



NEWS RELEASE

September 12, 2019

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**TORONTO CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
TRUSTEES 2019-2020**

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All TCDSB Schools Equipped with Automated External Defibrillators

Toronto - St. Lawrence Catholic School unveiled their new Automated External Defibrillator (AED) this morning. The school is one of 72 sites that received a new AED unit over the summer as part of the Board's plan to install AEDs in all schools and facilities by the end of 2019. All 202 TCDSB facilities are now equipped with the potentially lifesaving device.

TCDSB parent, Veronica Olmedo joined the milestone celebration. In December of 2018, Ms. Olmedo delegated at a Board meeting with a plea to equip schools with defibrillators after her oldest daughter died of a rare, genetic heart disorder. Both she and her youngest daughter have the same condition.

Following the unveiling, students learned how to operate the device through an AED demonstration by members of [The Mikey Network](#).

"We appreciate the feedback provided by parents, staff, students and other community members regarding AEDs and we continue to look for opportunities that help us ensure the safety and well-being of all our staff and students, which is always our number one priority," says **Chair Maria Rizzo**. "Through this partnership with The Mikey Network, we have successfully achieved our goal of having every school site equipped with an AED by the end of 2019, ahead of schedule."

"Today marks an important moment, aimed at putting a spotlight on the challenge that people living with rare, congenital heart conditions face on a daily basis, as well as the emotional toll it takes on their loved ones", says **Vice Chair Michael Del Grande**. "Events like this give us an opportunity to come together as a Catholic community to show our support to those vulnerable to incidents of sudden cardiac arrest and to show them that there is help."

"The implementation of AEDs reflects our continued commitment to well-being for our students, staff, parents and other stakeholders articulated in our Multi-Year Strategic Goals," says **Director of Education Rory McGuckin**. "The defibrillators are safe and can be used by anyone in an emergency situation, with the assistance of step-by-step automated instructions within the device. Many of our school staff have already received AED training, and additional staff will be trained."

For photos from today's event, visit our [website](#).

Facts:

- In December, 2018, the Board of Trustees approved the allocation of approximately \$210,000 to fund the purchase of AEDs
- Staff received CPR and AED training over the 2019 March Break. The Board also arranged ten (10) first aid courses during the 2018-2019 school year so that a minimum of two (2) staff members per school are trained in standard first aid, CPR and AED use. Most schools already have more than two (2) certified first aiders.

For a full list of TCDSB sites that received an AED unit over the summer, refer to our [Background](#).

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The Toronto Catholic District School Board educates more than 92,000 students from diverse cultures and language backgrounds in 198 Catholic elementary and secondary schools, serving over half-a-million Catholic school supporters across the City of Toronto. As the world's largest publicly funded Catholic school system, we educate students in an inclusive learning community rooted in the love of Christ, where they are challenged to grow in grace and knowledge and to lead lives of faith, hope and charity.

At Toronto Catholic we transform the world through witness, faith, innovation and action.