



York Catholic District School Board Director's Annual Report 2013-2014

Mission Statement

Guided by Gospel Values and Catholic Virtues, in partnership with home and Church, we educate and inspire all students to reach their full potential in a safe and caring environment.

Vision Statement

Our students will become creative and critical thinkers who integrate Catholic Values into their daily lives, as socially responsible global citizens.

Core Values



Strategic Commitments

Integration of Our Catholic Faith

Continuous Improvement of Student Achievement

Effective Use of Our Resources

Engaging Our Communities



York Catholic District School Board

Website: www.ycdsb.ca

Twitter: @YCDSB

Address: 320 Bloomington Road West, Aurora, ON L4G 0M1

Phone: 905-713-1211 • 416-221-5051





The York Catholic District School Board provides Catholic educational programming to over 55,000 students in Kindergarten to Grade 12, as well as, general interest and language courses for the public through its Continuing Education Department. It operates 104 schools located throughout the Regional Municipality of York, which is comprised of nine municipalities: Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, King, Vaughan, and Whitchurch-Stouffville.

The York Catholic District School Board is consistently ranked as one of the top-performing school boards in the province of Ontario. It is governed by 10 publicly-elected trustees, and has over 6,000 staff, making it one of the region's largest employers.

Director's Message



I invite you to celebrate the tremendous successes that our students and staff have achieved over the 2013-2014 year. In my many visits to our schools and classrooms during the school year, I can attest that it has been a productive year for all of us.

The York Catholic District School Board remains one of the top-performing school boards in the province, and this is thanks to our partnership with parent and parish communities. Our 2014 EQAO and OSSLT results showed that our students continued to outperform their provincial counterparts in every category of testing.

York Catholic schools are places of excellence where students learn, grow, and deepen their faith. It is heartwarming to witness the Catholic spirit in our schools through numerous faith-filled and charitable activities. Since Pope Francis began his papacy in 2013, it has been clear that our students and staff look to him for guidance. His message of charity and goodwill resonated with students and inspired the first-ever, student led, province-wide mass during Catholic Education Week.

Throughout the year, staff and students demonstrated their faith in action through a variety of activities: all of our schools were united through our journey in the "Walk of Faith"; our namesake schools celebrated the canonizations of St. John XXIII and St. John Paul II; our students embarked on service trips to the Dominican Republic and to Peru to help build new schools; and over 200 elementary school students gathered at the CEC for the annual Social Justice Symposium, Luke 4:18.

At the Board table, we leveraged each dollar to best achieve our focus on student achievement and well-being, and continued to make decisions that supported 21st century learning initiatives.

This year, the Board initiated the development of a Multi-Year Strategic Plan. In Spring 2014, we reached out to all stakeholder groups through the "Planning Our Future Together" online survey. The development of the Multi-Year Strategic Plan was led by members on our Strategic Planning Advisory and Steering Committee who used the stakeholder feedback to create a new Mission, Vision, Core Values and Strategic Commitments. The cumulative result was our new Multi-Year Strategic Plan which was released in October 2014.

To continue with the momentum of our Multi-Year Strategic Plan, this Annual Report reflects our new Board commitments. These commitments provide a clear and concise focus and are reflective of the feedback from our key stakeholders. Our Strategic Commitments include the: Integration of Our Catholic Faith, Continuous Improvement of Student Achievement, Effective Use of Our Resources, and Engaging Our Communities.

We have accomplished much over the last year, and this Annual Report highlights a small sample of the many new initiatives, success stories, and innovative programs at York Catholic. I am thankful for the continuous support of trustees, senior staff, administrators, teachers, support staff, parents, parishes and community partners for their commitment to Catholic education. At York Catholic our greatest strength is our commitment to collaboration. By working together, we can achieve our new vision where all students will become creative and critical thinkers who integrate Catholic Values into their daily lives, as socially responsible global citizens.

Sincerely,

Patricia Preston
Director of Education



Chair's Message

During the 2013-2014 school year, we celebrated Catholic Education Week with the theme, *Serving in the Love of Christ*. To serve with justice is to be the hands and feet of Jesus. At York Catholic, there is a special spirit of giving, compassion, hope, and responsibility that inspires our students and staff to make positive differences in their schools and communities by serving one another in the love of Christ.

Trustees and Senior Staff reached out to our communities, engaging all of our Board stakeholders in a variety of ways this past year. In March 2013, we began the process of developing a Multi-Year Strategic Plan. A number of collaborative consultations followed, including an online survey inviting all stakeholders to provide their input on the Board's Mission, Vision, Core Values, Board Priorities and to identify strengths and areas for improvement. The feedback received was invaluable and we thank everyone who participated. The results of the survey are available on our website at www.ycdsb.ca/strategicplan.

The past two years saw the development and implementation of the Board's Exit Survey - an opportunity to engage York Catholic students and gather their feedback and perspectives. The survey completed by our Grade 8 and Grade 11 students, asked about their school experience, why they choose certain high schools, and what their intended plans were post graduation. The feedback received will assist the Board to better understand the needs of our students so that we can successfully tailor programming to address those needs.

As we celebrate the many successes of our Catholic school system, we are mindful that this is a trying time for Catholic education. Financial pressures, as we strive to meet the complex needs of all our students in a budgetary paradigm that leaves little room for flexibility, have also been a challenge. I have no doubt that we will remain united in our vocation as Catholic school trustees, to achieve the goals we set forth in our new Multi-Year Strategic Plan.

Under the leadership of His Eminence, Thomas Cardinal Collins there has been a strengthening of the relationship between all the partners in Catholic education. We are thankful for his vision and we are excited to create new ways to elevate the profile of Catholic education within our own communities.

I thank our many partners in education -- our staff, students, parents, parishes, all levels of government and community partners for their meaningful contributions to York Catholic.

I would also like to thank my fellow trustees for their continued support to our Board, our schools and our constituents. Together we will strive to make informed decisions to ensure that our students reach their full potential in safe and caring environments.

God Bless,

Elizabeth Crowe
Chair of the Board of Trustees

Board of Trustees



Elizabeth Crowe
Aurora / King /
Whitchurch-Stouffville
elizabeth.crowe@ycdsb.ca



Theresa McNicol
East Gwillimbury /
Georgina / Newmarket
theresa.mcnicol@ycdsb.ca



Carol Cotton
Markham
(Thornhill / Unionville)
carol.cotton@ycdsb.ca



Marlene Mogado
Markham (Milliken /
Markham / Unionville)
marlene.mogado@ycdsb.ca



Teresa Ciaravella
Vaughan
(Maple / Kleinburg)
teresa.ciaravella@ycdsb.ca



Dino Giuliani
Vaughan (Woodbridge,
Area 2, Ward 2)
dino.giuliani@ycdsb.ca



Maria Carnovale
Vaughan (Woodbridge,
Area 3, Ward 3)
maria.carnovale@ycdsb.ca



Cathy Ferlisi
Vaughan
(Concord / Thornhill)
cathy.ferlisi@ycdsb.ca



Dominic Mazzotta
Richmond Hill
dominic.mazzotta@ycdsb.ca



Ann Stong
Richmond Hill
ann.stong@ycdsb.ca



Joe McLeod
Junior Student Trustee



Michael Pallotto
Senior Student Trustee

Table of Contents

6 **Integration of Our Catholic Faith**

- 7 Luke 4:18 Symposium Inspires Students to Walk the Talk
- 7 Walk of Faith
- 8 Our Catholic Schools Shine Through Acts of Charity
- 8 Celebrating Milestones in Catholic Education
- 8 York Catholic Schools Celebrate Canonization of Two Great Popes
- 8 Province-Wide Mass

9 **Continuous Improvement of Student Achievement**

- 10 21st Century #YCDSB21C
- 11 York Catholic's Top Scholar
- 11 Recognizing Excellence in Leadership
- 11 Safe and Caring Schools
- 12 Comprehensive Mental Health and Addiction Strategy
- 12 Desire for Change: Digital Citizenship #followthechange
- 12 Students Host Leadership Links: Desire to Inspire
- 13 Continuing Education: Serving Children and Adults in the Community
- 14 YCDSB Students Out-Perform Provincial Peers in EQAO Testing
- 14 Literacy
- 14 Numeracy
- 15 EQAO Standardized Test Results
- 17 Programs and Pathways
- 17 Specialist High Skills Major
- 17 Expansion of French Immersion
- 18 First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) Committee
- 18 Investing in Music Education
- 19 Looking Ahead: 2014-2015 YCDSB Plan to Improve Student Achievement and Well-Being

20 **Effective Use of Our Resources**

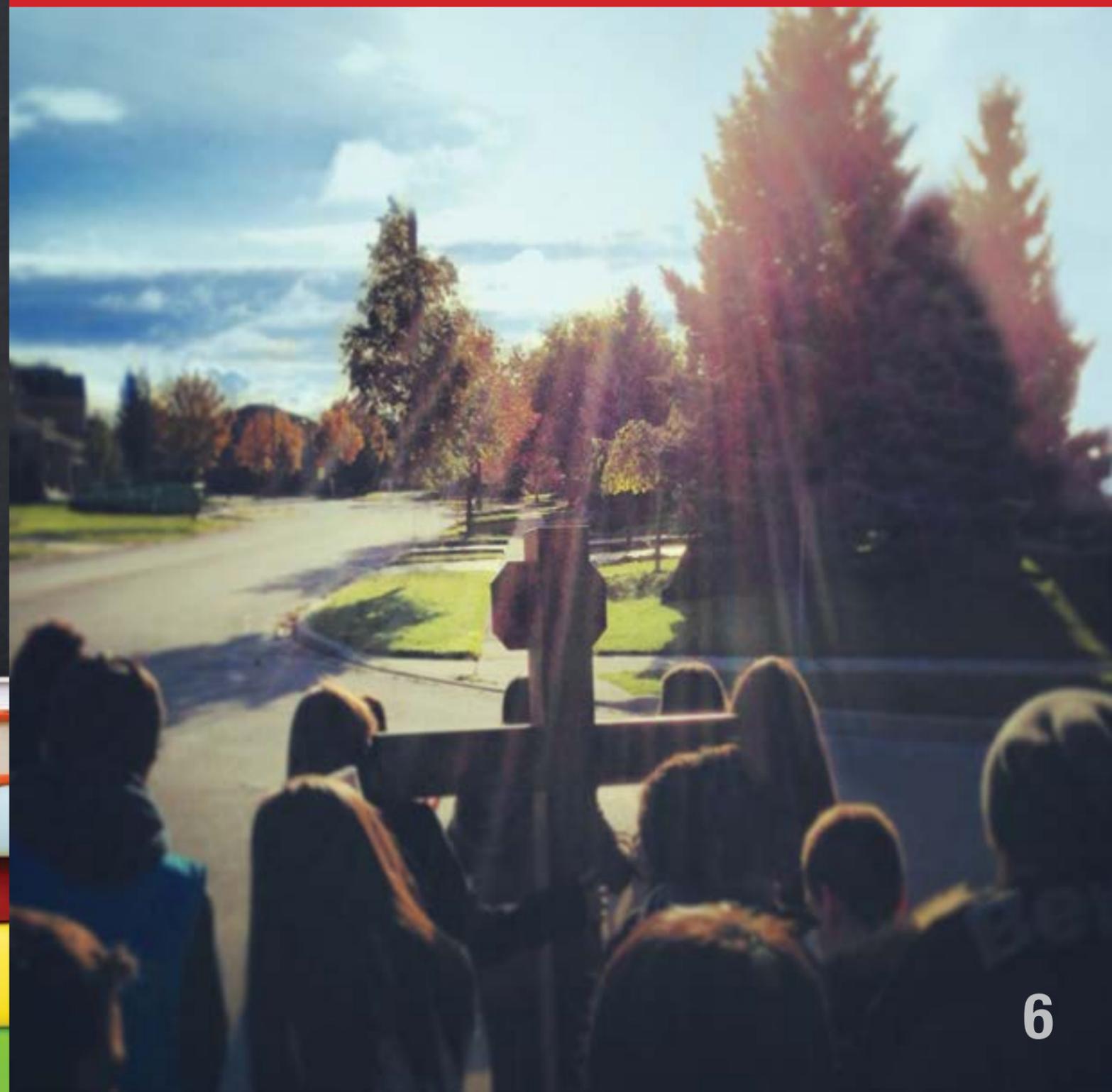
- 21 Budget
- 22 Facility Excellence: Building a Bright Future
- 22 Environmental Initiatives
 - Rock the Bike
 - Ontario Eco Schools Program

23 **Engaging Our Communities**

- 24 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan
- 24 School Climate Survey 2013-2014
- 25 Exit Survey 2013-2014
- 26 Engaging Our Communities through Student Services
- 26 Parent Engagement



Integration of Our Catholic Faith



Luke 4:18 Symposium Inspires Students to Walk the Talk

Almost 200 students from 43 elementary schools, along with 25 student leaders from York Catholic high schools and approximately 50 teacher-facilitators attended the annual Luke 4:18 Social Justice Symposium, entitled Walk the Talk, which held on May 7th.

The overall theme of the symposium was "inclusion," and students in Grades 6, 7 and 8 embraced this empowering, faith-filled, learning experience, to explore what we need to do as a community to build a just society where everyone counts, and everyone is included.

The day offered the students a variety of opportunities to focus on ways in which they can include others individually, in classrooms and within school communities. In keeping with the philosophy of Luke 4:18 clubs, students participated in 'faith-in-action' workshops to enhance their understanding of critical issues in our society. The workshops included assembling 800 health kits for Canadian Food for Children, weaving eight bed mats out of milk bags, and participating in a presentation from the Harmony Movement on the impact of the media and advertising on youth.

In the evening, Father Joe Gorman, Parish Priest at St. Joseph, Aurora, celebrated mass before dinner, which included a special message from the Pope. The evening concluded with a concert presented by Superfire.

Walk of Faith

During September 2013 – November 2013, secondary schools throughout the York Catholic District School Board joined together with their feeder elementary schools to take the Walk of Faith.

The Walk of Faith was part of an extended initiative declared by Pope Benedict XVI to encourage Catholic communities to celebrate 2012 as the Year of Faith. To celebrate our Catholic faith, students from all York Catholic communities participated in a series of relay events, where students walked with one of 15 large crosses designed by secondary school teams, and transferred the crosses from one school community to another. When the two groups of students met, they greeted each other, reflected on the symbolism of carrying a crucifix, the journey involved with a spiritual pilgrimage, and their public display of faith. As the crosses changed hands, communities were brought together and it was inspiring to see students connect with one another through our shared faith.



Our Catholic Schools Shine Through Acts of Charity

It is wonderful to see staff and students helping the most vulnerable in our local communities and abroad.

- Board participation in ShareLife increased 40.6% in the 2013-2014 year. Together, the Employee Campaign and our school campaign raised a total of \$167,179.26.
- In December 2013, in support of the Philippine Relief Fund, our schools collected \$122,000! A letter sent to the Board by the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace, indicated that the Philippine Relief Fund Campaign raised more than \$12 million dollars through local initiatives across Canada, and, that the York Catholic District School Board had the largest average contribution per student among all of the participating school boards in the country.

Celebrating Milestones in Catholic Education

These five schools celebrated milestone anniversaries during the 2013-2014 school year:

- St. Joseph CES celebrated 50 years in Richmond Hill
- Notre Dame CES celebrated 50 years in Newmarket
- St. John Chrysostom CES celebrated 10 years in Newmarket
- St. Elizabeth Seton CES celebrated 25 years in Newmarket
- Cardinal Carter CHS celebrated 25 years in Aurora

York Catholic Schools Celebrate Canonization of Two Great Popes

Pope Francis formally declared Pope John Paul II and Pope John XXIII as saints during a dual canonization ceremony held on April 27, 2014 at St. Peter's Square in Vatican City. The York Catholic schools named in honour of these religious leaders celebrated the canonization of their namesake with special events and faith-based activities. The names of the schools were also officially changed to reflect this Holy recognition. Blessed Pope John Paul II Catholic Elementary School in Richmond Hill became St. John Paul II CES, and Blessed John XXIII Catholic Elementary School in Markham became St. John XXIII CES.

Province-Wide Mass

Student Trustees Michael Pallotto and Joe McLeod made us proud as they were instrumental in organizing the first-ever, Province-Wide Mass held during Catholic Education Week. The Mass featured a special video message by His Eminence Thomas Cardinal Collins, and a letter from Pope Francis specifically addressed to Ontario's Catholic highschool students. All of our York Catholic high schools participated in this Mass with other Catholic high schools across Ontario. It was a wonderful experience for students, knowing that Pope Francis was praying for them and sending them his blessings. This was a student-led initiative that truly highlighted the spirit of Catholic Education.

Continuous Improvement of Student Achievement

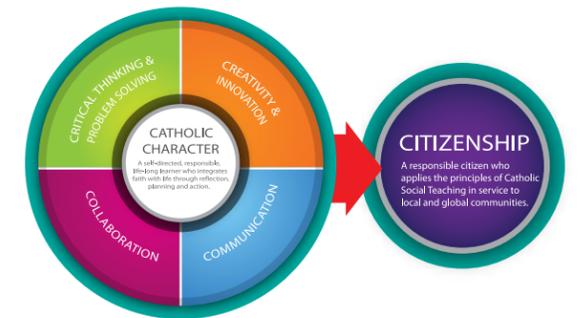


21st Century Learning #YCDSB21C

As the York Catholic District School Board strives for continuous improvement, we recognize the need to establish a solid foundation for the success of all students in the 21st century, today and in their future. The hallmarks of 21st century learning are the opportunities for students to develop excellence in **critical thinking, creativity, communication** and **collaboration** in a faith-based context that will strengthen their Catholic character and their understanding of global **citizenship**. These are our 6 Cs.

Our vision is to achieve a dynamic 21st century learning environment driven by excellent pedagogy, and supported seamlessly and invisibly by instructional technology, framed by our Catholic Graduate Expectations. Technology is a powerful tool that can enhance student learning and inspire student engagement, when teachers and students are knowledgeable about its use in educational contexts and invested in strong digital citizenship. Devices such as iPads and Chromebooks were supplied to each school to provide opportunities to use technology in more classrooms.

In the 2013-2014 school year, we invited each school to form a 21st Century Learning Team to support teacher learning. Staff attended six professional learning workshops throughout the year. Webinars, a series of Dinner & Learns, the launch of the Board's new 21C website, <http://www.ycdsb.ca/21clearning/>, and the Board's 21 Conference, "Google Saturday," offered additional opportunities for all teachers to explore and apply various technologies and digital tools such as Google Apps For Education, Desire 2 Learn, interactive whiteboards, iPads and Chromebooks to support instruction and assessment and enhance student engagement, achievement and well-being.



#YCDSB21C at a Glance:

- Establishing 21C teams in every school in the YCDSB
- Expanding the use of technology in the classroom and living the 6Cs
- Expanding e-learning from 3 sections in 2010-2011 to 20 sections in 2014-2015
- Expanding blended learning via Desire 2 Learn from 610 unique student users in 2011-2012 to over 14,000 in 2014-2015
- Providing in-servicing on D2L to teams of teachers from every elementary school by April 2015
- Providing an iPad to each FDK classroom in February 2015

#YCDSB21C in the Classroom

Christ the King CES: iPads to Enhance Critical Thinking and Skyping with David Suzuki
 Rogers Television, November 29, 2013
<http://www.rogerstv.com/page.aspx?lid=237&rid=17&sid=5992&gid=123239>



York Catholic's Top Scholar

Jason Manson-Hing from St. Brother Andre Catholic High School was named York Catholic's top scholar for the 2013-2014 school year with an overall average of 99.67 per cent.

Jason was an Advanced Placement student at the Markham school and earned a perfect 100 per cent in his Calculus and Vectors, French, Church and Culture, and Mathematics of Data Management classes. He also earned 99 per cent in Advanced Functions and English.

During his time at St. Brother Andre CHS, Jason participated in the school's Photography Club, Mentoring Club, and Badminton Team. He also held executive positions on the school's Luke 4:18 Social Justice Club, and Power Source Anti-Racism Council. He credits his friends and peers in the school's Advanced Placement (AP) program for much of his success.

Recognizing Excellence in Leadership

On May 26, 2014, the York Secondary Catholic Presidents' Council Awards for Outstanding Leadership ceremony celebrated the spirit of Catholic leadership in YCDSB high schools. Students and staff received awards in various categories including athletic leadership, religious leadership, the arts, outstanding school spirit, equity, initiative, character and inspiration.

The award ceremony is especially unique as the recipients are recognized by a special group of people – their peers. The executive members of the York Secondary Catholic Presidents' Council, comprised of nine student leaders, select students and staff who demonstrate who take on new challenges, embody our Catholic virtues, approach learning, teaching or coaching with passion, and who are ideal role models. These students and staff are an inspiration to all in their school communities.

Safe and Caring Schools

During the last school year, the focus of our Safe & Caring Schools initiative was to continue building on the Bullying Prevention Initiatives that are underway in every school and building capacity among staff at all levels to enable more effective leadership in leading schools toward becoming safer and more welcoming places. During the 2013-2014 school year, we provided financial support to each school in the board to support school based bullying prevention initiatives and continued with our invitation for school communities to sign the 'I will not take part in bullying' campaign banners. The Board hosted a number of in-services throughout the year: Deep Diversity led by the Anima Leadership Organization; Violent Threat Risk Assessment training; Training for staff who lead the secondary school Respecting Difference Groups; and in-service for trustees, senior administration, school principals and vice-principals on our new board document, "All God's Children."

Comprehensive Mental Health and Addiction Strategy

The York Catholic District School Board is strongly committed to promoting positive mental health. Because of the strong link between mental health and student achievement, we recognize the importance of increasing awareness of the signs of child and youth mental health problems; decreasing stigma; early intervention; and understanding that help is available.

The YCDSB has developed a comprehensive mental health strategy and five-year plan for implementation.

The Comprehensive Mental Health and Addiction Strategy focuses on:

- Building resiliency and social emotional learning skills
- Reducing stigma of mental health and addiction
- Early identification and intervention
- Providing fast access to high quality services for our students

During the 2013-2014 year, the YCDSB focused its efforts on building capacity in awareness and literacy on Mental Health with all the stakeholders. The Board also introduced a Mental Health section on its website which includes a number of excellent resources, links and tips for positive mental health.

Visit: www.ycdsb.ca/mental-health

Students Host Leadership Links: Desire to Inspire

The York Secondary Catholic President's Council (YSCPC) and leaders from all of YCDSB high schools organized a leadership day for 300 Grade 6 to 8 students at St. Robert Catholic High School. The theme of the day was "Desire to Inspire".

The focus was to develop student leaders in the younger grades in order to bring leadership to the elementary schools as well as create a seamless transition to high school. The younger students attended group sessions and workshops organized by the senior leaders. These workshops included a number of activities that focused on creating a more inclusive school community and society. Motivational speaker, Q Mack, performed multiple activities with the students to reinforce the message "Increase the Peace".

Desire for Change: Digital Citizenship #followthechange

In November 2013, the York Catholic District School Board, hosted its annual Desire for Change conference at the York Catholic District School Board Centre for the Arts. Approximately 250 students from each of our high schools gathered to listen to a guest speaker, then created activities that they brought back to their own schools to further promote the particular theme.

Digital Citizenship #followthechange, was the focus of the day. Sean Mauricette spoke to our students about being responsible digital users and the importance of using respectful communication.

Students were then broken up into themed groups and developed a video on different topics which were then shared with all the other schools. These videos have been used in various capacities to discuss issues affecting today's youth.





Continuing Education: Serving Children and Adults in the Community

The Continuing Education Department offers a wide variety of programming serving elementary, secondary and adult learners. The YCDSB Adult ESL program is notably the second largest in the province of Ontario consisting of 519 classes and 20,625 learners. The Adult ESL program includes sector-specific courses in accounting, engineering, business administration and information technology.

Other specialized programs include: Literacy and Citizenship Preparation courses. Courses are offered in the day, evening and Saturdays throughout York Region. Standardized assessment and learner evaluation are key features of the program. The Adult ESL program proudly coordinates programming with various community partners including: local libraries, Welcome Centre Immigrant Services, COSTI Immigrant Services and other local agencies. The Adult ESL program is funded by the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration.

The Elementary Division of Continuing Education provides opportunities for extended learning after school and on Saturday mornings. The program offers many languages at 19 school sites. Remedial after school literacy and numeracy skills classes are also offered throughout the school year at various sites for students in grades 1 to 8 as well as the Family Literacy Program for SK to Gr. 2 students and their parents. The following programs are offered at various elementary schools throughout the Board running in the Fall, Winter and Summer:

- Art 4 Kids (Gr. 4-6)
- Creative Hands (Gr. 1-3)
- French Conversation (Gr. SK-5)
- French Immersion Summer Camp (Gr. 1)
- Primary Power (Gr. 1-3)
- Reading Readiness (Gr. 1-2)
- Skills Development (Gr. 7-8)
- TechnoHero (Gr. 3-5)
- TechnoFlash (Gr. 5-8)

The Secondary Division of Continuing Education also offers learning opportunities such as After School Literacy and Numeracy Skills as a way to improve student success. Other programs include PLAR (Prior Learning and Assessment and Recognition), Global Education Opportunities, Night School for Semesters 1 & 2, as well as Summer School, Co-operative Education, Summer e-Learning, Reaching Up Credit for Grade 8 students, Saturday Credit Courses, Literacy Preparation for Grades 8-10, and Math Preparation for Grade 8 students. Finally, students are also given the opportunity to take their Driver Education training through the Board's Continuing Education Department and their school.

As a growing and innovative department, the Continuing Education Department serves the needs of students and communities within the York Catholic District School Board.

YCDSB Students Out-Perform Provincial Peers in EQAO Testing

The York Catholic District School Board is pleased that the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) standardized test results show that its Grade 3 and 6 students continue to outperform their provincial counterparts in every category – reading, writing and mathematics. Writing continues to be York Catholic's strongest area of achievement. At the secondary level, Grade 9 Math Assessment show that 86 per cent of York Catholic students enrolled in Grade 9 academic math courses achieved the provincial standard.

Literacy

York Catholic students continue to demonstrate very high levels of performance on the writing components of all provincial assessments.

Over the last six years, there has been consistent improvement in student performance on the Junior Division (Grades 4-6) Assessment of Reading. During the 2013-2014, there was an improvement in student performance on the Primary Division (Grades 1-3) Assessment of Reading. Students with special education needs continue to demonstrate improvement from the previous year on the Primary and Junior Assessments of Reading.

A very high proportion of high school students across the board continue to be successful on the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test.

Numeracy

During the 2013-2014 school year, there was an increase in student performance for the Junior Division (Grade 4-6) Assessment of Mathematics and the Grade 9 Assessment of Applied Mathematics.

Nearly all of the high school students enrolled in the Academic Math Program continue to demonstrate high levels of achievement on the Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics.

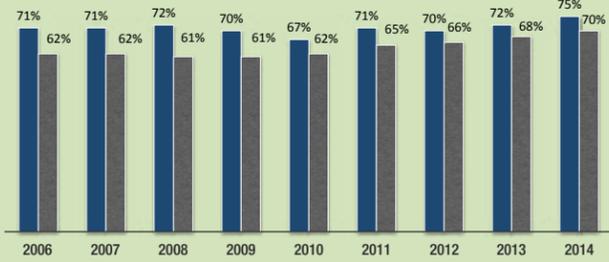
The performance of students in mathematics continues to reflect their hard work, and the tremendous support of their parents, as well as the dedication of staff and the effectiveness of the strategies implemented.

Student achievement in mathematics will continue to remain a key focus of the 2014-2015 Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement, Faith Development and Well-Being.

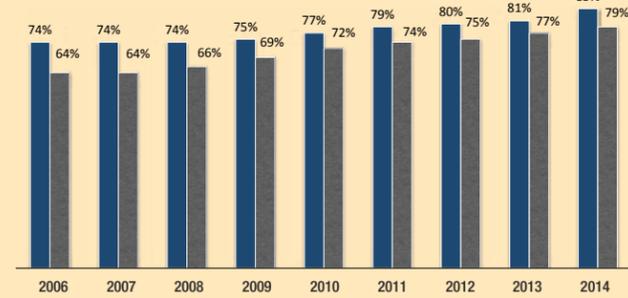
EQAO Standardized Test Results

■ YCDSB ■ Province

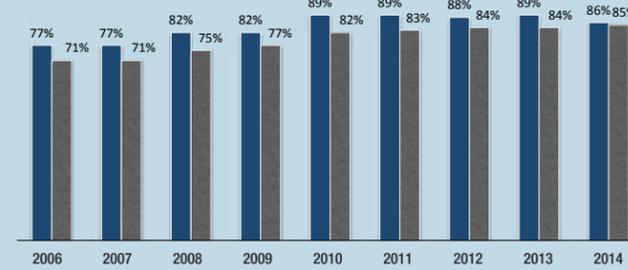
Grade 3 Assessment of Reading (Students Achieving Level 3 & 4)



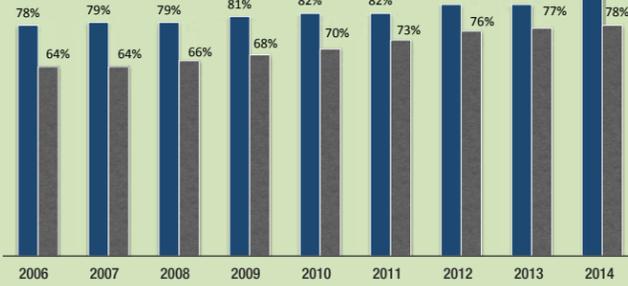
Grade 6 Assessment of Reading (Students Achieving Level 3 & 4)



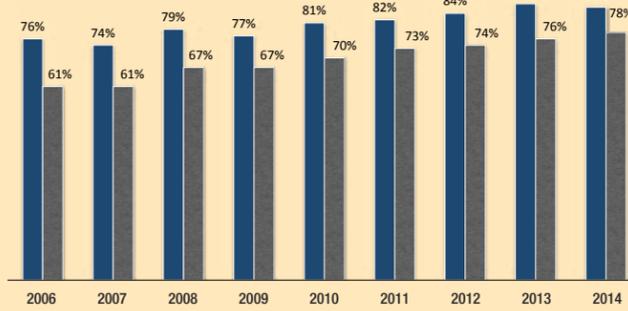
Grade 9 Academic Math Program



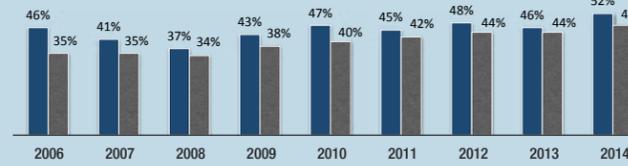
Grade 3 Assessment of Writing (Students Achieving Level 3 & 4)



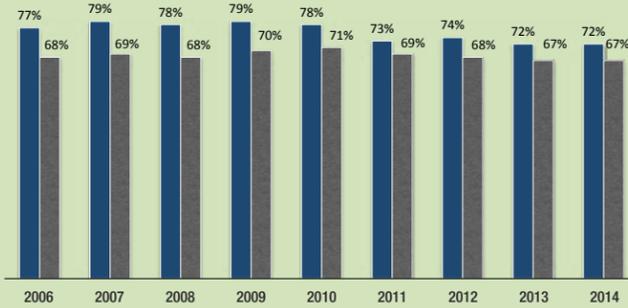
Grade 6 Assessment of Writing (Students Achieving Level 3 & 4)



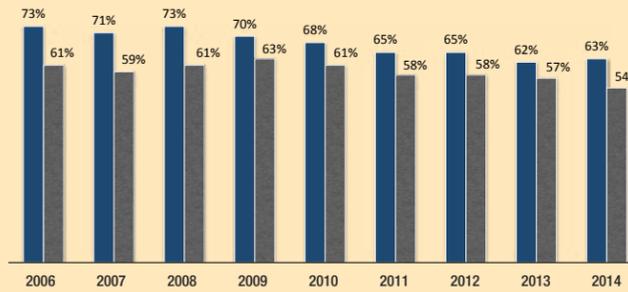
Grade 9 Applied Math Program



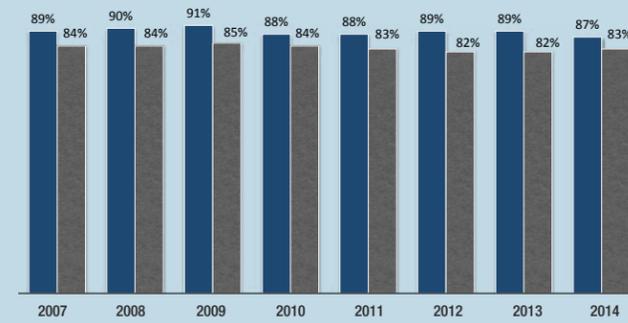
Grade 3 Assessment of Mathematics (Students Achieving Level 3 & 4)



Grade 6 Assessment of Mathematics (Students Achieving Level 3 & 4)



Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test



Programs and Pathways

Programs and Pathways provides students with the knowledge, skills and tools they need to make successful transitions. Our goal is to enable students to apply knowledge of their gifts, interests and abilities to make appropriate decisions about educational, career and life possibilities.

At the end of the 2013-2014 school year, there were noted improvements in student performance on the Learning Skills and Work Habits, as well as the 5-year graduation rate. Moreover, the Board continues to experience a consistent pattern of improvement in credit accumulation for all secondary students and students with special education needs. Nearly all York Catholic secondary students successfully graduate from high school at the end of 5 years.

To promote successful outcomes for all students, the Board makes available to its students initiatives like guidance and career education, experiential learning, co-op and eLearning opportunities. Programs offered by the Board include: the International Baccalaureate Program, the Regional Arts Program, the International Languages Program, Laptop Learning, Specialist High Skills Majors (SHSM), Dual Credit Courses, the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP), the Advanced Placement (AP) Program, School-Within-A-College (SWAC) program, and Credit Recovery.

Specialist High Skills Major

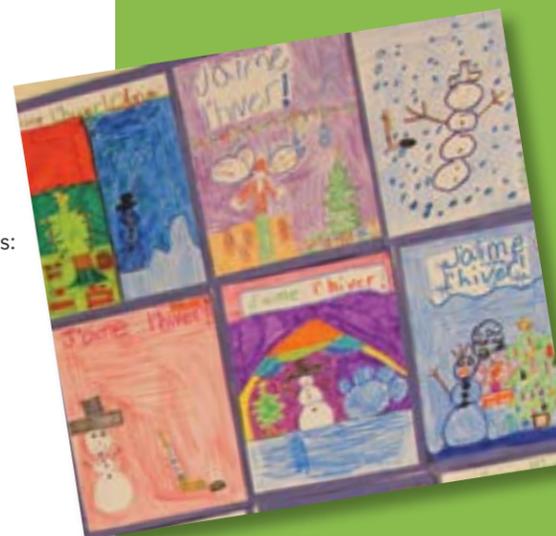
The Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) is a series of Ministry-approved specialized programs that help Grade 11 and 12 students to focus their learning on a specific economic sector while meeting the requirements to graduate from secondary school. It also helps in their transition after graduation to post-secondary study, apprenticeship training, or the workplace. In 2013-2014, we offered 18 SHSM programs in sectors ranging from Health and Wellness to Information and Communication Technology. In the 2014-2015 school year, 702 students have registered in SHSM courses; Red Seal completion rate of 74% compared to the provincial average of 44%.

Expansion of French Immersion

Our French Immersion program continues to flourish. In 2013-2014, York Catholic had a total of 62 French Immersion classes, at the following 9 sites:

- Christ the King
- Immaculate Conception
- Our Lady of Peace
- St. Anthony
- St. Brendan
- St. Edward
- St. Elizabeth Seton
- St. Joseph, Aurora
- Our Lady of Fatima

With Board motions passed in 2014, York Catholic will offer the elementary French Immersion program at 14 schools beginning September 2015; and by 2018, the Board will offer the Secondary French Immersion Program in 4 Catholic secondary schools.



First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) Committee

The York Catholic District School Board's First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) Committee continues to lead the areas of focus for the FNMI initiatives each year. Its membership includes First Nation and Métis students, parents, staff, as well as representatives of the FNMI community. We also have an FNMI student representative on the York Secondary Catholic Presidents Council who works diligently to promote the FNMI perspective.

Resources that profile the FNMI perspective, with accompanying lessons are available in each elementary school library. At the secondary level, the Board offers Native Studies courses in three high schools, including a course which offers a March Break trip to Peru highlighting the global Aboriginal perspective.

The York Catholic District School Board launched its "Here We Are" outreach to community members and parents to encourage Self-Identification with the support of the YCDSB FNMI Steering Committee.

We offered two Parent Engagement Evenings for Parents of Voluntary Self ID Families. We collaborated with Todd Jamieson and Alfie Fishgap of Bear Paw Originals, Josiah's Cook of Goodminds.com, Nora Rhineland of Nin Os Kom Tim, Peggy Pitiwanikwat of Seneca College Aboriginal Office, and Kelly Honsberger of The Métis Nation of Ontario. Topics included pathways planning and bursary/scholarship presentation for parents.

To enhance student support, we developed programming for the Grade 5 Social Studies curriculum. Teachers shared best practices regarding the use of resources developed by YCDSB Teacher Librarians. Each school received a collection of resources that supported the FNMI themes in the Grade 5 Social Studies curriculum.

Investing in Music Education

In the Spring 2014, the York Catholic District School Board approved a motion for a capital plan to invest \$2.5 million (subject to Ministry approval) into the delivery of the elementary music program. The Board allocated a total of \$800,000 (\$200,000 annual for four years) for the purchase of new Orff instruments and music materials for this initiative. This investment in music underscores the Board's commitment to student achievement and quality learning for all students. Nearly two years ago, the York Catholic District School Board approved a motion to establish a Music Committee to develop a vision for music curriculum delivery. This infusion of money is part of the Board's four-year plan to support the elementary music curriculum by designating and retrofitting a classroom in every elementary school for the music program.



Effective Use of Our Resources



Looking Ahead: 2014-2015 YCDSB Plan to Improve Student Achievement and Well-Being

To ensure continuous improvement in student achievement, faith development and well-being for the 21st century, the Board has identified the following key priorities for the 2014-2015 school year:

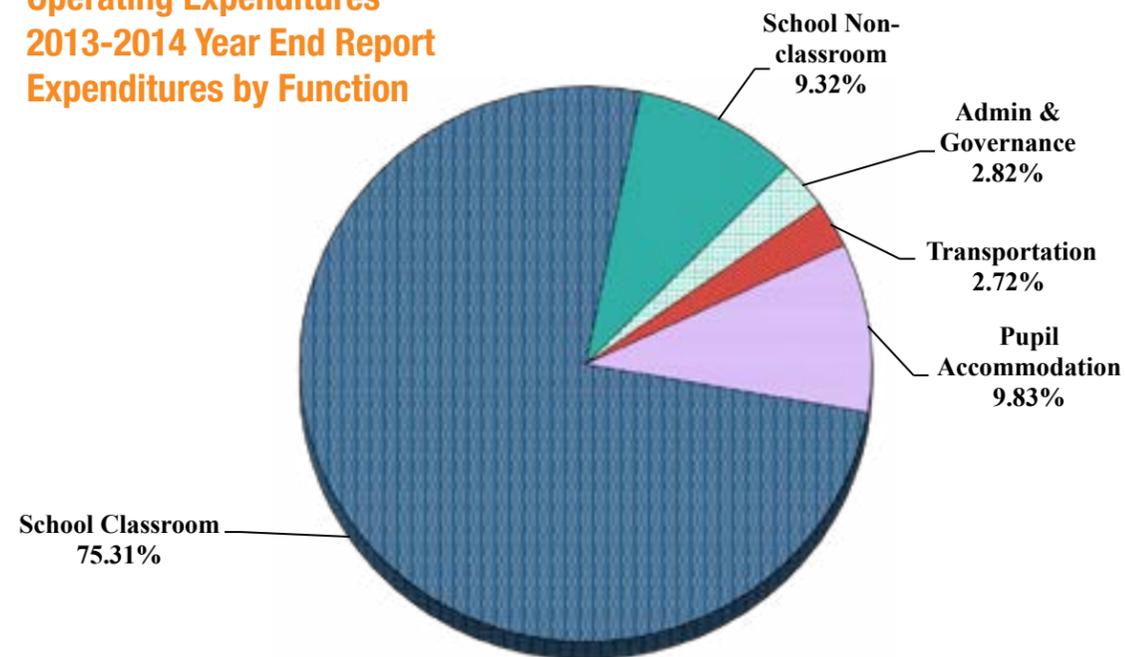
- Foster a culture of instructional excellence that is welcoming, engaging and inclusive;
- Provide a safe, supportive and healthy environment;
- Teach students, from Kindergarten to Grade 12, the skills and attitudes they need to be hopeful, optimistic, resilient and responsible and make positive choices;
- Improve student achievement in Primary Reading to support high levels of performance on the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) so that all learners can become effective communicators, reflective and creative thinkers and self-directed, responsible life-long learners;
- Improve student achievement in Mathematics from Kindergarten to Grade 12 so that all learners are empowered to be successful in daily life and the workplace as effective communicators, reflective and creative thinkers, and collaborative contributors;
- Raise the achievement of all students and close the gap for students who achieve below expectations;
- Promote academic excellence through programs and educational experiences that prepare students for success in the 21st century;
- Foster greater system coherence and alignment, across all schools and departments, in support of enhancing student achievement, faith development and well-being.

Budget

The York Catholic District School Board continues to focus on the effective use of its resources. Funding pressures continue to be a challenge; however, the Board was able to achieve a balanced budget of \$560 million for the 2013-2014 school year.

The budget highlights the Board's commitment to student achievement by supporting excellent learning environments and growing and improving its schools.

Operating Expenditures 2013-2014 Year End Report Expenditures by Function



• School Classroom	418,981,173	75.31%
• School Non-classroom	51,870,283	9.32%
• Admin & Governance	15,699,488	2.82%
• Pupil Transportation	15,125,374	2.72%
• Pupil Accommodation	54,688,709	9.83%
• TOTAL	556,365,027	100.00%

The above does not include new pupil places, facility renewal, debt charges, or other Ministry year-end reporting requirements (eg. PSAB, school finances etc.)



Facility Excellence: Building a Bright Future

In September 2014, the York Catholic District School Board implemented the final phase of the Full-Day Kindergarten Program in all elementary schools. A number of construction projects took place over the 2013/14 school year and throughout the summer months.

Full-Day Kindergarten renovations took place at:

- Father Frederick McGinn CES
- St. Veronica CES
- St. Brigid CES
- St. Emily CES
- St. Padre Pio CES

Environmental Initiatives

Rock the Bike

Electricity-powering bicycles were acquired in November 2013, and since then have 'toured' York Catholic schools to expose students to renewable forms of electricity generation and to promote discussion around environmental stewardship, energy conservation, sustainability, as well as, active and healthy living through exercise.

During the 2013-2014 school year, 39 schools took part in the Board's innovative "Rock the Bike Tour." The "Rock the Bike Tour" was made up of a series of multimedia environmental presentations by the Board's Environmental and Offices Services Department. All of the electricity needed to power the presentation, such as speakers, microphones, music, and lighting were generated from students who rode two stationary "Rock the Bike" bicycles.

Ontario Eco Schools Program

The Ontario Eco Schools Program continues to be a success at York Catholic schools. A total of 63 schools were certified as EcoSchools in 2013-2014, including one school, St. Theresa of Lisieux Catholic High School, which achieved platinum-level status, a new benchmark that was introduced to the provincial program in 2013-2014.

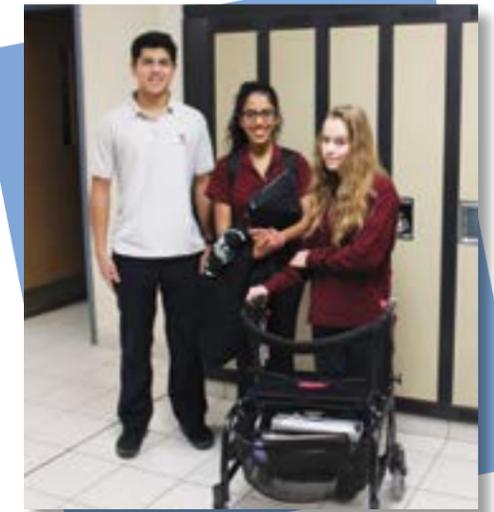
- 28 schools achieved gold status
- 24 schools achieved silver status
- 10 schools achieved bronze status

Engaging Our Communities



Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

During the 2013-2014 School Year, the Board introduced its Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for the 2013-2018 period. This Multi-Year Accessibility Plan is developed in accordance with the Integration Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005. It incorporates the intentions of the York Catholic District School Board (Board) to meet its obligations under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA), 2001. The plan describes the measures that the Board will implement over the five-year period to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities who work, learn and participate in the Board's community and environment including students, staff, parents and guardians, volunteers and visitors to the Board and its schools. The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan will further support Board Policy #601, "Accessibility Standards for Customer Service", which can be found on the Board's website at www.ycdsb.ca.



Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Objectives:

- Describe the process by which the Board will identify, remove and prevent barriers;
- Review recent efforts of the Board to remove and prevent barriers;
- Describe the measures the Board plans to take in the period 2013-2018 to identify, remove and prevent barriers;
- Make a commitment to provide an annual status report on the Board's implementation of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan;
- Make a commitment to review and update the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan annually;
- Describe how the Board will make this Multi-Year Accessibility Plan available to the public.

To view the York Catholic District School Board's Accessibility Plan, visit:
<http://www.ycdsb.ca/documents/Accessibility-Plan-2013-18.pdf>

School Climate Survey 2013-2014

York Catholic conducted a School Climate Survey to engage all parents and school staffs. Parents and school staffs who participated in the survey indicated that students, from Kindergarten to Grade 12, feel respected and welcomed. The consensus was, York Catholic schools are doing a good job of fostering an appreciation of diversity and promoting inclusivity and respect among students. Additionally, they indicated that our schools model and reflect a Catholic world-view that encourages students to put their faith into action.

Feedback provided by school staff indicated greater student participation from Kindergarten to Grade 12, in extra-curricular and enrichment activities. Providing more leadership opportunities for students in their schools, as well as improved communication with parents about opportunities that take place in their children's schools was also reflected in the results.

School staff, from Kindergarten to Grade 12, also advocated for mental and physical well-being and resiliency among elementary and secondary students to ensure the full development of their God-given potential. Ensuring that students are listened to, valued and respected will lead to greater student engagement and achievement.

The Board is using the school climate survey findings from parents and school staff, along with feedback collected from students, to develop, implement and monitor equity and inclusive education policies to support student achievement, faith development and well-being; identify barriers or bias; and help students develop into highly-skilled, knowledgeable, and caring believers who are collaborative contributors and citizens.



Engaging Our Communities Through Student Services

On October 16, 2013 the York Catholic District School Board held its annual "Planning for the Future" symposium for students with Learning Disabilities and their parents. The symposium includes guest speakers, community partners, and offers an array of resources to help students with learning disabilities with the transition to College, University and Skilled Trades. Approximately 100 families were in attendance.

The Special Services Department also hosted two Early Facilitation Parent Information Evenings for Kindergarten preparation for parents of children with special needs. The sessions were held at St. Joan of Arc CHS and at the Catholic Education Centre.

On May 22, 2014, YCDSB in partnership with YRDSB and the Council for Exceptional Children presented the annual Yes I Can Awards which celebrated the accomplishments of our exceptional students. The awards also celebrated the contributions of educators, parents and community members in their service to exceptional children and youth. Approximately 500 people attended.

In July 2014, YCDSB, in partnership with Vocalinks, offered a four-day Summer Assistive Technology Program for students and their parents. The camp provided an opportunity to receive hands on software instruction in a fun and friendly environment.



Parent Engagement

Parents are valued stakeholders. The York Catholic District School Board recognizes that parents play a vital role in their child's education. Engagement between all partners – parents, teachers, school, church and community – increases student achievement. When these partners work together to support a child's education, everyone benefits and schools thrive by becoming positive places to teach, learn and grow.

York Catholic Parent Involvement Committee

The York Catholic Parent Involvement Committee (YCPIC) is the parent advisory body of the York Catholic District School Board. It is an official committee of the Board, and meets regularly throughout the school year. The YCPIC's main purpose is to support, encourage and enhance parent engagement at the Board level in order to improve student achievement and well-being.



During the 2013-2014 school year, the YCPIC was involved in Board presentations, and provided workshop opportunities to new and existing Catholic School Council (CSC) members. Director of Education, Patricia Preston, invited, the YCPIC Chair to address all School Principals and Superintendents of Education about the many ways to enhance parent engagement in all YCDSB schools.

In partnership with the Board, the YCPIC also held a successful large-scale conference for CSC members. This Annual Parent Council Conference had the highest attendance rate since the YCPIC began hosting this workshop with the YCDSB. Parent engagement opportunities were also provided through Parent Reaching Out Grants.

A Year-in-Review Newsletter highlighting the achievements, new policies and a status on the Multi-Year Strategic Plan was shared with all families in the Board.



The Board continues to share good news and important information with more than 8,000 followers via its Twitter Channel, @YCDSB.

Exit Survey 2013-2014

York Catholic conducted its second annual Exit Survey for students transitioning from elementary to secondary school, as well as high school students who were a year away from graduation. The survey assesses students' plans for continuing their studies with the York Catholic District School Board.

Nearly all of the Grade 6 students in the 3 schools located in the northern region of the Board (91%) indicated that they planned to enroll in a York Catholic school. The top reasons given by the Grade 6 students for not enrolling in a York Catholic school included distance to home, friends going elsewhere and the family was moving out of the area.

Most of the Grade 8 students surveyed throughout the Board (83%) indicated that they planned to enroll in a York Catholic high school. For those students who indicated that they would not be enrolling in a high school in the Board, the reasons cited by these students included distance to home and the availability of programs.

Elementary and secondary student feedback gathered from the Exit Survey indicated that their faith experiences were well developed and that students could readily make the connections between their faith and external actions.

Upon reflecting on their high school experiences, most Grade 11 students who participated in the Exit Survey (80%) indicated that the School Board is doing exceptionally well in providing the following:

- Challenging coursework that allows students to think deeply about ideas and put them together in new ways.
- Opportunities for students to receive extra help when experiencing difficulties with course work.
- A school environment that is safe and non-threatening.
- Opportunities to participate in extracurricular and social activities that the students are interested in.
- Teachers and administrators who have high expectations for students.