



# THE YEAR OF MERCY

DIRECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016



MESSAGE FROM

## THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

One of our greatest achievements of 2015-2016 was the articulation of a renewed strategic direction for the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board. A broad consultation process became an opportunity for us to step back and identify those areas, supported by input from our Catholic stakeholders, that were important for the HWCDSB to realize its Mission and Vision.

Most of what we learned over the past several months was gleaned from focus group sessions and online surveys. However, in a first-time activity, 100 students from across our Catholic school system were invited to take part in a Director's Student Forum to share their views on our three identified strategic priorities. In a world that is too often preaches self-reward, it was not only encouraging, but enlightening to me that three of the four priority areas that were most important to our students were focused on topics outside of themselves. The exercise not only showed that the state of our youth is strong, but that the Holy Spirit continues to inspire our students to reach past the dominant culture and look for ways in which they can transform our future. As this Director's Annual Report 2015-2016 shows, the transformation has already begun.

DAVID HANSEN, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

MESSAGE FROM

## THE CHAIRPERSON

On December 8, 2015 – mid-way through our school year – Pope Francis opened the Holy Doors of St. Peter's Basilica to a Year of Mercy in a gesture that was mirrored in dioceses throughout the world. In his pastoral letter on the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, our own Bishop Crosby invited us to journey together "united in faith, confident in hope, fervent in charity ... rejoicing in the inexhaustible riches of God's mercy."

Our journey of the past year has been a joyful response to that invitation, and a demonstration of how mercy is lived out in our schools. Examples of our efforts to be "merciful like our Father" are outlined in this Director's Annual Report and speak to the unique mission of Catholic education in Hamilton-Wentworth to realize the fullness of humanity as modeled by our Lord Jesus Christ.

In closing, I would like to recognize and thank our Director of Education David Hansen, senior administration, principals and vice-principals, teachers, and staff and students throughout our school system for their tremendous service and witness of the past year.

PATRICK DALY, CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF TRUSTEES



# BELIEVING

## NURTURING OUR CATHOLIC COMMUNITY



Educating students in a Christ-centred learning environment is at the core of Catholic Education. Our mission “to enable all learners to realize the fullness of humanity of which our Lord Jesus Christ is the model” is realized through programs and activities that demonstrate our preferential option for the poor, Christian Service opportunities, Religious Education, Faith Formation, daily prayer and worship, and Stewardship of Creation.

This Jubilee Year of Mercy (Dec. 1, 2015- Nov. 20, 2016) challenged us, in particular, to provide programs and allocate resources that help to mitigate the impact of poverty on student success. This “mission to be witnesses of mercy” (Pope Francis) translated into thousands of hours of Christian Service, additional supports for Equal Opportunities (inner city) schools, community outreach, environmentally engaged schools, and tens of thousands of fundraising dollars for charities at home

## SUCCESSSES

Equal Opportunities schools realize increases of 5% and 1% in EQAO Grade 6 reading and writing assessment results in 2015-2016.

4,000 students and staff participate in 12th annual Walk with Christ: Justice for the Poor Pilgrimage, raising \$40,000 for development projects in the Global South.

Students at St. Thomas More Catholic Secondary School collect over 80,000 lbs. of food items through its annual “We Scare Hunger” Halloween campaign;

100% of HWCDSB schools achieve Ontario EcoSchools certification for their environmental efforts.

Expanded Christian Meditation program enables students to deepen their relationship with God.

HWCDSB implements revised Health & Physical Health curriculum.

Secondary students travel to Dominican Republic and Haiti on mission trips to build homes for families living in poverty and to learn about sustainable farming practices.





# ACHIEVING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT & WELL-BEING

Understanding the connection between student well-being and student success, the HWCDSB is committed to providing curriculum, assessment and instructional strategies, along with the necessary cognitive, mental, emotional, social, spiritual and physical supports to enable all students to achieve their full potential in Christ. This commitment to develop the whole child is realized through a comprehensive Mental Health Strategy, Student Success programs, Special Education, an Early Years Strategy, expanded opportunities in STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics), and Physical Literacy & Health.

## PARENT ENGAGEMENT

We know, and research shows, that students achieve better when their parents are involved in their school. Through resources and parent engagement activities such as Hurray for FDK, Welcome to Kindergarten, the annual parent conference, parent-teacher interviews, Grade 8 parent nights, curriculum nights, pathways events, and the use of online communication tools, including school websites, the HWCDSB able to facilitate conversations between students, parents/caregivers and teachers/schools.

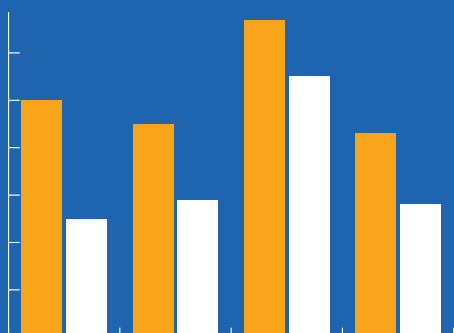
## HWCDSD GRADUATION RATES

4-year and 5-year graduation rates for the 2010-2011 cohort show that 84% and 90% of students successfully completed their OSSD graduation requirements, compared to 76% and 84% provincially.



# EQAO

EQAO assessment results for 2015-2016 show the majority of students continue to achieve Level 3 & 4 in Grade 3 and Grade 6 reading and writing, however, junior math results continue to fall short of provincial expectations. In Grade 9 math assessments, 83% of academic students and 46% of applied students achieved the provincial standard. Grade 10 OSSLT results for 2016 continue to be high with 80% of fully participating first-time students achieving success. Recommendations from a Math Task Force, including the hiring of a Math Special Assignment Teacher and Numeracy Consultant, have been adopted in the past year to provide job-embedded professional development for teachers and support schools with their individual math needs.



EQAO Results:

[https://eqaoweb.eqao.com/eqaoweborgprofile/profile.aspx?\\_Mident=26&Lang=E](https://eqaoweb.eqao.com/eqaoweborgprofile/profile.aspx?_Mident=26&Lang=E)

## SUCCESSSES

77 secondary and 72 elementary students self-identified as First Nations, Métis or Inuit (FNMI) in 2015-2016. NYA:WEH, a culture-based support program at Cathedral High School has helped FNMI students succeed in school through programs and activities aimed at improving student engagement, attendance and academic achievement.

Robotics continues to provide students with real world experience in STEAM. In 2015-2016, the HWCDSB fielded 15 FIRST LEGO League (FLL) and 3 FRC (FIRST Robotics Competition) teams, and hosted an FLL regional qualifier and an FRC off-season event. Three elementary teams advanced to the Ontario Provincial Championship in Waterloo, while two FRC teams competed at the World Robotics Championship in St. Louis. Partnerships with ArcelorMittal Dofasco and Mohawk College have not only created expanded opportunities for students in Robotics and Advanced Manufacturing, but have provided teacher training

Hamilton Code Clubs, funded through an ABACUS grant, were set in 9 elementary schools to introduce students to simple software coding in a fun, hands-on learning environment.

A number of mental health strategies were implemented over the past year to ensure that Catholic schools are “healthy places and spaces” where students feel safe, accepted and supported in all areas of school life. SafeTALK training was provided over three sessions to teaching staff and educational assistants in applied suicide intervention skills.

Physical literacy and health is not only supported, but strengthened through community partnerships with Start2Finish, Rising Stars, Playocracy, Hamilton Public Health and the YMCA.





# STEWARDSHIP

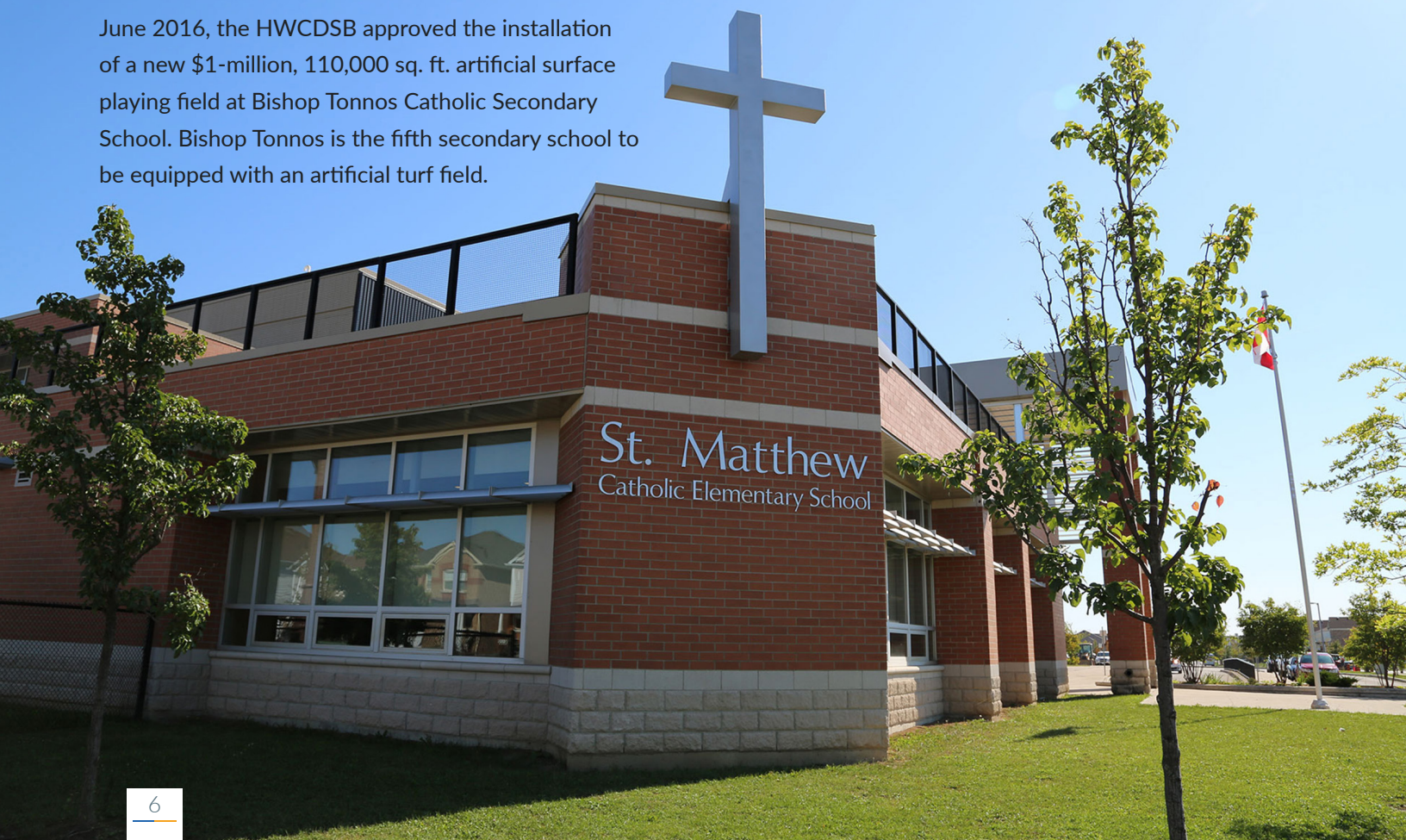
## EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES

The HWCDSB continues to invest in resources and facilities that provide the best opportunities for our students and staff. This priority not only focuses on infrastructure, but on organizational conditions, capital planning, technology in teaching and learning, and the effective use of financial and human resources.

**Capital Planning:** Recommendations from an annual pupil accommodation report, presented to the Board of Trustees in February 2016, formed the basis of the board's capital priorities submission for 2016. Enrolment pressure business cases were submitted for St. Matthew Catholic Elementary School, where at present school enrolment and utilization is at 143%, and St. James the Apostle Catholic Elementary School, where enrolment and utilization is expected to double by 2020. In March 2016, the HWCDSB approved the execution of the purchase and sale agreement for a new Binbrook Catholic Elementary site. A replacement school or permanent addition/retrofit has also been requested for St. James the Apostle Catholic Elementary School.

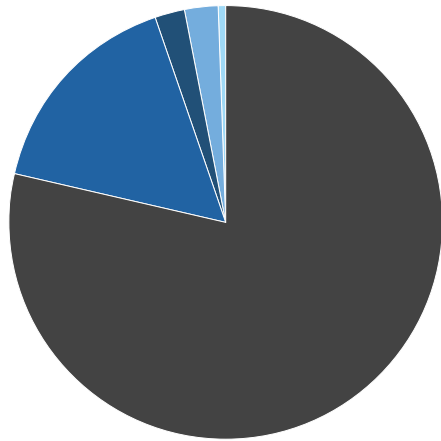
Due to high renewal needs, Facility Condition Business Cases were submitted for St. Eugene, Sts. Peter and Paul, St. Joseph, St. Francis Xavier, Regina Mundi and St. Michael Catholic Elementary Schools. The child care centre at St. Augustine Catholic Elementary School has also been identified for a retrofit. The HWCDSB will work with its municipal partners, the Consolidated Municipal Service Manager/District Social Services Administration Board on a joint submission for St. Augustine as well as for a proposed new child care centre for the new Binbrook Catholic elementary school.

June 2016, the HWCDSB approved the installation of a new \$1-million, 110,000 sq. ft. artificial surface playing field at Bishop Tonnos Catholic Secondary School. Bishop Tonnos is the fifth secondary school to be equipped with an artificial turf field.



# ACTUAL SPENDING

TOTAL EXPENDITURES: \$332,323,737  
(AS OF AUGUST 31, 2016)



# BOARD PROFILE

Schools: 56

Enrolment: 28,347.8 ADE

Staff: 4,456

Elementary Schools: 49

Elementary Enrolment: 18,546 ADE

Students enrolled in Full-Day Kindergarten: 3,500

ESL/ELL Students: 129

Students with Special Needs: 2,195

Secondary Schools: 7

Secondary Enrolment: 9,801.8 ADE

ESL/ELL Students: 125

Students with Special Needs: 1,687

(Figures as of August 31, 2016)

<http://www.hwcdsb.ca/>

# BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2015-2016



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Hamilton-Wentworth  
Catholic District School Board

*Believing, Achieving, Serving*