



Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic  
District School Board

# Director's Annual Report 2015

*Believing, Achieving, Serving*



**"Go out and make some noise"**



## Director's Message

Heeding the words of Pope Francis who encouraged our Catholic youth at World Youth Day 2014 to “go and make some noise,” the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board created a good deal of noise in 2014-2015 in support of student achievement and well-being, Catholic social teachings, and care of the earth.

Education by its very nature is transformational, but the very best part of Catholic education is that it prepares students, and gives them the tools to transform society. This past year has been a testament to that. Achievements of note include a Math Task Force report that addressed declining math achievement in Grade 3 and 6 provincial math assessments, a Mental Health Strategy to support “open” and “healthy minds,” and a new Specialist High Skills Major program in Advanced Manufacturing to prepare secondary students for STEM related careers. Other developments will see the construction of a replacement school for Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Elementary School and a new school in Binbrook, as well as retrofits for St. Jean de Brébeuf Catholic Secondary School and St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School.

These are just a few examples of the good things we have accomplished together over the past school year. I invite you to review this year's Director's Annual Report which not only celebrates our achievements, but our efforts and commitment to realize our multi-year strategic goals.

DAVID HANSEN, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION



## Chairperson's Message

“Beginnings are times of possibility and promise,” noted Bishop Douglas Crosby at a Eucharistic Celebration to mark the inauguration of the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board's newly elected Board of Trustees on December 2, 2014.

Citing Pope Francis' immense capacity for joy, the bishop challenged the trustees to make it their personal and collective attitude over their next four-year term of office

Guided by Bishop Crosby's words and inspired by the theme of this year's Catholic Education Week, “Exploring Paths of Joy,” joy not only became the prevailing attitude for trustees, but for our students and staff throughout the system who set out this year to bring the love and joy of Christ to others.

That love and joy were evident in mission trips, social justice projects, anti-bullying and safe schools campaigns, health and wellness supports, and environmental activities that were as life-altering as they were life-giving. Many of these initiatives are outlined in this Director's Annual Report and speak to the distinct 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 efforts to create paths of joy.

PATRICK J. DALY, CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF TRUSTEES



# About Us

Since 1855, the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board has provided a quality, Christ-centred education to hundreds of thousands of students from JK to Grade 12. Today, the HWCDSB serves more than 28,000 students at its 56 Hamilton schools, and another 3,800 learners through its four St. Charles adult and continuing education centres. HWCDSB employs more than 3,000 employees, and has an annual operating budget of \$327-million. At the heart of this vibrant and very successful system is a mission statement that recognizes the value and uniqueness of each person: *"Our mission in Hamilton- Wentworth, in union with our bishop, is to enable all learners to realize the fullness of humanity of which our Lord Jesus Christ is the model."*

## Count on Us!

(Figures as of October 31, 2015)

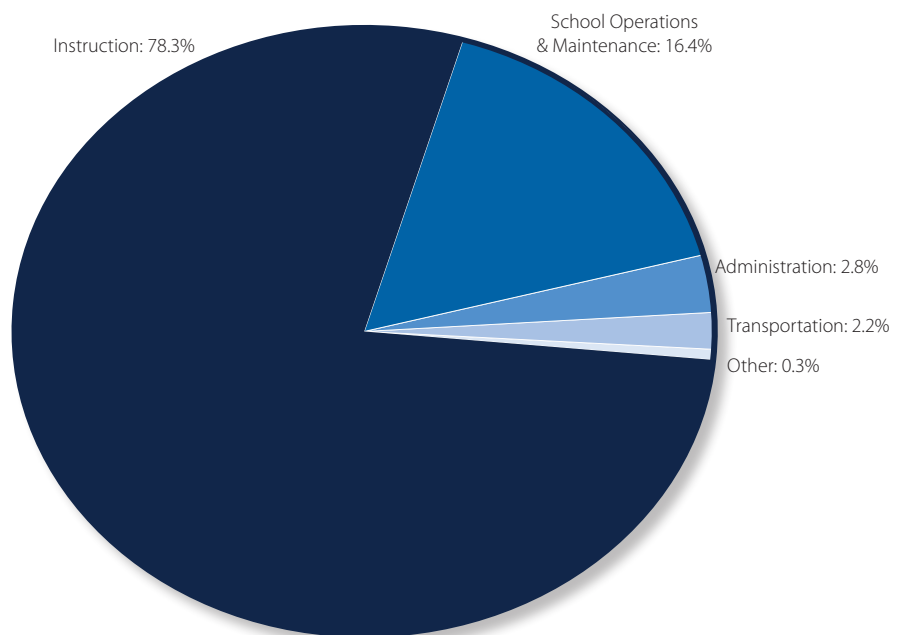
Schools: 56  
 Enrolment: 28,427  
 Self-identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit Students: 152  
 Number of Teachers: 1,750  
 Principals & Vice-Principals: 85  
 Administrative & Support Staff: 1,260  
 Elementary Schools: 49  
 Elementary Enrolment: 18,559  
 Students enrolled in Full-Day Kindergarten: 3,510  
 ESL/ELL Students: 144  
 Students with Special Needs: 1,834  
 Percentage of primary classes at 20 students or less: 84%

Secondary Schools: 7  
 Secondary Enrolment: 9,860  
 ESL/ELL Students: 140  
 Students with Special Needs: 1,695  
 2014/2015 Graduation rate: 83%  
 St. Charles Adult & Continuing Education Centres: 4  
 Enrolment: 3,821  
 St. Charles Teachers/Instructors: 76  
 St. Charles non-teaching Staff: 18  
 Permitted Hours of Community Use of Schools: 107,810

## Actual Spending 2014-2015

**Total expenditures:** \$327,077,649  
 (As of August 31, 2015)

Instruction: \$256,004,377
School Operations & Maintenance: \$53,574,375
Administration: \$9,163,551
Transportation: \$7,284,103
Other: \$1,051,243



## 2015-16 Budget

The Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board approved a balanced budget of \$336,560,773 (operating and capital) for 2015-2016. The budget serves as a written expression, in financial terms, of the Board's mission and stated priorities. Budget priorities, developed through a community consultation process, continue to focus on programs and initiatives that foster faith formation, religious education, improvement in achievement, equity in opportunity, and excellence in academic and co-curricular programs, as well as renewal and maintenance of school facilities.

In addition to discretionary items, the 2015-2016 budget includes the following enhancements:

- Unprecedented support for the Equal Opportunities Initiative;
- \$1.5M for the purchase of technology learning supports over two years;
- Addition of 5 math coaches, consistent with recommendations from the Board's Math Task Force;
- Purchase of new textbooks and revised curriculum resources; and
- Support for the Early Years Program.

## Equal Opportunities Initiative

Founded on the belief that a good education provides a pathway out of poverty, an Equal Opportunities Initiative was established in 2006 to mitigate the effects of poverty on student learning by providing additional supports to schools in low-income neighbourhoods. Through nutrition programs, 'Closing the Gap' tutors, additional learning resources, and after-hours and weekend recreational and learning opportunities, the HWCDSB is removing barriers to student achievement and post-secondary success. Enhancements this year will see an expanded partnership with Rising Stars, an organization that supports and empowers youth through experience-based learning opportunities.



*The 2015-2016 budget provided unprecedented support for the Equal Opportunities Initiative which funds school nutrition and other programs. Photo courtesy of Cathie Coward, The Hamilton Spectator.*



*Close to 1,000 students, aged 6-13, participated in Focus on Youth summer camps.*



## Multi-Year Strategic Plan 2015-2016

Throughout the fall of 2015, the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board underwent an extensive consultation process to articulate a clear vision and strategic direction for the HWCDSB for the period 2015-2018. The plan, which aligns with the board motto 'Believing, Achieving, Serving', offers a solid internal consistency between the stated values of the HWCDSB and the strategies that will be implemented to ensure that students are educated in a Christ-centred learning environment.

The plan identifies three strategic priorities that will guide board operations over the next three years:

- Strengthening Our Catholicity – Nurturing Our Catholic Community
- Student Achievement & Well-Being
- Stewardship – Effective Management of Resources.

The MYSP is supported by a number of operational plans that include: the HWCDSB Board Plan for Student Achievement; Special Education Plan; ICT Technology Plan; Capital and Facilities Plan; Mental Health Strategy; and Finance Department Operational Plan. Monitoring reports are brought to the Board of Trustees on a regular basis.

## Strengthening Our Catholicity – Nurturing Our Catholic Community

Educating students in a Christ-centred learning environment is at the core of Catholic Education. The focus of this priority is to ensure that schools deliver on the HWCDSB's mission to enable all learners to realize the fullness of humanity of which our Lord Jesus Christ is the model.

## Family Life Education in Catholic Schools

The revised Health & Physical Health curriculum was implemented in Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic schools in September 2015. Previously, the family life curriculum was delivered within a Catholic framework through the Fully Alive program. The vast majority of the content in the revised curriculum continues to be covered by Fully Alive. Additional resources have been developed by the Institute of Catholic Education (ICE) under the guidance of the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario to support Catholic teachers in the delivery of the revised curriculum and to ensure its consistency with Catholic teachings and appropriateness within the context of a Catholic classroom.





## Christian Service / Social Justice

The HWCDSB provides opportunities for students to participate in authentic Christian service through activities such as Halloween 4 Hunger, a program sponsored by Free the Children that raises awareness about local food hunger issues, and the system-wide “Walk with Christ” Pilgrimage, an annual service project in support of the poor in the Global South. In the past 15 years, St. Thomas More Catholic Secondary School’s Halloween 4 Hunger campaign has collected over 650,000 lbs. of food for Neighbour 2 Neighbour Centre. Since 2003, the Pilgrimage has raised more than \$550,000 for development projects and emergency relief in Uganda, Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Dozens of secondary students travel each year to Haiti and the Dominican Republic on service trips to improve living conditions for the poor.

## Learning with Faith

A number of targeted actions have been identified in the Board Improvement Plan’s Learning with Faith pillar to integrate Catholic faith teachings into all areas of school culture. Prayer continues to be promoted in the school setting through daily, shared prayers and regular liturgical celebrations. A system-wide Faith Day was held on November 14th that focused on prayer. In the past year, several schools have adopted Christian Meditation as way to encourage children in the practice of prayer. Other initiatives included the creation of a Saints and Catholic Social Teaching perpetual calendar and the launch of the “Our Catholic Community” online sacred space during Advent and Lent.

## Parent Engagement

Recognizing that parents play an integral role in student achievement, the HWCDSB has developed a number of supports to engage parents in their children’s learning and career planning. Advisory groups such as the Catholic School Council, Catholic Parent Involvement Committee (CPIC) and Joint Educational Parent Advisory Committee (JEPAG) enable parents to stay connected with their school while resources such as Career Cruising, my path app, SuccessMaker Pro, eMath+ and the All About Me Portfolio include parents in their children’s learning and pathways planning. Other parent engagement initiatives include an annual parent conference, Grade 8 Parent Information & Pathway Nights, an annual Catholic School Council Breakfast, and Parenting & Family Literacy Centres.





## Ontario EcoSchools

All 56 schools of the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board achieved Ontario EcoSchools certification in 2014-2015 for their efforts to conserve energy and care for the Earth. HWCDSB is one of only four school boards across Ontario to reach this status, and one of only two to achieve it four years in a row. The program is integrated with and builds on the Ontario academic curriculum, and engages students, staff, school administration and parents in an effort toward responsible stewardship through the development of green teams and green practices. Pillars focus on teamwork and leadership, ecological literacy, waste minimization, energy conservation, and school ground greening. Programs undertaken by schools in the past year include idle-free zones, active transportation, litterless lunches, bottled water free zones, eco education fairs, recycling, green bin composting, victory and harvest gardens, school ground greening, and de-pave projects.



An ASST (Active and Sustainable School Transportation) Charter, developed by the City of Hamilton and endorsed by the HWCDSB in April 2015, focuses on increasing physical activity, reducing traffic congestion, improving air quality, enhancing neighbourhood safety, and instilling a greater sense of community engagement.

## Student Achievement & Well-Being

This priority reflects the HWCDSB's call to support learners in achieving their full potential in Christ through incisive curriculum, assessment and instructional strategies aimed at supporting the whole student.



Ontario EcoSchools celebrates its 10th anniversary with the launch of an EcoAction Challenge at St. Anthony Daniel Catholic Elementary School. The day kicked off with 200 students "Walking, Riding, or Rolling" to school to show their support for a healthy environment.

## Math Task Force

The Math Task Force was commissioned in December 2013 to address declining math achievement in Grade 3 and 6 EQAO assessments locally and provincially. Its report, presented to trustees in January 2015, represented a year's worth of work and offered a number of recommendations aimed at improving achievement in math. Ministry recommendations focused on hiring practices and revisions to the Ontario Mathematics Curriculum. Board recommendations included: principal/vice-principal autonomy in math programming and staffing; continued priority hiring of teachers with Math qualifications/backgrounds; ongoing professional learning in mathematics; review of Math textbooks, K-6; expansion of math tutoring programs in schools; and greater access to technology and manipulatives to support the teaching of mathematics. Recommendations were also developed for schools/classrooms and parents. The report will be used to inform Budget Steering Committee decisions.



St. Matthew Catholic Elementary School was awarded silver LEED certification by the Canada Green Building Council for its whole-school approach to sustainability.

## EQAO

EQAO Primary and Junior assessment results for the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board showed sustained and improved scores in Reading and Writing in 2014-2015. Student achievement in Mathematics at all levels continues to be an area of concern with 68 percent of primary students and 52 percent of junior students achieving Level 3 & 4 in the provincial assessment. In Grade 9 Applied Mathematics, 42 percent of students achieved the provincial standard in 2014-2015, compared to 44 percent the previous year. Recommendations from the Math Task Force, established in 2013-2014, are currently being implemented to improve math achievement.

## EQAO Primary & Junior Assessments

*\* Provincial results are not available for 2014-2015 due to non-participation by many boards in the province*

### Primary Reading

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
HWCDSD	66	68	69	70	74
Province	65	66	68	69	

### Primary Mathematics

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
HWCDSD	67	70	67	66	68
Province	69	68	67	67	

### Junior Writing

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
HWCDSD	79	80	81	83	83
Province	73	74	76	78	

## EQAO Grade 9 Mathematics Assessments

### Applied

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
HWCDSD	40	43	43	44	42
Province	42	44	44	47	

### Primary Writing

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
HWCDSD	77	79	79	81	80
Province	73	76	77	78	

### Junior Reading

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
HWCDSD	75	78	76	78	81
Province	74	75	77	79	

### Junior Mathematics

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
HWCDSD	57	60	54	54	52
Province	58	58	57	54	

### Academic

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
HWCDSD	86	85	84	83	82
Province	83	84	84	85	

## Grade 10 Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) Assessments

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
HWCDSD	82	81	80	83	80
Province	83	82	82	83	82

## HWCDSD Graduation Rates

Another key indicator of student success is the graduation rate which tracks a cohort of students over 4 and 5 years to determine their success in completing the requirements necessary for an Ontario Secondary School Diploma. School Student Success Teams actively work to re-engage students who have not been successful, and programs such as Wilma's Place and St. Charles Adult Education Centres provide alternatives to traditional education programs.

### 5-Year Graduation Rate

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
HWCDSD	88	91	43	89	N/A
Province	82	82	44	83	N/A

### 4-Year Graduation Rate

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
HWCDSD	82	84	82	84	84
Province	72	73	74	76	N/A

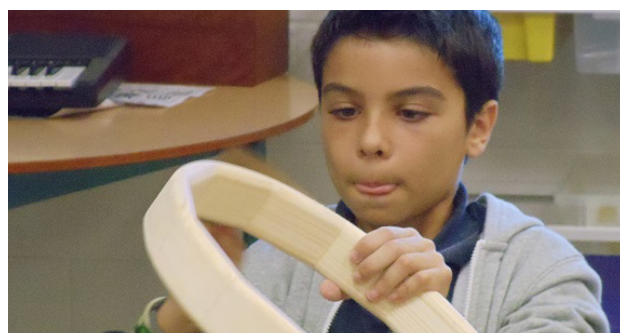


## Student Mental Health Strategy

A Student Mental Health and Addictions Strategy was implemented by the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board in September 2014 to ensure the mental health and wellbeing of all students. The HWCDSB has undertaken a number of initiatives in the past year to support students and staff in developing the required knowledge to adopt and maintain positive mental health through working groups, awareness campaigns, surveys and board scans, professional development sessions, and collaborative partnerships with at risk groups. Safe Talk training was completed by school leadership teams, and applied suicide intervention skills training was provided to key staff to facilitate early identification and support, build school capacity, and create clear pathways to care. School programs in support of student mental health include Peer Mentors, iMATTER, restorative justice programs, Health Action Teams, Diversity Conferences, Mental Health Forums, anti-bullying initiatives, and Youth Net.



Grade 8 feeder school students attended a W.I.S.H. (Why I Should Help) Day at St. Jean de Brébeuf whose aim was to inspire and support students to realize their potential to create positive change through their actions.



Junior gifted students participate in a special workshop led by NYA:WEH student leaders from Cathedral High School on the Making and Birthing of the Hand Drum.



The fourth annual St. Mary-in-Motion event, organized by the school's Health Action Team, encouraged students and staff to get active through Zumba dance sessions, outdoor field games, and walking laps on the track.

## SHSM in Advanced Manufacturing

In October 2015, the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board partnered with ArcelorMittal Dofasco and Mohawk College to offer a new Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) program in Advanced Manufacturing. The program is currently offered to 40 Grade 10, 11 and 12 students at Bishop Ryan and St. Jean de Brébeuf Catholic Secondary Schools who, in addition to their regular classroom instruction, receive first-hand and on-site training from industry professionals.



Canadian Martyrs' students participated in a 10-week kindness program facilitated by 4th year nursing students from McMaster University focused on building inclusive communities.

## Early Years Strategy

The HWCDSB Early Years Strategy is grounded in the belief that the early years remain fundamentally important and are the foundation that shapes children's future health, happiness, growth, spiritual development and learning achievement in school. In the past year, priority was given to strengthening Full-Day Kindergarten, stabilizing and transforming childcare services, collaborating with sector community partners, and optimizing support services for children and families in need. FDK is now in full implementation with 3,569 students enrolled in 145 classrooms across the system. Professional learning networks have been established to provide a seamless transition from FDK to Grade 1 for a continuum of learning. Childcare continues to be provided through Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic Child Care Centres Inc. with programs established in 34 schools. Several schools were retrofitted to increase the number of childcare spaces. Best Start Child and Family Centres, located in several HWCDSB schools, also help children prepare for formal school and encourage families to be part of early learning.



## Special Education

As an internationally recognized leader in inclusive education, the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board serves as a model for the 'Each Belongs' philosophy. Programs and services in HWCDSB schools are governed by principles of inclusion, normalization and personalization. An annual Special Education Plan 2015-2016 was submitted to the Ministry of Education in compliance with Regulation 306 that outlines programs and services in place for students with exceptionalities. Revisions were made to the plan to reflect changes in staff roles/responsibilities and programming, and to identify specific improvement priorities for 2015-2016. The plan also included a HWCDSB Parent Guide to Special Education Programs and Services to engage parents as active partners in their children's education and care. In other developments, transition plans were developed in 2014 for all students with an IEP, as per PPM 145, that include specific goals for each student, actions and individuals/agencies required to achieve the stated goals, and timelines for implementation. Supporting all students, and especially students with exceptionalities, through effective transition planning is recognized as an important aspect of student achievement and success.



*An annual Physical Activity Healthy Living (PAHL) Sports Day united students with special needs and mentors in spirit of friendly competition and fun.*

## Adult and Continuing Education

St. Charles Adult and Continuing Education Centres provide a variety of programming for adults, adolescents and youth in the core areas of credit, language instruction, literacy and numeracy, and general interest. In 2013-2014, a total of 4,847 students enrolled in credit programs offered at adult secondary school, night school, summer school, section 23, and through school-to-work programs. Another 2,000 learners participated in ESL and LINC (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada), and more than 4,800 learners enrolled in Literacy and Numeracy, and General Interest Courses.



*175 adult graduates received their Personal Support Workers (PSW) certification and/or high school diplomas through the HWCDSB's St. Charles Adult Education program in June 2015.*



## Stewardship: Effective Management of Resources

This priority focuses on building and maintaining the infrastructure necessary to improve student achievement and nurture Catholic community through the use of technology, careful stewardship of financial and human resources, maintenance of facilities and capital planning, and parent engagement and communication.

### Capital Planning

A pupil accommodation review is conducted annually to monitor the ongoing viability and operation of HWCDSB schools. In addition to monitoring school populations, trends and utilization rates, the report also tracks residential development in order to prepare timely and strategic capital project proposals to the Ministry of Education that support the building of new schools and school additions/retrofits. In October 2015, the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School submitted a number of business cases to the Ministry of Education for capital priorities funding consideration. They included a replacement school for Our Lady of the Assumption CES, a retrofit for St. Jean de Brébeuf CSS and St. Joseph CES, and a new Catholic elementary school in Binbrook.

In November 2015, the Ministry of Education announced funding in the amount of \$11.9-million for a replacement school for Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Elementary School in Upper Stoney Creek. The school, with a ministry rated capacity of 599 pupil places, will be built in the Summit Park neighbourhood to accommodate growing development in the area.

St. Jean de Brébeuf Catholic Secondary School was also awarded a \$2.8-million grant for a 5-room expansion to alleviate overcrowding at the East Mountain school. Additional upgrades will include air conditioning, a new gymnasium and library, a new electrical system, and a refurbished cafeteria and auditorium.

In other funding developments, St. Gabriel Catholic Elementary School received Ministry approval for a new childcare centre. The Winona school, which opened in September 2015 with an inaugural enrolment of 550 students, has addressed accommodation pressures at nearby Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Elementary School where enrolment peaked in 2014-2015 at 882 students.

Other projects in progress included FDK additions, and upgrade/renewal projects in existing HWCDSB schools through School Condition Improvement (SCI) funding of \$2.6-million over the next three years. Investments in capital additions for 2014-2015 totaled \$25.3-million for assets in service. Assets in service include land and land improvements (\$1,842,057), buildings (\$21,845,750) and moveable type assets (\$1,563,150). Land & land improvements largely entailed site preparation costs pertaining to the construction of the new St. Gabriel CES and a portion of the school condition improvement grant of \$2,623,063. Buildings included the completion of the new St. Gabriel CES project, a 6-room addition at St. Thérèse of Lisieux CES, and FDK additions (\$4,080,217).



*An official blessing was held at St. Jean de Brébeuf Catholic Secondary School in October 2014 to mark the opening of the school's new artificial turf sports field.*



*The new St. Gabriel Catholic Elementary School in Winona opened in September 2015. The \$9.93-million, 57,330 sq. ft. school has alleviated overcrowding at Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Elementary School.*

# Board of Trustees



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(Vice-Chairperson)



**Anthony Perri**  
Ward 3 & 4



**Aldo D'Intino**  
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**Joseph Baiardo**  
Ward 6



**Patrick Daly**  
Ward 7  
(Chairperson)



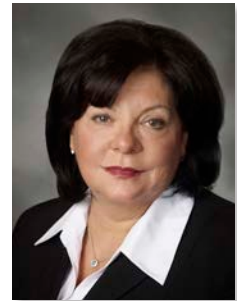
**John Valvasori**  
Ward 8



**Mary Nardini**  
Ward 9, 10 & 11



**Paul DiFrancesco**  
Ward 9, 10 & 11



**Carolyn Cornale**  
Ward 12, 13, 14 & 15

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Director of Education

**Paola Pace-Gubekjian**

Senior Superintendent  
of Business & Treasurer

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Sandra Pizzuti

**James LoPresti**

Executive Officer of  
Human Resources

**Assistant Superintendents  
of Education**

Julie Angiolillo

Sandra Scime

Gregory Tabone



*Back row, left to right: S. Pizzuti; S. Scime; C. Ciapanna; P. Pace-Gubekjian; M. Hucal; G. Tabone; J. LoPresti.  
Front row: T. Kovach; Director of Education D. Hansen; J. Angiolillo; I. Fortino.*