

ST. FIDELIS CATHOLIC SCHOOL

DIGNITY • EXCELLENCE • PRIDE

SEPTEMBER 2019



9 Bannerman Street
Toronto, Ontario M6L 2S5
Tel. (416) 393-5358
Fax. (416) 397-6315

Mackie Coluccio, Principal
Maria Abate-Sampogna, Vice Principal
Gerri Grossi-Capizzano, Head Secretary

School Hours of Operation:
8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Lunch: 11:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

Maria Meehan, Superintendent
416-222-8282 extension 2732

Daniel Di Giorgio Trustee
416-512-3410

Alenna Emer, Co-Chair
Linda Lisi, Co-Chair
(416) 222-8282 Voice Mailbox #88358
cspc.stfidelis@tcdsb.org

St. Fidelis Parish
Father Shibil John Pariyathu Padavil
33 Connie Street North York
M6L 2H8 (416) 247-8741

FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK

Dear Parents and Guardians,



Update on Negotiations with CUPE

The Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) is involved in province-wide, central collective bargaining with the Council of Trustee Associations and the provincial government.

At the Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB), CUPE represents caretaking, maintenance and warehouse staff, office clerical and technical staff, school based support staff including

Child and Youth Workers and Education Assistants, and secondary school supervisors as well as International Language Instructors-

The TCDSB has been advised that the members of the CUPE may begin job action as early as Monday, September 30, beginning with work-to-rule sanctions.

The health and safety of students and staff is deeply important to us.

If there is any impact to regular school operations, parents will receive communications through the following methods:

- School Messenger (please ensure that your school has current and up to date telephone numbers and email addresses on file for your family)
- Twitter (follow @TCDSB)
- TCDSB website www.tcdsb.org
- 24-hour telephone information line 416-222-8282 ext. 2873

The Board wishes to assure parents and students that every effort will be made to ensure that all elementary and secondary schools, day care centres, before- and after-school programs and nutrition programs will continue to remain open as long as it is safe to do so.

School bus transportation for eligible students will continue.

Parents are encouraged to contact their local school principal with any questions or issues of local concern.

Introducing the Secondary School Online Application for Registration (SEC SOAR.TCDSB.ORG)

We are announcing some exciting news regarding the Secondary School Application Process for enrolment in September 2020. On **Tuesday, October 15, 2019**, the Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB) will officially launch the new **Secondary School Online Application** website, **SEC SOAR.TCDSB.ORG**.

Some exciting features of the online application include:

- easy tracking of the status of your child's application,
- complete the Specialty Program Application along with your regular program application through one application,
- email notifications for offers of placement,
- accept/decline offers of placement you receive electronically.

Important note: a current email address on file with your elementary school is required in order to create your child's application/account on October 15th, 2019. **If you do not have an email address on file, please be sure to submit this information to your elementary school office before Tuesday, October 8th, 2019.**

For a full guide to completing the on line application, please visit the TCDBS website at www.tcdsb.org → Admissions & Placement Department page, to view the "Parent Guide to Completing the Secondary School Online Application" information guide.

PARENT OPPORTUNITIES & INFORMATION

Safe Schools Advisory Committee: Parent Reps Needed

TCDSB Seeks 2 Parent Reps for Safe School Advisory Committee. **Application deadline October 18, 2019.**

[Click here for an application and more information.](#)

TCDSB Environment Steering Committee

TCDSB is seeking 2 community/parent representatives for its Environment Steering Committee.

All positions are voluntary and candidates must be parents who presently have children enrolled in TCDSB.

Applications are available at: <https://www.tcdsb.org/FORPARENTS/Documents/Parent-%20Community%20Member%20Application%20Form-2016-R.pdf>

Completed applications can be sent via email to communityrep@tcdsb.org

Application deadline: OCTOBER 25, 2019

Toronto CPIC Annual Report 2018-2019

[Click here to access the Toronto Catholic Parent Involvement Committee Annual Report for 2018-2019.](#)

CPIC Elections

October 28 and 29, 2019

Nomination forms accepted until October 18, 2019

<https://www.tcdsb.org/CPIC-Elections>

STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES & INFORMATION

TDCAA Athletics

Girls Basketball West and Girls Field Hockey Season are underway

Coming soon:

- Cross Country Championships: **Friday, October 25** at Etobicoke Centennial
- Golf Championship: **Thursday October 3** at Station Creek Golf Club
- Tennis Preliminaries:
 - Junior Tournament: **Thursday October 10** at Mayfair West
 - Senior Tournament **Thursday October 17** at Mayfair West
- Tennis Championship: **Wednesday, October 30** at Mayfair West

[Click here for a full list of upcoming TDCAA events.](#)

Elementary Athletics

October 16, 2019—Elementary Cross-Country Regionals (North and South)

October 17, 2019— Elementary Cross-Country Regionals (East and West)

October 22, 2019-- Elementary Cross-Country City Finals

High School Open Houses for Grade 8 Students and Their Families

High school information nights are being hosted at secondary schools around the City **until October 16th.**

[Click here for a complete schedule of dates, times and locations.](#)

Ontario Colleges Information Fair

October 23-24 at the Enercare Centre, Exhibition Place <https://ocif.ca/>

TCDSB Newcomer Student Leadership Conference

TCDSB will once again welcome newcomer students at the annual **Newcomer Student Leadership**

Conference, which will be held this year on **Wednesday, October 16**. TCDSB schools are invited to extend an invitation to at least two newcomer students from grades 7 to 12 (maximum of 10) to attend this free event.

[Click here to complete online event registration on or before October 2, 2019.](#)

BOARD & COMMITTEE MEETINGS

OAPCE: Oct. 1
Student Achievement Committee: Oct. 2
Labour Relations Ad Hoc Committee: Oct. 3
By-Laws Ad Hoc Committee: Oct. 7
Governance and Policy Committee: Oct. 8
Corporate Services Committee: Oct. 10
SEAC: Oct. 16
Regular Board: Oct. 17

[Click here to review information and agendas.](#)

To view minutes or video broadcasts from previous meetings, select the **Past Meetings** tab on the page.

Policies Currently Under Review/Revision:

Update to Trustee Code of Conduct Policy T.04
Update to Awards Funds and Scholarships Policy FF.01
Update to Catholic School Parent Councils Policy S.10

EVENTS AND INFORMATION

- **October is Hispanic Canadian Heritage Month**
- **October is also Principals' Month**
Recognition Days:
- **October 2, 2019 Custodial Workers' Appreciation Day**
- **October 5, 2019 World Teachers' Day**
- **October 25, 2019 Early Childhood Educators and Childcare Worker Appreciation Day**

Walk to School Day: October 2, 2019

Walk to School Day is an opportunity for all of us—students, staff, families—to focus on improved health and well-being, active lifestyles and building safer communities for everyone. Register your school for Walk to School Day and receive a Certificate of Participation from Canada Walks. [Click here for more information.](#)

Feast of Creation: An Ecumenical Gathering

Celebrate the Season of Creation with contemplative prayer and music. **Friday, October 4** from 6:30 – 8 p.m. at St. Basil's Church (50 St. Joseph Street, Toronto). [Click here for more information on this and other upcoming events at The Mary Ward Centre.](#)

World Mental Health Day

October 10, 2019

<https://www.tcdsb.org/pages/world-mental-health-day.aspx>

System-Wide PA Day

October 11, 2019

Thanksgiving

October 14, 2019

International Day for Eradication of Poverty

October 17, 2019 <https://www.tcdsb.org/pages/international-day-for-eradication-of-poverty.aspx>

Inaugural Rosary Bowl

The Toronto Rosary Bowl will take place **Saturday, October 19th** from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Blessed Cardinal Newman (100 Brimley Road South, Scarborough). [Click here for more information about this family-friendly event.](#)

Federal Election

October 21, 2019

School Bus Safety Week

October 20-25, 2019

School bus driver appreciation day October 22, 2019

<https://www.tcdsb.org/pages/international-day-for-eradication-of-poverty.aspx>

Mark Your Calendar!

Special Services Information Fair

November 9, 2019 (watch for details www.tcdsb.org)



Transition Back to School

Returning to school can elicit a mixed bag of emotions for students. While it may be exciting to think about reuniting with school friends or upcoming events that will take place this year, there may also be some anxiety around new routines and expectations, academic work, or peer dynamics. Transitioning back to school may be particularly challenging for students with learning disabilities and/or mental health struggles. Here are a few tips to ensure a good start to the new academic year for all:



HAPPY "NEW YEAR!"

The new school year is a good time to set new habits. Consider meeting together as a family to discuss a family goal.

The TCDSB Mental Health Team wishes all families a smooth transition back to school and a productive, enjoyable Fall!

1. **Express excitement** about the new school year and highlight upcoming opportunities or activities.
2. **Encourage your child to self-reflect** on last school year in order to set goals for this year (e.g., which goals were met; what was difficult; what worked?). Set new goals and discuss manageable steps to work towards the goals.
3. **Encourage your child to get involved** in teams, clubs, or other extra-curricular activities. This type of involvement can foster a sense of belonging and increase self-esteem.
4. **Establish collaborative relationships** with your child's teacher(s) and other members of his/her support team (e.g., resource teacher, EA, CYW) early in the school year. Set up a meeting or a phone call and discuss your child's strengths, needs, and goals.
5. **Discuss expectations about homework and study times.** Involve your child in setting up an appropriate homework space and/or a portable homework "kit" with needed supplies.
6. **Involve your child in creating a schedule** that includes getting enough sleep, outdoor exercise, and boundaries around screen time.

Getting Back to a Sleep Routine

After enjoying late summer nights and having little routine in place throughout the day, it can often be a struggle to get back into a sleep schedule. Good sleep hygiene supports us in feeling re-energized for those early morning wake-ups and fueled throughout the school day. Here are 3 easy ways to improve your sleep (for both parents and kids!):

Maintain a regular schedule – ensure you are going to sleep and waking up at the same time every day. As you are building this habit, it might be useful to keep a sleep log to track timing until your body clock gets used to a consistent pattern.

Choose a relaxing sleep time activity – refrain from using screen time including computer, phone, or TV as a go-to bedtime ritual. These devices will only stimulate alertness in the mind and make it more difficult to fall asleep. Instead, try going for a walk, talking to a friend, or reading a book to promote relaxation.

Spend less time in bed – this includes staying in bed after your alarm goes off in the morning, and when you find yourself awake or unable to sleep at night. During these times, it can often be helpful to leave the bedroom until your mind has quieted down. If you find your mind is still racing, try falling asleep or waking up to a mindfulness/meditation exercise, relaxing sounds, or a story. Some of my personal favourites are available on the free version of an app called *Calm*. Sleep well! (Written by: School Social Worker Amanda Costabile)

(Source: National Sleep Foundation)

Attendance Matters!

School attendance and school success go hand in hand. Not only do students lose valuable opportunities for learning when they are absent, they also lose opportunities to connect with caring adults as well as their peers. Meaningful connections with others can act as a buffer against stress, can enhance happiness, and can even protect us against depression. See the following tips to help with getting your child to school regularly so they can reap the benefits!

- **Set good habits in September.** Research shows that students who miss between 2 and 4 days in September continue to miss 2-3 days on average each month, totaling about 25 days for the year!
- **Help your child get organized the night before** (e.g., lay out clothes, make lunches, pack backpacks).
- **Ensure your child is getting enough sleep** (9 to 11 hours per night for ages 5–13 years; 8 to 10 hours per night for ages 14–17 years).
- **If your child reports feeling unwell frequently, speak to your family doctor;** be aware that frequent complaints of a stomach ache or headache can be a sign of anxiety.
- **Talk to teachers and the school principal if your child seems anxious** about going to school and/or there are other barriers to regular attendance. There are many supports available at school (e.g., guidance counselors, social workers, psychology staff, CYW's).

(Sources: Attendance Works.org; PsychologyToday.com; Baltimore Education Research Consortium, July 2014); Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines)



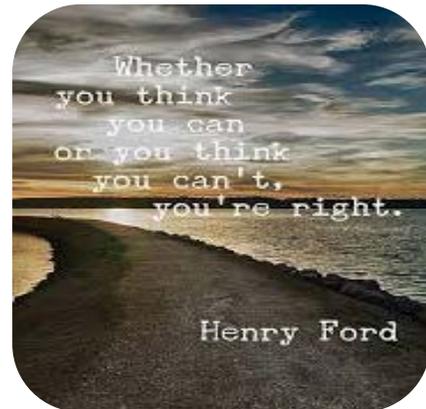
Rooted in Christ: We Believe

As the second year of our current three-year pastoral plan begins, let us reflect on the concept of *believing*. As a community of believers, we know that God is present in all of us. To strengthen both our faith and our mental health it is important that we believe in ourselves.

Our core beliefs begin developing in childhood, so consider the following tips for influencing your child's beliefs about him/herself:

1. **Praise positive character traits** that you witness in action (e.g., if you see your child comforting an upset sibling or friend, remark that the child is a caring person).
2. **Praise effort rather than result.** When you praise hard work your child will feel capable and will believe that hard work pays off.
3. **If you hear the words "I can't,"** encourage the child to remember a time when he/she accomplished something else that was challenging.
4. **When you hear a negative statement from your child,** help him/her to write down the reasons the belief might not be true.
5. **Remember: "the way we talk to our children becomes their inner voice"** (Peggy O'Mara).

(Sources: PsychologyToday.com; Allparenting.com)



Supporting Your Child through Hard Emotions

As parents, we want to see our children happy. When we see they are unhappy we often jump into "fix-it" mode. Whether that means trying to cheer them up, distract them from their distress, or solve their problems, it is best to avoid the urge to "fix" right away. Children/youth need to feel free to experience and express a range of emotions in order to come to acceptance that these emotions are part of life and that they are not permanent. Acceptance of emotion helps develop resilience. To support your child/youth during hard times, practice reflective listening. Listen for the emotion in their stories and reflect it back to them (e.g., "It sounds like math was very overwhelming today."). When they feel heard and validated, it will bring the emotion down and they may then be ready to problem solve with your assistance.

(Sources: PsychologyToday.com (05/21/13); Washington Post, (08/26/19))

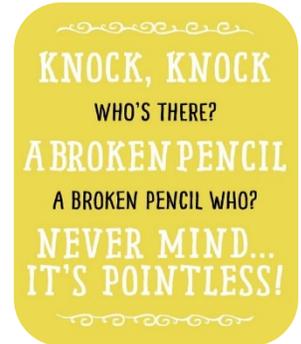


A Laugh a Day...

The **Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines** have been referenced throughout this newsletter. Take a closer look at the recommendations for Sleep, Screen Time, and Physical Activity at this link:

www.csepguidelines.ca

A **2019 study** revealed that only 5% of children are meeting the recommendations in all three categories. Thirty percent are not meeting ANY of the recommendations (Source: AAP Publications, 2019/08/21).



Community Mental Health Resources

Kids Help Phone 1-800-668-6868 www.kidshelpphone.ca

Professional and confidential counseling available 24/7 via phone. Text and live chat are also available (see website).

What's Up Walk-in Counseling www.whatsupwalkin.ca

Professional, confidential walk-in counseling for children, youth, and their families. No fee. No appointment. Health card not required. Six locations across Toronto. See website for locations and hours of operation.

211 Toronto www.211toronto.ca

24/7 information and referral to community and social services.

Featured Mental Health Resource:

Mental Health T.O. is a free phone service to help connect anyone under the age of 18 to mental health and addiction services in their community.

Phone: 1-866-585-6486 (9 a.m. – 5 p.m.)

* For more information visit the website: www.mentalhealthto.ca *

September 21st is International Day of Peace. Let us all remember that:



This newsletter is brought to you by the TCDSB Mental Health Team. Feel free to contact us with any comments, questions, or suggestions at 416-222-8282 (extensions below):

Marie-Josée Gendron, PhD, C.Psych.
Melissa Hanlon, MSW, RSW

TCDSB Chief of Mental Health Strategy and Staff Well-Being , ext. 2774
TCDSB Mental Health Lead, ext. 2772

Special thank-you to School Social Worker Amanda Constabile MSW, RSW for her contributions to this edition