

Director's Update

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Roger D. Lawler
Director of Education

“The Waterloo Catholic District School Board is an education leader in Ontario. Our graduates span the globe in every imaginable walk of life.

We like to say that Waterloo Region's Catholic schools add tremendous value to Waterloo Region. I'd like to encourage you to join me throughout 2008-09 in telling our story.”



The Honourable John Milloy – Ontario's Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities -- is this year's recipient of the **Distinguished Graduate Award**.

September 2008

Welcome Back!

Waterloo Region's Catholic Schools – Better Than Ever

The 2008-09 school year is off to a great start and I'd like to use this opportunity to welcome our new students, staff and parents -- and to *welcome back* our returning students, staff and parents. It is my great hope that your experiences in our schools will be both positive and faith-filled.

While we open this new school year with the joy, anxiety and hopes of a fresh start, we also find sadness. Over the summer we lost three students to untimely deaths.

Thank you to the many staff, students, pastors and parish members who supported the families and the wider Waterloo Region Catholic faith community during those difficult times. We treasure the lives of those children and will always feel their loss.

This year, our school system will experience considerable change as we continue to focus on our three priorities of:

- ✓ *improving student achievement;*
- ✓ *nurturing our Catholic community; and,*
- ✓ *building capacity to lead and learn.*

To this end, during September our schools – in cooperation with school councils -- established specific achievement targets. The targets will be communicated in your school community and there will be reports back to you during the year. You will be able to access the school plans and updates via your school's web site. We are committed to identifying student needs and assessing how we are meeting them.

On September 18th – along with the other five Catholic school boards in our diocese – we hosted **Bishop Tonnos** and **Auxiliary Bishop Bergie** at the first annual **Eucharistic Celebration of Catholic Education**. This event will occur each year at a different Catholic school board across the diocese. It was a great honour -- to our school system and to Waterloo Region – to be chosen to host this event.

The Waterloo Catholic District School Board is an education leader in Ontario. Our graduates span the globe in every imaginable walk of life.

We like to say that Waterloo Region's Catholic schools add tremendous value to Waterloo Region. I'd like to encourage you to join me throughout 2008-09 in telling our story.

Our schools are something to celebrate! Best wishes for a successful and rewarding school year.

Roger D. Lawler
Director of Education

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





Let's Celebrate "All The Good We Give"

By Father Fred Scinto, C. R.

Greetings to all who are connected with our Catholic school system! May this school year (2008-2009) be a happy year for all of us!

This school year coincides with the Church's celebration of the **Year of Saint Paul**. Saint Paul was not only exceptionally important for early Christianity but he continues to be a gift for us in the Risen Lord because of all the powerful, enduring, relevant things he proclaimed for this Lord. As Christians, this year we are asked by the Holy Spirit, working through the Church, to integrate Paul's great insights deeper into our personal and social lives.

One great insight Paul had is that all of us believers form the body of the Risen Christ in today's world: we make Christ today present to that world. This year, then, let us take our Christian Faith more seriously and make this body of Christ more effective and beautiful and servant to the world. Let us, as this body of Christ, work more strongly to integrate more fully our families, our parishes, and our schools; we are called to this by Christ at this time because in our province it is necessary for people to see and appreciate all the good we give and the value we add to society through our Catholic school system.

God bless you always and especially in the performance of this God-given task.

Father Fred Scinto, C.R., of the Resurrection Centre For Lifelong Learning, is the Spiritual Animator of the Waterloo Catholic District School Board.

Our partners at **kidsLINK** celebrated their 150th anniversary of service to Waterloo Region this year -- and the Catholic Education Centre was fortunate to have hosted their **150th Anniversary Travelling Art Show**, featuring works of art by the children kidsLINK serves. Congratulations kidsLINK -- and thank you for all you do!!

When 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 519-570-0915.

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



Last Spring, students from **St. Clement CES** helped open the new "Sparky's Apartment" at the Waterloo Region Children's Safety Village. Sparky teaches children what to do in case of fire.

Earlier this year, students at **St. Michael CES** in Cambridge raised \$3,200 to support **Canadian Food For Children**. Congratulations St. Michael!!!



Waterloo Region's Catholic Schools

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A Message From Board Chair -- Wayne Buchholtz



That's why our partnership with you is so important!

We also hope our staff take the time to enjoy their daily experiences with the children they serve.

As a retired educator myself, I know the huge impact our staff can have on the lives of children. It is an awesome responsibility – and a privilege for all of us.

While we will always face challenges as a Catholic school system, I think it's important for people across Waterloo Region to recognize and appreciate that Waterloo Region's Catholic schools are among the best in Ontario...and that the added value we bring to the Region must never be underestimated.

Working together, we will only become better...and stronger!

God bless...and have a GREAT year!

On behalf of the Board of Trustees I'd like to extend to all of our students, staff and parents a very warm welcome back to school.

It is our great hope that each and every one of our students – be they new to the system or back for another year of their Catholic educational journey – will experience education's finest in **their** Catholic school.

We hope parents will feel welcome and needed as an integral part of each child's education. Parents, after all, are the primary educators of their children.

Are You A Registered Catholic School Supporter? You Might Not Be!

Just because you are a Roman Catholic and your children attend a Catholic school does not necessarily mean you are a registered Catholic school supporter under Ontario law.

In Ontario, we are fortunate to be able to send our children to Catholic schools, which provide a strong academic education with a focus on character development based on the teachings of Jesus. It is important that we do not take this privilege for granted—we must continue to show our support for Catholic education.

The property tax rate is the same for both Catholic and public school supporters, and it is your constitutional right to declare yourself as a Catholic school supporter (on your property assessment notice) whether you own your home or rent. **It is important to know that every time you move, your property taxes will automatically default to the public board unless you formally declare yourself and re-register as a separate school supporter.**

Not sure if you're a registered Catholic school supporter?

Find out today by calling the Municipal Property Assessment Office at 1-866-296-6722 or check their website at www.mpac.ca -- or call the WCDSB office at **519.578.3660 ext. 2352**



Test Results For 2007/08 Meet or Exceed Provincial Average in Eight of Nine Measures

(Provincial averages in brackets)

WCDSB Grade 3 Results:

Reading **65%** (61%) ---- Writing **69%** (66%) ----
Mathematics **72%** (68%).

WCDSB Grade 6 Results:

Reading **67%** (66%) ---- Writing **68%** (67%) ----
Mathematics **65%** (61%).

WCDSB Grade 9 Applied Level Results:

Mathematics **30%** (34%)

WCDSB Grade 9 Academic Level Results:

Mathematics **80%** (75%)



On September 18, 2008 **Bishops Anthony Tonnos** and **Gerard Bergie** joined more than 800 representatives of the Catholic school boards in Hamilton Diocese for the first annual **Diocesan Celebration of Catholic Education**. Student Trustees from each of the Boards presented banners representing their school systems. WCDSB Student Trustee **Thomas Slabon** is second from left.



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



Waterloo Region's Catholic Schools

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Last spring – as part of our ongoing efforts to add value to Waterloo Region -- we announced plans to build Waterloo Region's first-ever artificial turf field at a high school – St. David CES, Waterloo. The project, complete with synthetic running track and night-time lighting is proceeding nicely and the facility will be open for school and community use in late winter / early spring, 2009.



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 **8 MILLION pages of information** since 2005 – that's **more than 2.5 Million pages per year!** Be sure to sign up for our "Newswire" service and remember to check the cancellations page when the weather's bad! Look for the red / green button.



In August, Principals from all WCDSB schools met in the St. Mary's Parish Hall to plan the new school year – another example of how we work year-round to make our schools the best they can be.



Waterloo Catholic
District School Board

Discover Your Community Catholic Schools

JK to Grade 12

**St. Louis Adult Learning
& Continuing Education
Centres**

Newcomer Reception Centre

**International Visa Student
Programs**

Secondary & Adult Students

**Career Exploration & Pathways
Programs...**

- ▣ Experiential Co-op Education
- ▣ University Co-op Education
- ▣ Job Entry Co-op Education
- ▣ Specialist High Skills Major
- ▣ Ontario Youth Apprenticeship

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Visit Our Website: www.wcdsb.ca

☺ Telephone: 519.578.3660

Email: info@wcdsb.ca

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Waterloo Region's Catholic Schools

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