



Trustee, Ward 4

September 29, 2004

Dear Parents/Guardians:

I welcome you back to a new school year. Whether you are new to our Catholic community or a returning family, I wish to thank you for choosing the Toronto Catholic District School Board for your child(ren)'s education.

I am pleased to share with you a number of decisions that have been made recently, which directly benefit the students in our Catholic schools. At the regular meeting of the Board held on August 19th, the Board approved its 2004-2005 budget estimates of \$780,963,680. Within that budget we have been able to implement a number of new initiatives to improve student learning, including:

- A full-day senior kindergarten program at seven school sites, including Blessed Margherita of Citta di Castello and St. Augustine in our own ward.
- Lead literacy and numeracy teacher initiative in all elementary schools. In August 85 teachers have received training to assist them in their role as lead teacher in their respective schools.
- Primary class size reduction. To date 60 (full time equivalent) teacher positions have been implemented in 65 schools to reduce class sizes in the primary grades in many of our schools, including St. Charles Garnier, St. Jerome, St. Norbert, St. Raphael, St. Robert and St. Wilfrid. The total allocation for our Board was \$4.3 million.
- \$4.6 million for textbooks with a priority being given to Mathematics materials
- \$5.4 million for the Success for All initiative to support those students who may be at risk of not completing their education, including the hospitality at James Cardinal McGuigan.
- \$600,000 for playground equipment.

Over and above the budgeted projects, at the September meeting of the Board, the Board of Trustees have also approved the following expenditures:

- \$4.95 million for science labs in our secondary schools, including Madonna.
- \$700,000 for summer literacy camps, much like the camps that were held this past summer in 12 schools, including St. Jerome.

In addition, the Board successfully completed the purchase of St. Conrad and Blessed Marherita of Citta di Castello from the Toronto District School Board.

The Board of Trustees at its September meeting further approved the distribution of a one-time allocation of funds totalling \$1,175,000 to schools. The Board decided that each elementary school should receive \$5,000 and each secondary school should receive \$10,000 to acknowledge and support the work of the parent community as well as that of our school staff. I am requesting that a meeting be scheduled with the Catholic School Advisory Council, Principal and myself to discuss how this one-time fund will be allocated.

We are pleased to direct more money back into the schools and classrooms where they are needed. I look forward to meeting with each of you. Thank you once again for your collaborative efforts in support of your Catholic school community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Cicogna".

Mary Cicogna
Catholic School Trustee, Ward 4

cc: School Principals