“In a school community formed by Catholic beliefs and traditions, our Mission is to educate students to their full potential.”
Board of Trustees

Twelve elected trustees provide a governance function for the Toronto Catholic District School Board. They set policies and priorities, approve programs, set programs, set the budget and represent the broader community.

Each year one secondary school student is selected to serve on the Board as a Student Trustee.

Toronto Catholic District School Board Profile

Total number of students 99,171
- Elementary Students 68,542
- Secondary Students 30,629
- Teachers 5,600
- Support/Academic Staff 2,160
- Principals/Vice-Principals 315
- Administration & Governance 203

Total number of schools 202
- Elementary Schools 169
- Secondary Schools 31
- Combined Schools 2

(Cardinal Carter Academy for the Arts & St. Michael Choir School)

*Staffing and enrolment figures are based on full-time equivalency.

TRUSTEES 2002 – 2003

Wards
1. Mark Stefanini
2. Rose Andrachuk
3. Joseph Carnevale, Chair
4. T.B.A.
5. Joshua Colle
6. Christine Nunziata, Honorary Treasurer
7. Michael Del Grande
8. Mary-Ann Rubillard, Vice-Chair
9. Catherine Lessaint-Miller
10. Barbara Poplawski
11. Angela Kennedy
12. Paul John Crawford

Milo Silva, Student Trustee

For more information about Catholic Education in Toronto and for additional copies of this 2001-2002 Director's Annual Report, please call the Communications Department, Toronto Catholic District School Board, 80 Sheppard Avenue East, at 416-222-8282, ext 5314
Fax: 416-229-5342
E-mail: commdept@tcdsb.org
or visit our website at www.tcdsb.org

This annual report was produced by the Communications Department

Director's Message

I am privileged to have been selected to serve as the Director of Education for Canada’s largest Catholic school board effective September 1, 2002.

My very best wishes are extended to our previous Director of Education, Johanne Stewart. Johanne officially retired from our Board on August 31, 2002 after her five-year term as Director of Education and a 37-year career commitment to Catholic education in the City of Toronto. Her devotion to ensuring that all of our students’ individual needs were met, welcoming parental involvement with all facets of their child’s education, and treating all staff fairly and equitably are only a few of her admirable qualities. On behalf of all staff of the Toronto Catholic District School, we bid you a warm farewell and thank you Johanne for your unending dedication.

In my inaugural speech to senior staff in August 2002, I expressed my belief in “the value of one”. This concept embraces our entire mission: from our work with each individual student, to rejoicing over the success of a single student, to our common calling and destiny to be one Church and to the celebration of diversity within our community. By treating people as valued individuals and by focusing on the unique needs and talents of our students, staff and friends we will build leadership and ensure optimum Catholic educational opportunities for our students.

During the past academic year, we focused our energies on recruitment and retention of quality staff, improvement of facilities, continued programming initiatives for our students, and increased opportunities for professional development through our new professional learning centres. We continued to emphasize literacy as a system priority, and our students are clearly benefiting from the many resources that have been channelled into this area.

The year was also marked by some very difficult decisions. The diverse needs of our students continued to outweigh the amount of money that was available in a number of areas.

Schools had to be closed in order to generate additional money for new school construction. We are hopeful that the sacrifices that were made will translate into better educational opportunities for students across our system.

Throughout the challenges, we never lost sight of one of our key partners in Catholic education. We continue to believe that parents belong at the centre of a young child’s education. The single best way to improve education is by strengthening parents’ role in it, both by reinforcing their relationship with the school and by helping and encouraging them in their own critical job of teaching the young.

World Youth Day 2002 provided a unique opportunity for us to celebrate who we are as a Catholic school board. We rejoiced in our common faith, welcomed the world and celebrated with the young people who are our future, and who we are dedicated to serving.

I acknowledge and thank the on-going support of our parents, the continued commitment of all our teaching, non-teaching staff, administrators and our strong relationship with our Churches. Through their active participation and hard work, we are able to fulfil our mission of educating students to their full potential.

I look forward to working with and for you throughout the years ahead.

Tom Donovan, Director of Education
The Toronto Catholic District School Board is a community of faith, and as such, our schools incorporate prayer, meditation, formal religious education and community service into the daily lives of our students. In 2001-2002 we were given the unique opportunity to celebrate our common faith in a very public and meaningful way as the host board for World Youth Day 2002. Our staff, students, parents and parishes participated in numerous faith building events leading up to World Youth Day.

Students “Live the Dream”

Dante Alighieri Academy launched its “Live the Dream” CD on April 4th. Sponsored by the Salesian Sisters, the CD was created specifically for World Youth Day 2002. The Dante singers went to Italy where the highlight of the concert tour were performances for Pope John Paul II, and for the Salesian Sisters and Salesian Fathers from more than 78 countries.

Rally at Downsview Park

Under the leadership of Father Massey Lombardi, more than 10,000 students from 27 elementary schools and six secondary schools were given an opportunity to welcome the Cross and celebrate the spirit of World Youth Day through prayer and song at a special rally held on June 20th at Downsview Park.

Sharing the faith

On June 27, 2002, Michael Power/St. Joseph Catholic Secondary School students brought the World Youth Day message to the homeless in Toronto’s downtown core. The school’s “God Squad Street Patrol” is dedicated to offering food and friendship to those in need.

Our day with the Cross culminated in a procession up the Humber River and an outdoor prayer service in Toronto’s west end.

The Board of Trustees approved the 2001-2002 budget totalling $684.11 million. Year-end results for 2001-2002 indicate a deficit of $0.337 million.

The Board approved the 2001-2002 Pupil Accommodation Grant (PAG), School Renewal Program in the total amount of $11.13 million.
SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS:

- All Saints Catholic School - new facility
- Bishop Allen Academy - a four-classroom addition, renovations/modifications
- Brebeuf College School - new facility
- Canadian Martyrs Catholic School - a four-classroom addition
- Cardinal Carter Academy for the Arts - five classroom alterations at Catholic Education Centre
- Dante Alighieri Academy - arts component addition
- Father John Redmond Catholic Secondary School - new facility
- Father Henry Carr Catholic Secondary School - addition/renovation or new building (to be determined)
- Francis Libermann Catholic Secondary School - addition/renovations
- Holy Cross Catholic School - major renovation
- Immaculate Conception Catholic School - new facility
- James Cardinal McGuigan Catholic Secondary School - renovations, addition
- Loretto College School - new facility
- Magr. Percy Johnson Catholic Secondary School - new facility or addition/major renovations (to be determined)
- Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School - new facility
- Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic School - new facility
- Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School - new facility
- Our Lady of Victory Catholic School - new facility
- Senator O’Connor College School - new facility
- St. Anthony Catholic School - new building
- St. Basil-the-Great Catholic School - accessibility renovations
- St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School (former St. Lucy site) - addition/renovations
- St. Jane Frances Catholic School - addition/major renovations
- St. Nicholas of Ban Catholic School - addition/renovations
- St. Robert Catholic School - new facility
- St. Timothy Catholic School - new facility
- Various “receiving” schools (resulting from consolidation of schools)
- As well, redevelopment, window replacement and roofing projects will be carried out at numerous school sites

New School for Our Lady of Victory

Approximately one third of our schools are in desperate need of repair or replacement. This is more than any other Board in the Province. According to the Ministry’s own technical evaluation of our facilities, through the Facilities Condition Index, we are ranked number 1 in need. FCI indicates that a school with a greater than 20% ratio has the following implications: “Functionality of the facility will be compromised.” 86.2% of our schools have an index greater than 20%.

The Ministry acknowledged Our Lady of Victory Catholic School as a school that is “prohibitive to repair.” It was the start of a solution to a problem that has plagued our Board for decades. We need many more of our schools deemed “prohibitive to repair” as soon as possible. We need to build new schools for our students because they deserve to be educated in an environment that is conducive to learning.

More than a decade of fundraising

During the past 12 years, the Cardinal Leger Catholic School community has raised more than $230,000 for cancer research through its annual Terry Fox Run under the leadership of Cathy Nealon. The school’s 2002 record-breaking total was more than $27,000.

Students and school communities throughout the Board put their faith into action every day through their participation in activities that support the neediest members of our own community here in Toronto, as well as those in other countries. Among the countless acts of charity that took place in 2001-2002 were:

Top 250 Students

- Bishop Ford: Dr. Nealon, the school’s 2002 record-breaking total was more than $27,000.
- Father John Redmond Catholic Secondary School: new facility
- Father Henry Carr Catholic Secondary School: addition/renovation or new building (to be determined)
- Francis Libermann Catholic Secondary School: addition/renovations
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Memorial tribute to student

Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School created a living tribute to Meagan Bebenek, a student at the school whose life was tragically lost at an early age. The school rallied behind Meagan’s family during Meagan’s illness and after her death, and to date they have created a musical tribute to celebrate the life of the young girl through the CD “Goodnight My Angel”, and helped to raise more than $98,000 for Brainchild, a research foundation of the Hospital for Sick Children through “Meagan’s Walk” held last May.

Helping children around the globe

The Michael Power/St. Joseph Catholic Secondary School Chapter of “Kids Can Free The Children” is in its third year. With the motto of “Knowledge is Power”, the goal of the organization is to educate children, in the hope that this will lead to an end to child labour exploitation in developing countries. In 2001-2002, through their docudrama and other fundraising initiatives, MPSJ students raised $3,000 to help build a school in Haiti. The 60-minute student production has become a much anticipated annual event.
The tragic events of September 11th touched the lives of our school communities in a variety of ways. At Holy Child Catholic School, students were given an opportunity to reach out to children in New York by writing letters of condolences. As the first anniversary of those letters, students create stories, poems and artwork reflecting on their experiences, students create rituals, prayer services and the shared reading of the letters was incorporated into memorial prayer services held at our school. 

Reflecting on recent events

The Board launched its first annual History Fair on February 19, which featured Senator Laurier LaFierre, noted Canadian Historian and journalist as the keynote speaker. The Board, in conjunction with Historica Canada, undertook this initiative to recognize and energize the history curriculum in the schools. The History Fair targets elementary school students in grades 6, 7 and 8. More than 300 students form grades 6, 7 and 8 from Catholic schools across Toronto presented and displayed their projects based on Canadian History on May 7, 2002 at Fort York in Toronto. 

The Board is initiating a joint task force with the Archdiocese of Toronto with the aim of building stronger ties between TCDSB schools and local parishes, and boosting enrolment in Toronto’s Catholic schools. The task force—comprising two trustees, two representatives from the Archdiocese, up to two parents and two students—will address the issue of ensuring that greater numbers of Catholic students attend Catholic public schools.

Respect for the environment

The Board’s two system priority areas for 2001–2002 school year focusing on ‘Our Catholic Community’ and ‘Literacy’ have been used to enhance local planning strategies, as well as system initiatives. A wide scope of community building activities related to World Youth Day was undertaken in schools in addition to policy consultations, visual arts and music events and the Board’s first history fair. Literacy initiatives continued around local school action planning, EQAO activities and assessments, and Fifth Block activities. Data analysis comparing 1999 grade 3 results with 2001 Grade 6 results on EQAO testing is highly encouraging and Canadian Achievement Tests (CAT/3) for grade 7 students were very good for a large urban board.

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System and Board priorities 2001- 2002 Update

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TCDSB students remember

Each year our schools hold a variety of liturgies, prayer services and commemorative celebrations to acknowledge the contributions made by Canada’s veterans to ensuring our freedom and way of life. Remembrance Day has become an important part of the curriculum and prayer life in our schools. Veterans are invited to speak to students about their experiences, students create stories, poems and artwork reflecting on themes of peace and hope for the world, and prayer services are held to celebrate our hope for the future.

First Annual History Fair

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TCDSB and Archdiocese of Toronto Joint Task Force

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Respect for the environment

Schools around the Board participate in a variety of activities during Earth Week, and throughout the year, in an effort to reduce waste, heighten awareness of environmental issues and demonstrate a respect for the world that God has given us. Chaminade College School has shown tremendous leadership in this area through its Environmental Club led by teachers Robert Giza and Tino Romano. The club has been recognized with a Toronto Catholic District School Board Exemplary Practice Award (2001), Toronto & Region Remedial Action Plan Award (2002), Black Creek Businessmen’s Conservation Award (2001) and the Mel Lastman Award for Environmental Excellence (1999). Among the school’s initiatives are an annual clean-up of Black Creek, the growing of Gloxinia houseplants, tree planting, erosion control and bank stabilization, and the raising of trout and salmon in the school’s fish hatchery, which are released each year into Black Creek and the Humber River. This September, the club began the Chaminade Trail, which has received funding of $20,000.00 (May 2002) from the “Friends of the Environment” and “The Trillium Fund”. This trail will run the length of Black Creek and will re-introduce people of this area to a resource that had been lost for 50 years.

First Annual History Fair

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Response to EQAO grade 9 mathematics results
The Board has responded to the results of the first assessment of grade 9 mathematics by EQAO with a rigorous and detailed action plan for improvement, which includes:
- Using a variety of models to in-service teachers and administrators on the changes needed in instruction and assessment.
- Providing in-service for new teachers without existing mathematics qualifications to build the specialized skills needed for intermediate mathematics instruction.
- Providing additional intermediate resources that include manipulatives, calculators and textbooks.
- Developing strategies to ensure that grade 9 students are selecting the grade 9 mathematics course that best meets their needs.
- Investigating the impact of non-semestering on student performance in mathematics.
- Continuing to pursue additional qualification courses for intermediate staff with the universities.
- Reviewing and expanding the implementation of the locally developed mathematics course in grade 9.
- Ensuring that parts of the grade 9 EQAO assessment in mathematics are included as part of the student’s summative assessment.
- Establishing curriculum-writing projects to develop additional resources for teachers in:
  1. Sample assessments with examples of student work in all four levels of grade 7, 8 & 9
  2. Curriculum planning guides for grade 7, 8 and the grade 9 applied course
  3. Curriculum resources for a revised locally developed mathematics program in grade 9
  4. Resource guide for principals to assist with the assessment and evaluation of the mathematics program delivered in their school.
- Expanding after-school and summer remedial programs for intermediate students experiencing difficulty.
- Providing strategies to support the development of local expertise in mathematics by providing the benefits of a "rotary" type model for mathematics to permit selected teachers to teach more than one class of mathematics at more than one grade level.
- Exploring best practices of schools and other school boards that performed well.

Board shares results of 2002 CAT/3 testing
Of the 6,874 grade 7 students enrolled in TCDSB elementary schools, 6,519 students participated in the 2002 CAT/3 testing. TCDSB “regular scored” students were at or above the Canadian norm for all CAT/3 subtests. Students were tested in Mathematics, Computation and Numerical Estimation, Reading, Language, Vocabulary and Spelling, with the majority of students demonstrating “competence” in all of the specific skills evaluated within each of the subtests.

After-school literacy programs
The Board initiated 82 after-school literacy and numeracy programs for students in grades 7 to 10 for an eight-week period in the spring of 2001. This was in addition to the secondary school credit courses, which were already being offered in those areas.

The pilot project, aimed at students in grades 7 through 10, was made possible through the Ministry of Education’s Learning Opportunities Grant. Preliminary response to the programs has been positive, and the Board intends to continue to offer these during the 2002-2003 academic year.

New Initiatives
Homework Guidelines
Homework guidelines were approved for students in grades 1 through 12. Parents, teachers and Catholic School Advisory Council members were surveyed with respect to areas such as time guidelines, purpose of assignments, type of homework and the role of the parent in assisting the student. Each school will develop a Homework Policy in consultation with the Catholic School Advisory Council and share the policy with all students and parents. The policy will be reviewed annually. The Homework Guidelines have been available on the Board’s Internet site at www.tcdsb.org in the “Curriculum” and “Students” sections.

Support for Programs for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders
The Board has witnessed an increase in the number of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder. The TCDSB and the Special Education Advisory Committee have requested that the Ministry of Health immediately begin to conduct research to determine the potential cause for the exponential increase in the diagnosis of children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder. Funds have also been requested to better assist school staff with the unique needs as they are transferred from pre-school autism service to the regular school setting.

Before- and After-School Programs
Funding in the amount of $34,000 has been allocated from Economic Development funds to support the start up costs for 12 before- and after-school programs throughout the City of Toronto. There are currently 26 full day childcare centres and 45 before- and after-school programs operating in TCDSB schools.

School-based Professional Learning Centres
During the 2001 - 2002 school year the Board established four centres to provide school-based professional development opportunities for staff. The centres offer an additional strategy to enhance instruction and school improvement while providing an environment for teachers and administrators to share instructional best practices. The first of the four centres opened on March 25th at St. Maria Goretti Catholic School in Scarborough. Centres also opened at St. Dorothy Catholic School in Etobicoke, St. Charles Catholic School in North York, and St. Sebastian Catholic School in Toronto.

Interim Information Technology Plan
An interim information technology plan to respond to the immediate needs of elementary and secondary schools to maintain and augment the infrastructure with current desktop technology was approved. The plan should provide for increased accessibility of IT based resources to students, enhanced reliability and effectiveness of these resources and compliance with new Ministry of Education guidelines and expectations, as well as support for the Board’s curriculum initiatives.

IB Program
The Board was approved to offer the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program at both Michael Power/St. Joseph Catholic Secondary School in Etobicoke and Pope John Paul II Catholic Secondary School in Scarborough. The IB program, recognized worldwide, is a comprehensive two-year, pre-university curriculum, which integrates requirements for the Ontario Secondary School Diploma and requirements for the IB Diploma. Pre-IB studies will commence in 2002-03.

Three-year targets for improved literacy levels
The Board believes that with the proper supports in schools, the targets for improved literacy can be met by 2004. While the Early Reading Strategy has supported and enhanced the Board’s Balanced Literacy Program, TCDSB will continue to require additional financial support to ensure success.

Continued Commitment To Language Programs
International Languages Program
In January, the TCDSB paid tribute to staff and numerous partners and members of the community who have supported and contributed to the success of the Board’s International Languages Programs and launched a multi-media CD-ROM, an exceptional resource for our teachers and students. We continue to work closely with Centro Scuola to develop programs aimed at improving literacy among students and to keep their heritage alive through the preservation of their language and culture. Over 30,000 students are studying 23 languages during the regular extended school day, as well as after regular school hours.

French Language Programs
The Board is committed to teaching Canada’s other official language to its students through special programs for teaching French as a Second Language in its schools. The Board offers Core French at all levels in every school starting at grade 1. French Immersion and Extended French are offered at selected elementary and secondary schools.
On November 13, 2001, the Board held its first gala awards event to recognize the outstanding accomplishments of staff and students, and to acknowledge contributions to the Board and to Catholic education as a whole. “A Tribute to Our TCDSB Community” will be held twice each year.

The TCDSB Award of Merit was awarded to Sister Lucille Corrigan, CND and Sister Conrad Lauber, CSJ, former TCDSB principals, as well as to Michael Doyle, former Trustee, for their years of service to the Board and their outstanding contributions to Catholic education.

The TCDSB Alumni Award was presented for the first time in November 2001, to recognize former students who are still active in the Catholic community, and who have distinguished themselves in their careers or accomplishments. The first recipients of the new award were Julian Fantino, Chief of Police, Toronto Police Services and Guy Giorno, Chief of Education.

Residents who were honoured for their achievements included Gabriel Ayyavoo, Stephen Galati, All Saints Catholic School, received the Student Achievement Award for winning the Canada Staples Depot National Writing Challenge.

Peggy Ann Walpole, R.N., C.M. founder of Street Haven at the Crossroads were honoured with the Award.

The Asht Jaffer Award for Excellence in Special Education was presented to Jose Lobo, to Mary Sturino, and to the team of Michael Pautler, Christopher Arczewski and Pina Gareri.

The Sister Mary Hamilton Award for Exceptional Students was presented to Sarah Aiello and to Rosemary Romeo. The Father Andrew Cuschieri Award for students who have accomplished a humanitarian act towards another human being was presented to Joanna Amaya, Dawn-Flora Angue and Sarah Dobilas.

Approximately 250 students from across the Board were presented with the TCDSB Student Achievement Award for excelling provincially, nationally or internationally.

The Certificate of Appreciation was presented to more than 180 students, parents and staff to acknowledge service and contributions to the TCDSB.

Certificates of Appreciation for their work in the Catholic Student Support.

St. Francis de Sales Catholic School.

St. Norbert Catholic School.

St. Francis de Sales Catholic School.

St. Norbert Catholic School.

 approximate students received

Certificates of Appreciation for their work in the Catholic Student Leadership Program.

The TCDSB Exemplary Practice Award was presented to 12 individual school communities for innovative and dynamic approaches to program and service delivery and the initiation of special projects that enhance the learning experience for students in their schools. The recipients of the 2001-2002 Award were:

- Ward 1 Monsignor Percy Johnson Catholic Secondary School for its “Grade 10 History Mock Trial”
- Ward 2 Nativist of Our Lord Catholic School for its “Catholic Women’s League Reading Intervention Program”, a guided reading strategy to assist students in developing reading strategies, fluency, comprehension, and self-confidence
- Ward 3 St. Francis de Sales Catholic School for its “Turn Around program” to change behaviours and improve perception of St. Francis de Sales Catholic School.
- Ward 4 St. Norbert Catholic School for its “EQAO preparation program”
- Ward 5 St. Joseph Morrow Park Catholic Secondary School for its “Catholic Schools United Nations Assembly”, a simulated model of the United Nations which encourages students to immerse themselves in the world of diplomacy by addressing the real issues of today’s world
- Ward 6 Stella Maris Catholic School for its “EQAO preparation program”
- Ward 7 St. Maximilian Kolbe Catholic School for its “House League program” to encourage participation in a variety of activities, including athletics, thereby fostering a team and school spirit
- Ward 8 Francis Libermann Catholic Secondary School for its “Grade 10 Canadian History Fair”
- Ward 9 Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic School for its “Volunteers, Making A Difference” to promote the partnership between school, parent, and child
- Ward 10 St. Anthony Catholic School for its “Word Max Literacy Tournament” to provide students at the junior and intermediate levels, with an entertaining, accessible, and engaging activity that would reinforce and complement ongoing instruction in the development of literacy skills
- Ward 11 St. Catherine Catholic School for its “Active School” program which stresses the importance of physical activity in our daily lives
- Ward 12 St. Rose of Lima Catholic School for its “Kindergarten Math Work Program” which allows both parent and child the opportunity to discuss, listen, investigate, and experiment while discovering together

Tribute to TCDSB Community