products, and mouthpieces of musical instruments.
5. Continue doing what you normally do, but stay home if you feel sick. You can return to work or school one day after you are symptom free. Staying home will help prevent the spread of infections to co-workers and the general public.
6. Frequently clean common surfaces such as keyboards, doorknobs, countertops, etc., with warm soapy water, or a mild household detergent.

Help Us Name Our New School

In September, 2010 our newest school will open on **Pebblecreek Drive** in Kitchener's Grand River South neighbourhood – and Catholic students & ratepayers are invited to suggest a school name.

Suggested names should: reflect the distinct Catholic nature of the school (not limited to saints/apostles), be sensitive to the local community and parish and help establish a uniqueness with which students can easily identify.

Please email your suggestion (and any supporting reasons) to info@wcdsb.ca by November 1, 2009 – or via mail to 35 Weber St., W., P.O. Box 91116, Kitchener, ON N2G 4G2.

In The Mind's Eye 2009: Issues of Substance Use in Film + Forum

In the Mind's Eye offers FREE film and forum events every week throughout October and November – providing Waterloo Region with a rare and real glimpse into the world of drug use through films, workshops and keynote presentations. The Waterloo Catholic District School Board is committed to working with local youth, social service agencies and the **Waterloo Regional Police Service** against drug abuse and addiction in our community. Unique worldwide, *In The Mind's Eye* is facilitated via the **Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council** – of which WCDSB was a founding partner.

For more information -- or to contribute resources or time - visit www.inthemindseye.ca or call the ITME hotline at: 519-575-4757 ext.5016.

www.wcdsb.ca

Don't forget – our website is your #1 destination for anything you need to know about Waterloo Region's Catholic schools. We've served up more the **10.75 MILLION pages of information** since 2005 – that's **more than 2.7 Million pages per year!** Be sure to sign up for our **Newswire** service, check out our new **Translation** button, visit the **Top Links** section, watch a special **Video** about our schools, stay up to date via the latest **Headlines**, link into the **RSS Feed** and remember to check the **Cancellations** page when the weather's bad! Look for the red / green button.

A screenshot of the Waterloo Catholic District School Board website. The page features a navigation menu on the left with links like 'About Us', 'Headlines', 'Our Schools', 'Parents and Students', 'Programs', 'Special Education', 'Careers', 'Parishes', 'Links', 'International Education Services', and 'Newcomer Reception Centre'. The main content area has a large 'Welcome' message and a photo of a woman and children. A 'Cancellations' sidebar on the right lists recent news items. The footer includes social media icons and a disclaimer.



Waterloo Region's Catholic Schools

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