



# York Catholic District School Board

Director's Annual Report • 2015-2016

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 105 schools located throughout the Regional Municipality of York, which is comprised of nine municipalities:

Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Georgina, King, Markham, Newmarket, Richmond Hill, 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 8,000 staff, making it one of the region's largest employers.



During the 2015-2016 school year, we celebrated Catholic Education Week with the theme, Opening Doors of Mercy. As always, charity is a focus at York Catholic, and our staff and students have done wonderful work 'opening the doors of mercy' in this regard. In Fall 2015, all York Catholic District School Board schools participated in the Archdiocese' Project Hope for Syrian Refugees. We were very pleased when the Archdiocese of Toronto announced that the YCDSB collected the most funds of all the Catholic Boards participating, raising \$69,000. York Catholic also initiated a Syrian Newcomer Settlement Steering Committee to assist schools in supporting the many refugee students we welcomed to our schools in January 2016.

## Message from the Director of Education and Chair of the Board

In the Spring, we once again answered the Archdiocese of Toronto's call to assist those whose lives had been affected by the wildfires in Fort McMurray. Our schools held Loonie/Toonie Drives and raised over \$58,000.

The Board continued its work on the Multi-Year Strategic Plan. In an effort to engage our communities, the Board launched the MYSP Awareness Survey in February 2016, after the first full year of implementation of the Board's new Mission, Vision, Core Values and Strategic Commitments and to assess our stakeholder's familiarity of the plan.

This Annual Report reflects the Board's Strategic Commitments as outlined in our MYSP. They include: the Integration of Our Catholic Faith, the Continuous Improvement of Student Achievement, the Effective Use of Our Resources and Engaging Our Communities.

With these strategic commitments at the forefront of all decision-making, Trustees approved a number of initiatives this past year in support of student achievement and well-being goals. The Board:

- Purchased texts and digital resources for the new Religious Education Curriculum, "Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ"
- Opened two French Immersion sites at St. Marguerite d'Youville and St. Thomas Aquinas
- Approved the opening of two Advanced Placement Programs at St. Joan of Arc and Jean Vanier Catholic High Schools

This year, the Board also completed the first year of its five-year Long Term Accommodation Plan. We conducted Pupil Accommodation Reviews in the Vaughan Thornhill and South Woodbridge East communities. Closing schools is never easy, and together with our Board of Trustees, we are committed to developing and implementing solutions that support the best learning environments for our students. This year, the Board of Trustees approved the recommendation to close Holy Family and St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Elementary Schools.

Like many Boards in the province, there are challenges for our Board, as Ministry funding is not keeping up with cost increases. Together, staff and trustees reviewed ways to eliminate some of the Board's accumulated deficit, and reviewed all budget areas to minimize the impact on the classroom.

This year, we provided an opportunity for all stakeholders across the Board to give input into the budget development process via an online survey. We thank our many stakeholders for their input and feedback in assisting the Board with the budget development process. The Board is committed to working with the Ministry of Education to develop a successful Multi-Year Recovery Plan that will balance fiscal responsibility and student achievement to avoid impact in our classrooms.

Despite some of the challenges we've faced this year, it has been a wonderfully successful year, and we have much to celebrate. York Catholic students continue to perform extremely well on standardized tests. The EQAO Provincial Assessment and the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test results demonstrate that York Catholic is consistently one of the top-performing school boards in Ontario. For the second year in a row, York Catholic achieved the highest four and five-year graduation rate of all English language school boards and the second highest graduation rate overall among all boards in Ontario with 96%.

In the area of well-being, York Catholic is recognized as a leader among the Ontario Boards with respect to our Comprehensive Mental Health Strategy. This year, we introduced a Mental Health Symposium for Elementary Students. We remain deeply committed to providing all students opportunities to learn about positive mental help and coping skills.

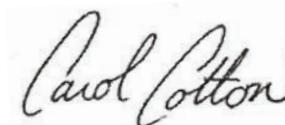
In the area of 21C, we introduced a series of new conferences and workshops for elementary and secondary students, as well as school staffs. We also piloted Google Expeditions to great enthusiasm by our students.

We are very thankful for the continuous support of our parents, parish partners, senior team, administrators, teachers, support staff, and community partners for their commitment to Catholic education. All of our partners play an important role in helping York Catholic achieve our mission and vision.

Sincerely,



Patricia Preston  
Director of Education



Carol Cotton  
Chair of the Board

The 2015-2016 year also saw a change in Board leadership as the Board of Trustees elected a new Chair of the Board. This election marked the first change in the Board's leadership in 17 years. Carol Cotton, Trustee for Markham (Thornhill/Unionville), was elected as Chair of the Board by her fellow trustees. Trustee Cotton was nominated for the Chair position by the Board's former Chair, Elizabeth Crowe. YCDSB thanks former Chair, Elizabeth Crowe, for her dedication and leadership for the past 17 years.

# Multi-Year Strategic Plan

The York Catholic District School Board’s Multi-Year Strategic Plan identifies four strategic commitments to our stakeholders:

## Integration of Our Catholic Faith

- Nurture the Catholic faith and spirituality of all through relevant and engaging religious education programs and experiences.
- Foster a culture in which daily interactions and practices are respectful and inclusive, and inspired by Gospel Values.
- Support members of our community on their faith journeys.

## Continuous Improvement of Student Achievement

- Nurture well-being by supporting students to become resilient, optimistic and responsible.
- Promote academic excellence through programs and educational experiences that prepare students for success in the 21st century.
- Foster a culture of instructional excellence that is welcoming, engaging and inclusive.
- Provide a safe, supportive and healthy environment.

## Effective Use of Our Resources

- Ensure that the budget is shaped by strategic priorities.
- Manage our resources in a sustainable and effective manner.

## Engaging Our Communities

- Provide stakeholders with opportunities for input and/or feedback that supports or informs Board decision-making.
- Develop and implement communication practices and procedures that improve the quality and timeliness of Board communication.
- Establish community partnerships that assist with the achievement of the Board’s strategic commitments.

### 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



The Multi-Year Strategic planning process, which began in March 2013, consists of six (6) phases:

**Phase 1:** Planning & Preparation (March - August 2013)

**Phase 2:** Context Setting (August - November 2013)

**Phase 3:** Consultation (November 2013 - June 2014)

**Phase 4:** Plan Development (June 2014 - October 2014)

**Phase 5:** Alignment & Implementation (November 2014 - February/September 2015)

**Phase 6:** Monitoring and Reporting (October 2015 - June 2018)

During the 2015-2016 school year, YCDSB began the Monitoring and Reporting phase. The Monitoring and Reporting phase began one year after the implementation of the MYSP. All YCDSB stakeholders were invited to provide input/feedback on the progress made towards strategic goals and Board initiatives via the "MYSP Awareness Survey," which was launched on February 1, 2016. A total of 8,050 stakeholders participated. The largest stakeholder respondent group was parents, with a response rate of 77.9%, followed by teachers with 15.6%.

Stakeholders were asked if they were aware of the Board's MYSP. Responses regarding familiarity with the Board's Mission, Vision and Core Values indicated that:

- 69% of stakeholders were "somewhat familiar to very familiar" with the Board's Mission
- 65% of stakeholders were "somewhat familiar to very familiar" with the Board's Vision
- 67% of stakeholders were "somewhat familiar to very familiar" with the Board's Core Values

When asked if stakeholders saw evidence of the Board's Mission, Vision and Core Values in our schools, they revealed:

### **Board Mission:**

The Board is achieving success by providing respectful, Christ-centred environments that are safe, and that foster the home, school, and parish relationship.

### **Board Vision:**

The Board is providing opportunities for faith development and preparing students to become critical thinkers. Technology is being used effectively to enhance learning.

### **Core Values:**

The Board is visibly reflecting its Core Values through communication, programming, and assessment and by offering ongoing opportunities for stakeholder input. Stakeholders also indicated that the Board is reflecting its Core Values in daily interactions with students, parents and staff.

Emphasis on the next phase of monitoring, reporting and communications outreach will focus on the 'goals' of the MYSP, and the ways in which the Board will achieve them.

To view our MYSP Annual Report and to view a more in-depth summary of the findings from our stakeholder feedback, visit [www.ycdsb.ca/strategicplan](http://www.ycdsb.ca/strategicplan).

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# Integration of Our Catholic Faith



2015-2016 was named by Pope Francis as the Year of Mercy. Many school activities and gatherings, for both staff and students, were focused on the concept of Mercy.

Staff participated in a number of opportunities to reflect and build on their faith-knowledge. Several Board resources to support staff were updated including: Annual Daily Prayers for Children for 2015-2016, Prayer Centre Resource for Elementary and Secondary, Planning Mass in Schools Resource, and Safety Protocol Update for the Use of Candles. A new elementary Religious Education policy document was implemented, called Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ, which was well-received by teachers, students, parents and parishes.

## Luke 4:18 Social Justice Symposium Opening the Doors of Mercy: I was a Stranger and You Welcomed Me

We are very proud of our elementary school Luke 4:18 Social Justice Committees. Students in Grades 6, 7 and 8 held a number of events and created various activities throughout the year to raise funds for ShareLife, and the St. Vincent de Paul Society, among many other local charities.

The Luke 4:18 Social Justice Committees present a wide range of opportunities for students to focus on the ways they can assist others locally and globally. In keeping with the philosophy of Luke 4:18 Committees, students participate in 'faith-in-action' learning opportunities to enhance their understanding of critical issues in our society.



## York Catholic sets a record for Project Hope fundraising, in support of refugees

The York Catholic District School Board raised \$69,923.18 through its schools and offices for the Archdiocese of Toronto's Project Hope campaign.

Project Hope was the Archdiocese of Toronto's Emergency Refugee Resettlement Campaign that was launched in September 2015. Its aim was to raise \$3 million within 100 days so that 100 refugee families could be resettled within the Greater Toronto Area. York Catholic is proud that it raised more money than any other school board within the Archdiocese's jurisdiction.

## YCDSB Supports ShareLife

In the 2015-2016 school year, YCDSB raised \$43,929.50 through the ShareLife Employee Campaign. The School Campaign, which includes various in school fundraisers and activities, raised \$117,632.46. This brought the total raised for ShareLife by our YCDSB community to an outstanding \$161,561.96.

YCDSB sincerely thanks its students, parents, staff and community partners who donated their time and money to support ShareLife.



## St. Stephen CES students featured in ShareLife Video, in support of Silent Voice

In December, Grade 6 students at St. Stephen CES in Vaughan participated in a video that featured Silent Voice, a ShareLife funded agency that serves people who are deaf, and their families.

The video's theme, 'being an effective communicator,' is one of the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations. The footage captured was used in a three-part series linking ShareLife, and its member agencies to the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations. The video is used by ShareLife, and accompanies curriculum in both elementary and secondary schools across the Archdiocese of Toronto as a religion supplement.

Visit: <http://www.sharelife.org/public/OCSGEB> to see our St. Stephen students







## Newmarket's Sacred Heart CHS raised over \$186,000 for cancer research

Sacred Heart Catholic High School raised an astonishing \$186,657 for its Relay for Life event, in support of the Canadian Cancer Society.

Students, staff, and alumni from the Newmarket school held the Relay for Life event on May 27<sup>th</sup>, which featured groups walking laps around the school's field for 12 hours, from 12 noon to 12 midnight. Cancer survivors walked the first lap of the relay course, which was followed by groups and teams of students walking for the remainder of the time. Students and staff also participated in a variety of games and activities throughout the day. To conclude the event, the school held a special luminary ceremony to honour the memory of loved ones who have passed away from cancer.

Since 2009, Sacred Heart CHS has raised over \$550,000 for the Canadian Cancer Society and continues to hold biennial Relay For Life fundraisers in the fight against cancer. In 2016, Sacred Heart Catholic High School, became the top fundraising school or post-secondary institution in Canada for this event.

## Jubilee of Mercy Retreat

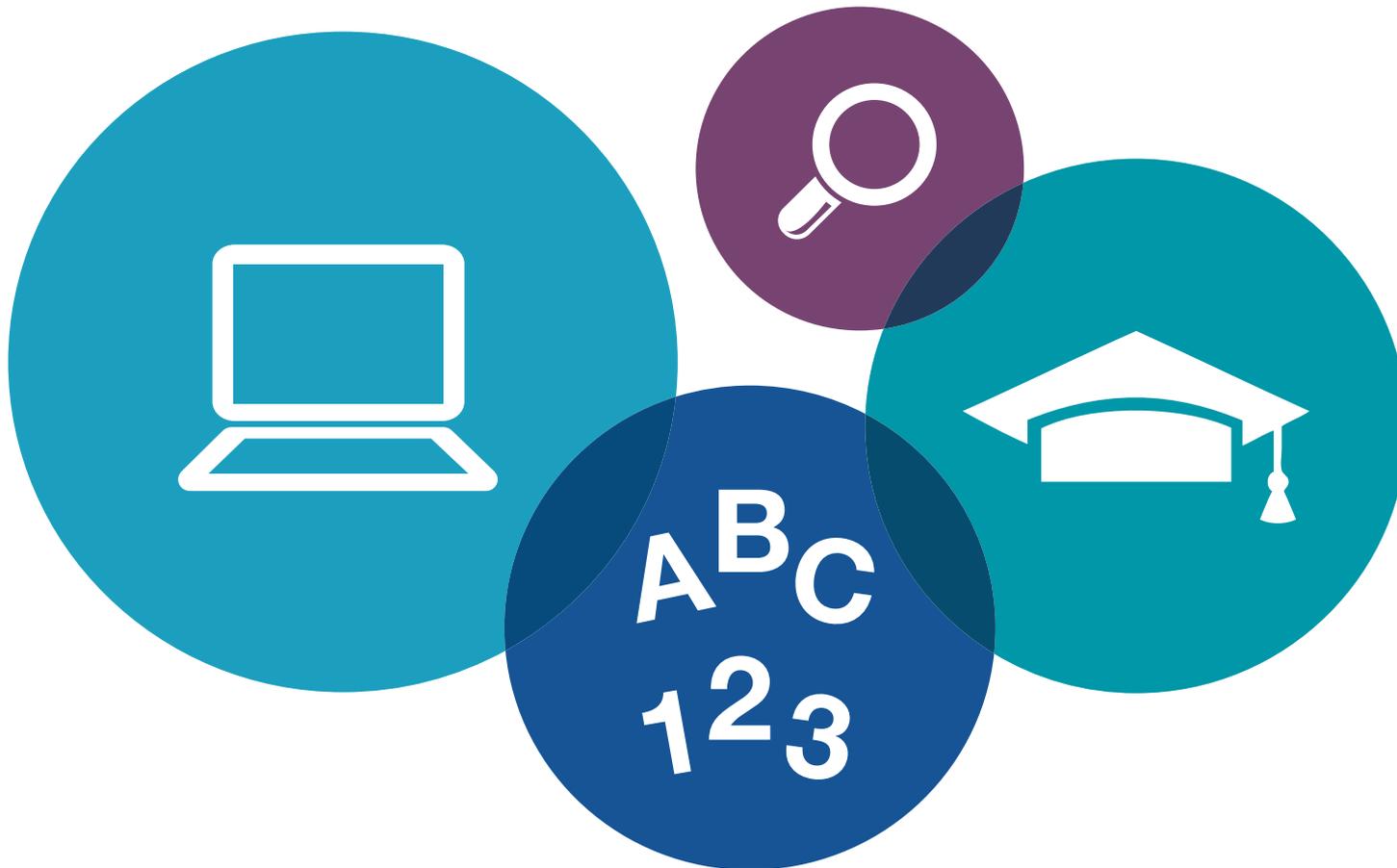
180 secondary students in YCDSB's Special Education Life Skills Program celebrated the Year of Mercy with a retreat at Seneca College on June 24, 2016.

The day began with Mass celebrated by Father Michael Corcione of St. Peter's Parish. A number of students from various York Catholic secondary schools participated in the celebration of Mass as readers and gift bearers. The Mass was followed by a nature walk to the Outdoor Education Centre. Students were greeted by the band, Superfire, whose members all have various special needs. "This is my first concert!", exclaimed one of the students as she posed for pictures and excitedly asked the band members for their autographs. The students in the Life Skills Program thoroughly enjoyed this year-end celebration.

## Milestones in Catholic Education

The following schools celebrated a milestone anniversary during the 2015-2016 school year. They hosted various events to mark the occasion with their parish, parent and school communities.

- St. Julia Billiard CES in Markham celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- St. Jean de Brebeuf CHS in Vaughan celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- St. Jerome CES in Aurora celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- Holy Family CES in Vaughan celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- St. Mark CES in Stouffville celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- Our Lady of Grace CES in Aurora celebrated its 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



# Continuous Improvement of Student Achievement

## #YCDSB21C

York Catholic continued to expand its focus on 21st Century Learning, student achievement, and well-being reaching over 1,200 teachers and more than 55,000 students. YCDSB expanded its 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual EdTech Saturday in-service for staff and also hosted an EdTech Day for elementary students at the Catholic Education Centre. The student EdTech Day provided opportunities for students to learn about Coding, Robotics, Digital Citizenship, Google and the 6 C's (Creativity and Innovation, Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, and Catholic Character).

Students in 50 York Catholic schools had a unique opportunity to travel through time and space during the 2015-2016 school year, thanks to Google Expeditions, a virtual reality learning program, which was piloted in our schools. York Catholic students explored places like the Great Wall of China, the moon, and Shakespeare's Verona by using Google Cardboard viewers in conjunction with an Expeditions app.

In 2015-2016, YCDSB introduced Dashboard Reporting to Principals to assist them in accessing information quickly and safely in support of student achievement and well-being. YCDSB also introduced a monthly Tech Express electronic newsletter with a focus on providing technology tips, news, events, and strategies to assist all YCDSB staff with professional learning.



## Growth & Community 2015-2016

- Schools added 4 more members to their 21C Learning Teams (totalling 10 staff)
- Information Systems Department restructuring: introduced 21st Century Learning Technicians
- 50 schools participated in Google Expeditions Virtual Reality Field Trips
- Introduced Digital Safety: Red, Yellow, Green tools
- Introduced Digital Discipleship
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual EdTech Day for staff and 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual EdTech Day for Students
- Introduced Tech Express E-Newsletter to all employees

## Keeping Digital Safety & Discipleship at the Forefront

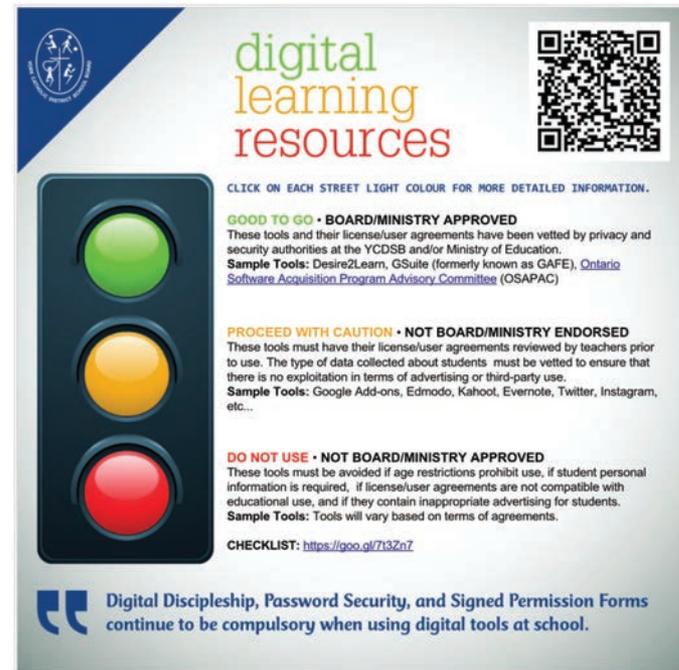
In 2015-2016, the Curriculum and Information Systems Departments teamed up to develop strategies to promote Digital Safety & Discipleship throughout all teaching and learning communities.

An Interactive Digital Safety Resource was created to help teachers determine which Apps are safe to use. We call this resource our Green, Yellow, Red tool.

If students, guided by our Catholic values, use evolving technologies in responsible and respectful ways then they will become reflective, critical and creative digital disciples who contribute to the common good.

A Digital Disciple, guided by our Catholic values, is one who uses technology ethically and responsibly to:

- advocate for local and global issues,
- act in solidarity and stewardship,
- promote human dignity.



**digital learning resources**

CLICK ON EACH STREET LIGHT COLOUR FOR MORE DETAILED INFORMATION.

**GOOD TO GO • BOARD/MINISTRY APPROVED**  
These tools and their license/user agreements have been vetted by privacy and security authorities at the YCDSB and/or Ministry of Education.  
**Sample Tools:** Desire2Learn, GSuite (formerly known as GAFE), Ontario Software Acquisition Program Advisory Committee (OSAPAC)

**PROCEED WITH CAUTION • NOT BOARD/MINISTRY ENDORSED**  
These tools must have their license/user agreements reviewed by teachers prior to use. The type of data collected about students must be vetted to ensure that there is no exploitation in terms of advertising or third-party use.  
**Sample Tools:** Google Add-ons, Edmodo, Kahoot, Evernote, Twitter, Instagram, etc...

**DO NOT USE • NOT BOARD/MINISTRY APPROVED**  
These tools must be avoided if age restrictions prohibit use, if student personal information is required, if license/user agreements are not compatible with educational use, and if they contain inappropriate advertising for students.  
**Sample Tools:** Tools will vary based on terms of agreements.

**CHECKLIST:** <https://goo.gl/7i3Zn7>

**Digital Discipleship, Password Security, and Signed Permission Forms continue to be compulsory when using digital tools at school.**

## UNDERSTANDING DIGITAL DISCIPLESHIP

COMPONENTS	DEFINITION	KNOWLEDGE + SKILLS
Literacy in a Digital Environment	The ability to navigate through credible digital resources in order to make meaning from texts.	<p>A responsible digital disciple is someone who is able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use effective literacy strategies to search for information</li> <li>• apply literacy strategies to locate, select, sort, interpret and synthesize information in order to build knowledge</li> <li>• use credible digital resources</li> <li>• evaluate and reflect critically on information/resources and sites</li> </ul>
Communication and Online Presence in a Digital Environment	The ability to communicate and respond appropriately while maintaining a positive presence online.	<p>A responsible digital disciple is someone who is able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop a positive reputation and digital footprint</li> <li>• identify and respond appropriately to online issues</li> <li>• communicate appropriately according to the audience</li> </ul>
Safety and Protection in a Digital Environment	The ability to safely participate in an online environment and protect the privacy of self and others.	<p>A responsible digital disciple is someone who is able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• implement precautions for online safety</li> <li>• protect the privacy of self and others</li> </ul>
Creation and Credit in a Digital Environment	The ability to respect the intellectual property of others and adhere to copyright laws to inform the creation of new knowledge.	<p>A responsible digital disciple is someone who is able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• respect and give credit to the intellectual property of others</li> <li>• use digital resources responsibly and adhere to user agreements</li> <li>• understand and abide by copyright laws when creating and applying their knowledge</li> </ul>
Health and Well-Being in a Digital Environment	The ability to balance offline and online activities and use devices to promote physical, spiritual and mental well-being.	<p>A responsible digital disciple is someone who is able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• balance online and offline activities</li> <li>• use devices with attention to physical and mental health</li> </ul>

## Our 21st Century Learning - Key Priorities

### Student Achievement

- Primary Reading to support OSSLT
- Mathematics from Kindergarten to Grade 12
- Closing the gap for groups of students who historically achieve below expectations
- Academic excellence for success in the 21st century
- System coherence and alignment

### Student Well-Being

- Instructional excellence that is welcoming, engaging and inclusive
- Providing a safe, supportive and healthy environment
- Teaching skills and attitudes for hope, optimism, resilience and responsibility

## 2016 EQAO & OSSLT Assessments

YCDSB students continue to perform well on the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) assessments and the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT). Results show that Grade 3 and 6 students continue to demonstrate strong performance in reading and writing and continue to perform above the provincial average in mathematics. At the secondary level, 86 per cent of York Catholic students achieved the standard on the Grade 9 Assessment of Academic Mathematics, and 86 per cent also passed the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test.

## Literacy

Over the last five years, performance on the Primary and Junior Division Assessment of Reading has increased by 9% and 7% respectively and surpassed the provincial target of 75%. Grade 3 and 6 students attending elementary schools continue to maintain very high levels of performance on the writing components of the provincial assessments. Secondary students continue to demonstrate very high levels of success on the Literacy Test.

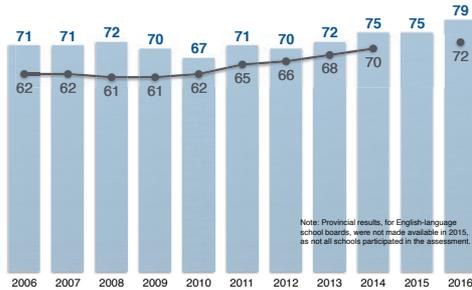
## Numeracy

There was an increase in student performance from the previous year on the Grade 3 Assessment of Mathematics. Improving student achievement in mathematics from Kindergarten to Grade 12 is a key priority of the 2016-2017 Board Innovation & Improvement Learning Cycle for Student Achievement, Faith Development and Well-Being.

# EQAO Standardized Test Results

## Grade 3 Assessment of Reading

Percentage of Grade 3 Students who achieved the Standard in Reading (Level 3,4)



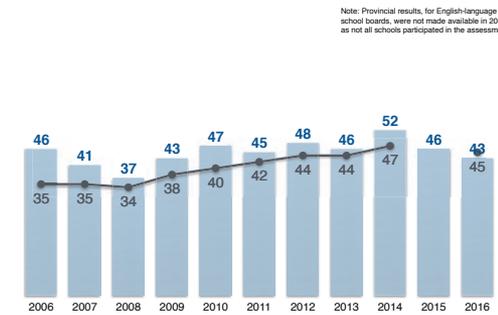
## Grade 6 Assessment of Reading

Percentage of Grade 6 Students who achieved the Standard in Reading (Level 3,4)



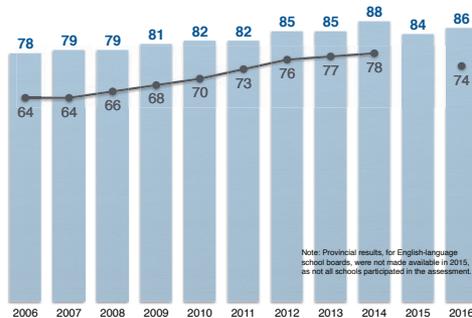
## Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics - Applied Math

Percentage of Students Enrolled in the Applied Math Course who achieved the Standard (Level 3,4)



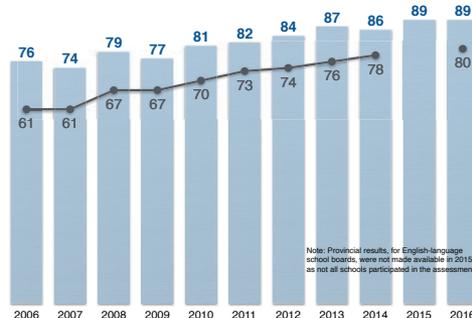
## Grade 3 Assessment of Writing

Percentage of Grade 3 Students who achieved the Standard in Writing (Level 3,4)



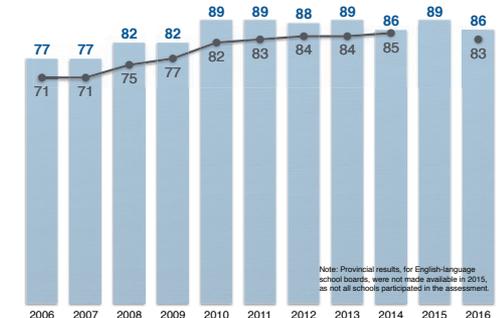
## Grade 6 Assessment of Writing

Percentage of Grade 6 Students who achieved the Standard in Writing (Level 3,4)



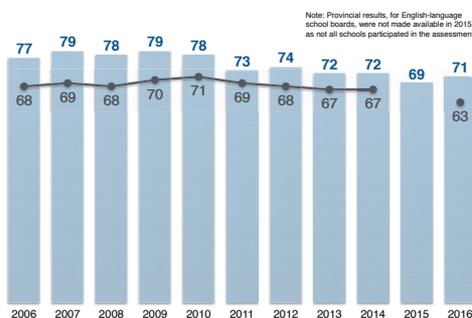
## Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics - Academic Math

Percentage of Students Enrolled in the Academic Math Course who achieved the Standard (Level 3,4)



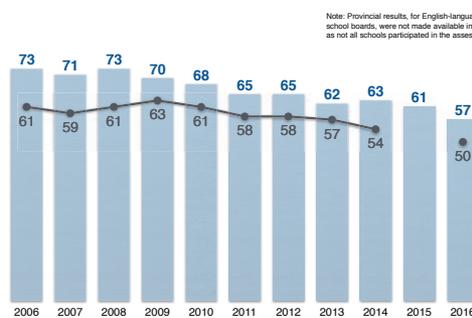
## Grade 3 Assessment of Mathematics

Percentage of Grade 3 Students who achieved the Standard in Mathematics (Level 3,4)



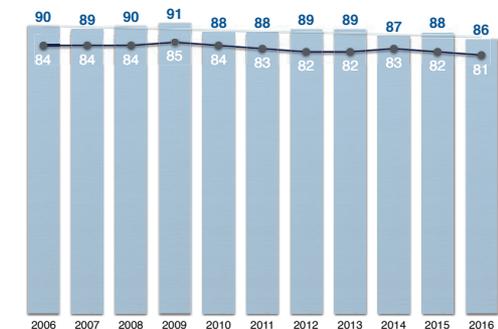
## Grade 6 Assessment of Mathematics

Percentage of Grade 6 Students who achieved the Standard in Mathematics (Level 3,4)



## Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test

Percentage of Students in the Board and Province who were Successful





## Top Graduating Student

Megan Lam from St. Robert Catholic High School scored a perfect 100 per cent average in her final year of high school, making her York Catholic's top graduating student.

Megan was enrolled in the International Baccalaureate (IB) Program. YCDSB offers the IB program at three schools: St. Robert CHS, Father Michael McGivney CA, and Cardinal Carter CHS.

During her time at St. Robert CHS, Megan participated in several school clubs, most notably, she served as the President of St. Robert's Math Club, was a Senior Member of the Debate Team, and was on the Executive Council of the DECA team, which provides students with practical business knowledge and experience. Outside of school, Megan teaches piano and music history, and acts as a Youth Ambassador for World Vision.



## Graduation Rate

On May 3, 2016 the Ministry of Education published individual school board graduation rates across the province. York Catholic District School Board, once again, achieved the highest four and five-year graduation rate of all English language school boards in the province. Our five-year graduation rate for 2015 was 95.9%. This exceeds the provincial average of 85.5%.

## Student Leadership Leadership Links

In November, secondary student leaders hosted a student leadership conference, entitled "Leadership Links", for 150 elementary students from over 50 schools. The theme of the conference was: We Are Limitless. Elementary students learned about the importance of being a positive leader and to be agents of positive change in their schools.

## TEDx Talk – Innovating Our Future

YCDSB, through the efforts of students and staff at Sacred Heart CHS, hosted its first ever TEDx Talk. The theme of the talk was: Innovating Our Future. During the event, several speakers shared their stories with the 400 students in the audience, as well as the hundreds of other students and staff who watched the talk from their schools remotely.

## Horizon's Conference

YCDSB's annual "Horizons Conference" that promotes student leadership in high schools was held in April 2016 at Our Lady of the Lake CCS in Georgina. The theme of the conference, The Magic In You, brought awareness to students on issues such as mental health, environmental studies and inclusiveness.

# A Healthy Mind Means

# A Healthy Life

## Mental Health Symposium and Video Contest

In 2016 YCDSB held its first-ever Elementary School Student Mental Health Symposium and it was a tremendous success! Grade 7 and 8 students had the opportunity to meet their peers from across the Board and learn about positive mental health and healthy coping skills. The Board also hosted its second annual High School Student Mental Health Symposium, where students listened to keynote speakers and inspiring youth who managed their mental health problems. Secondary Students also participated in workshops that increased their mental health literacy and resiliency skills.

Prior to each symposium YCDSB held two mental health video contests; one for elementary students and one for secondary students. The top three winners for each panel were announced at the symposiums. To see the winning videos visit: <http://www.ycdsb.ca/news/archive/040116-mhvideowinners.html>.

### *1st Place Winners*

Elementary: St. David CES- Mental Health Awareness

Secondary: St. Theresa of Lisieux CHS – Join the Conversation





## First Nations, Métis and Inuit Policy Framework



Self-identified FNMI families in our Board increased from 65 to 87. The Board continues to communicate to these families and encourages others to self-identify.

In 2015-2016, York Catholic implemented its First Nations, Métis & Inuit Policy Framework (FNMI). A permanent seat was established for a student of FNMI heritage on the York Secondary Catholic President's Council, which is comprised of student leaders from across the Board.

YCDSB's FNMI Steering Committee is comprised of representatives of Cree, Mi'kmaq, Dene, Tamiskaming, Oneida, Salish, Anishnabe, and Métis heritages. This committee met throughout the year and oversaw the implementation of the Board's drumming arts and music project. York Catholic's FNMI Steering Committee Elder and staff attended a weekend conference on "Reconciliation Through Education," and they continue working to implement the recommendations of Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Council.

In June 2016 an in-service was held for staff teaching Native Studies for the 2016-2017 Academic Year. Participants included 45 teachers, 15 Administrators, among others.

## Curriculum

### Programs and Pathways

Programs and Pathways represents a collection of programs, supports and activities that provide students with the knowledge, skills and tools they need to make successful transitions from grade-to-grade, to life after high school, and throughout their lives. Our "Pathways" goal is to enable students to apply knowledge of their skills and interests to make appropriate decisions about education, career and life possibilities.

At the end of the 2015-2016 school year, there were noted improvements in student performance on Learning Skills and Work Habits, as well as the 5-year graduation rate. The Board also continues to experience a consistent pattern of improvement in credit accumulation for all secondary students and students with special education needs.

To promote successful outcomes for all students, the Board makes available initiatives like career education, experiential learning, co-op and eLearning opportunities. Programs offered by the Board include:

- International Baccalaureate Program
- Regional Arts Program
- Laptop Learning
- Specialist High Skills Majors (SHSM)
- Dual Credit Courses
- Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP)
- Advanced Placement (AP) Program
- School-Within-A-College (SWAC) Program
- Credit Recovery

### Expansion of Specialist High Skills Major Program

The Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) is a series of Ministry of Education approved specialized programs that help Grade 11 and 12 students focus their learning on a specific economic sector while meeting the requirements to graduate from secondary school. In 2015-2016, we offered 19 SHSM programs in sectors ranging from Health and Wellness to Information and Communication Technology. Our "Red Seal" completion rate for 2015-2016 was 80% compared to the provincial average of 48%.



## French Immersion

Our French Immersion program continues to flourish. In 2015-2016, York Catholic expanded its French Immersion Program at St. Thomas Aquinas CES and St. Marguerite d'Youville CES.

In September 2017 YCDSB will offer the French Immersion program to Grade 9 students at St. Brother Andre CHS. The program will include ten core courses offered in French, including Religious Education, Grade 9 Geography and Grade 10 History.



## Focus on Mathematics

In an effort to improve student learning and achievement in Mathematics, York Catholic District School Board identified three overarching goals for improvement.

### *Student Learning*

To ensure students experience overall success in mathematics, work was done to help students acquire conceptual understanding of numbers (quantity, value) and to become confident and capable learners in the area of number sense.

### *Professional Learning*

To leverage teacher's math knowledge and pedagogical expertise the Curriculum Team provided a professional learning series to school math leads and administrators in the area of number sense and numeration.

### *Leadership*

Principal teams reviewed schools where mathematics performance was steadily improving, and analyzed successful strategies to support the instruction of mathematics in their own school.



## 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 the second largest in the province of Ontario consisting of 665 classes and 22,790 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 weekdays, evenings and on 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 Continuing Education Department also provides the International Languages Instructor Training Program as well as computer training programs like Microsoft Basic and Intermediate for the adult learner.

The Elementary Division of Continuing Education provides opportunities for extended learning after school, Saturday mornings, and during the Summer. The International Languages Saturday Program offers classes in 15 languages throughout York Region. The Remedial After School Literacy and Numeracy Skills and Grant Program classes are offered throughout the school year at various sites for students in Grades 1 to 8. A Family Literacy & Numeracy Program for SK - Grade 2 students and their parents is also offered at various schools.

In the Secondary Division, Saturday credit programs jumped from five sections to 15 sections. A Learning Strategies, eLearning course that was introduced in 2014-2015 received additional supports in 2015-2016 as teachers were trained in its use and are now able to use this skill in their everyday teaching. 2015-2016 saw a new focus on math, which included a new Numeracy non-credit course offered during the summer. This program better targets the skillset of incoming Gr.8 students who need assistance to improve their opportunities for success.

### Elementary Division Programs:

- Art 4 Kids (Gr. 4-6)
- Creative Hands (Gr. 1-3)
- Family Literacy & Numeracy SK to Gr. 2 Remedial Program
- French Conversation (Gr. SK-5)
- French Immersion Summer Camp (Gr. 1)
- International Languages Saturday and Summer Programs (JK to Gr. 8)
- Literacy & Numeracy After School Skills (Gr. 1-6) IGrant Program
- Literacy & Numeracy Skills Development (Gr. 7-8)
- Reading Readiness (Gr. 1-2)
- S.T.A.R.S. (Skills, Technology, Applications, and Remedial Support) Gr. 4-6 Program
- TechnoFlash (Gr. 5-8)
- TechnoHero (Gr. 3-5)
- TechnoJournal (Gr. 2-4)

### Secondary Division Programs:

- After School Literacy and Numeracy
- Driver's Education
- PLAR (Prior Learning and Assessment and Recognition)
- Global Education
- Learning Strategies, Gr. 8 e-learning class
- Night School Semester 1 and 2
- Night School eLearning
- Summer School
- Summer eLearning
- Reaching up Credits for Gr. 8 students
- Saturday Credit Programs in Languages and Subjects
- Literacy Preparation for Gr. 8 students
- Math Preparation for Gr. 8 students



# Effective Use of Our Resources

## Building a Bright Future

A number of construction projects took place over the 2015-2016 school year and throughout the summer months. In Vaughan, Holy Cross Catholic Academy's Science Lab was renovated as part of a Capital Renewal Project.

FDK renovations took place at:

- Our Lady of Fatima in Vaughan
- St. Anne CES in Richmond Hill
- St. Joseph the Worker CES in Vaughan
- St. Margaret Mary in Vaughan
- St. Thomas Aquinas CES in Georgina

New Playgrounds were installed at:

- St. Padre Pio Childcare Centre in Vaughan
- Prince of Peace Childcare Centre in Georgina

## Markham Sports Dome

The York Catholic District School Board, in partnership with First Service Tennis Management (FSTM), hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony to mark the official Grand Opening of the Markham Sports Dome at Father Michael McGivney Catholic Academy, on Saturday, October 3, 2015.

The sports dome is an indoor multi-sports facility that is more than 70,000 square feet in size. Construction began in April 2015 and was completed in September 2015. The facility allows student and community groups to play a wide-range of athletic activities, such as soccer, football, and lacrosse, year-round.

The Markham Sports Dome was built thanks to a partnership between the York Catholic District School Board and First Service Tennis Management, an indoor sports management group. The construction costs of the soccer dome were covered by FSTM, which will have access to the field after school hours, on weekends and on non-school days. The land was provided by the York Catholic District School Board, which will have access to the facility when school is in session.





# Environmental Initiatives

## YCDSB Among Top Energy Performing School Boards in Ontario

YCDSB was named one of the Top Energy Performing Boards in Ontario by the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority. The Board was once again delighted to receive this designation. York Catholic schools and Board office staff are deeply committed to improving our ecological footprint and finding meaningful ways to cut electricity and natural gas usage. This honour belongs to our 55 EcoSchools student teams, their staff facilitators, and our Environmental Services team for their proactive approach to energy conservation.

## Ontario EcoSchools Program

The Ontario EcoSchools Program continues to be a great success at York Catholic. A total of 55 schools were certified as EcoSchools in 2015-2016. St. Justin Martyr CES, Prince of Peace CES and Father Frederick McGinn CES achieved Platinum certification for the 2015-2016 school year.

## School Ground Greening

The YCDSB, in partnership with the Region of York and Evergreen, enlisted the services of a school ground greening consultant to support schools that expressed a desire to enhance playgrounds through tree planting, shade features and outdoor classrooms. Several schools participated in School Ground Greening Projects. Of note, St. Nicolas CES, with the collaboration of Windfall Ecology Centre, Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority, Evergreen and Environment Services completed a greening project including de-paving of the kindergarten area. St. Jerome CES also replaced a large portion of the exterior play area with mulch, an ecological solution to replace hard play surfaces. The program continues this year with special consideration for Kindergarten play areas.

## Solar Projects

Since the launch of the YCDSB Solar Project in 2014, YCDSB has completed the construction on 24 Solar Photovoltaic (PV) systems on school roofs that are connected to the Ontario electricity grid. This project supports the Board's commitments to ecological sustainability and conservation, and fiscal responsibility. The Board will undertake the construction of an additional Solar Photovoltaic (PV) system at Holy Cross CHS with a completion date of August 31, 2017.

## Markham Zero Waste Program

In collaboration with the City of Markham's Zero Waste Program, the city delivers recycling presentations to students and has committed to picking up all recycled products, including food waste, at no cost to YCDSB. This program will be expanded during the 2016-2017 school year to include all schools located within the City of Markham boundary.

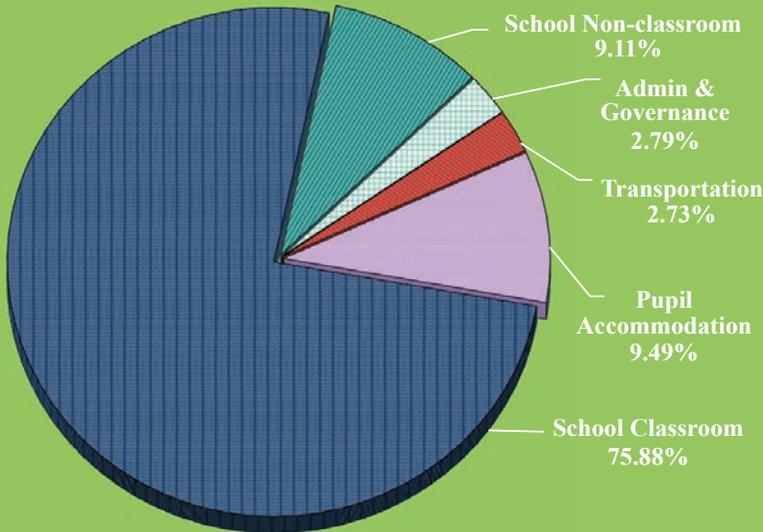
## Environmental Programs

Environmental Services continues to promote ecological programs to schools, including:

- Healthy Kids Challenge
- Project Bird Nests
- Toner Cartridge Recycling Program
- Sweater Day
- Tree Planting
- Print Reduction Strategies

# Budget

## Operating Expenditures 2015-2016 Year End Report Expenditures by Function



• School Classroom	440,891,764	75.88%
• School Non-classroom	52,939,332	9.11%
• Admin & Governance	16,223,914	2.79%
• Pupil Transportation	15,857,054	2.73%
• Pupil Accommodation	55,125,161	9.49%
• TOTAL	581,037,225	100.00%

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

## Pupil Accommodation Reviews

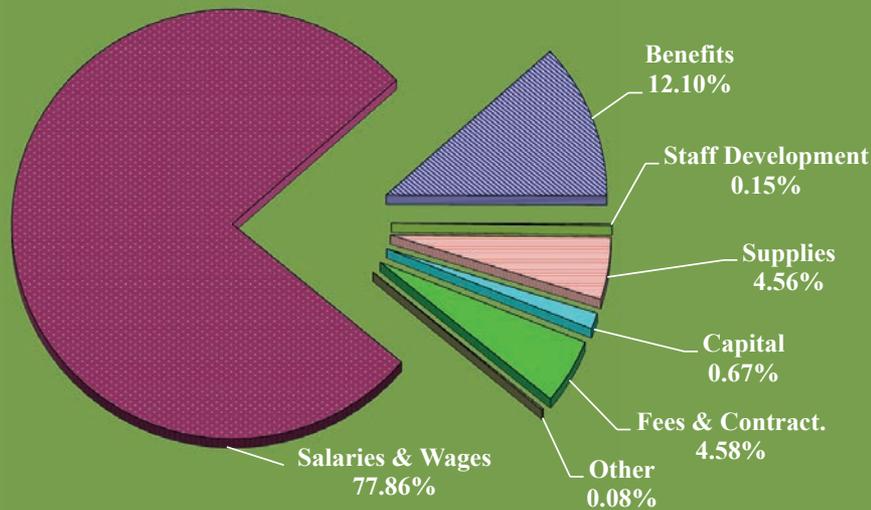
York Catholic District School Board has seen an increase in the number of surplus (unfunded) pupil places over the last decade as enrolment has declined. In 2015, the Board approved a five-year Long Term Accommodation Plan (2015-2020) (LTAP) to address the Board's current and future student accommodation needs board-wide.

The LTAP outlines a number of accommodation initiatives, including Pupil Accommodation Reviews (PARs) which is a community consultation process required by the Ministry of Education where a school closure and/

or consolidation is being considered to address changing demographics, enrolment, programming, and facility condition challenges facing a school or schools in a particular area under review. The PAR process results in a number of recommendations to Trustees to address those identified challenges, and provides opportunities for community participation through public consultation.

The Board's Multi-Year Strategic Plan, LTAP, our Community Planning and Partnership Policy (#704) and Pupil Accommodation Reviews are part of a larger Board process to provide the best supports for student success and achievement over the long-term.

## Operating Expenditures 2014-2015 Year End Report Expenditures by Object



• Salaries & Wages	452,393,396	77.86%
• Benefits	70,300,563	12.10%
• Staff Development	856,821	0.15%
• Supplies & Services	26,514,223	4.56%
• Capital	3,904,929	0.67%
• Fees & Contract.	26,618,868	4.58%
• Other	448,425	0.08%
• Total	<u>581,037,225</u>	<u>100.00%</u>

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

Working together with our school communities, the PAR process will help the Board ensure that we are efficiently using available space to accommodate students over the long-term while continuing to offer the high standard of program excellence in innovative, faith-filled learning environments that our students deserve and that our parents expect. In the 2015-2016 school year, Pupil Accommodation Reviews were initiated in the areas of Vaughan Thornhill and South Woodbridge East. The Board of Trustees approved the recommendation to close Holy Family Catholic Elementary School in Thornhill and St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Elementary School in Woodbridge.





# Engaging Our Communities

## Welcome Centre – Immigrant Services

As of February 2016, families that are new to Canada can visit a Newcomer Reception Centre in Markham or Richmond Hill, to register their children in a York Catholic elementary school or to have their children assessed to be placed in the appropriate grade in a York Catholic secondary school.

The Newcomer Reception Centres are staffed by multilingual settlement workers, in partnership with not-for-profit organizations, Job Skills, and Catholic Community Services of York Region.

The Markham Newcomer Reception Centre is located at 8400 Woodbine Avenue, Suites 102-103. Parents are encouraged to call: 289-846-3645 or email: [apptwc@ycdsb.ca](mailto:apptwc@ycdsb.ca) to book an appointment.

The Richmond Hill Newcomer Reception Centre is located in the South Hill Shopping Centre at 9325 Yonge Street. Parents are encouraged to call: 289-842-3124 or email: [apptwc@ycdsb.ca](mailto:apptwc@ycdsb.ca) to book an appointment.

## Parent Engagement

We are proud of our work in the area of Parent Engagement. Together with the York Catholic Parent Involvement Committee, the Board hosted two successful parenting conferences in the Fall and Spring. Dr. Kenneth Fung spoke to parents about children's mental health and anxiety, and Child and Family Therapist, Jennifer Kolari, spoke to parents on the topic of "Connected Parenting."

YCPIC is an advisory body whose primary purpose is to promote effective parent involvement, enabling parents to play a stronger role in supporting student achievement.



## Accessibility

The 2015-2016 school year marked the Board's third year of its Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2013-2018). The plan was developed in accordance with the Integration Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005. The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan supports Board Policy 415: Accessibility Standards for Employment, Board Policy 601: Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, and Board Policy 609: Accessibility Standards for Information and Communication.

The Board offers accessible formats and communication supports upon request. An accessibility feedback form and request form are available online at: <http://www.ycdsb.ca/about/accessibility.htm>.

## Twitter News

@YCDSB hit 10,000 Twitter followers in November 2015. Since launching @YCDSB in 2011, the Board has built a large following of students, parents, staff, community partners, media and other stakeholders. Follow us @ycdsb





## Engaging Our Communities Through Student Services

A series of community events were hosted by YCDSB's Student Services Department during the 2015-2016 school year. The goal of these events was to generate awareness, share information and engage parent communities and Board partners. Events included:

- Planning for the Future Symposium
- Early Facilitation Parent Information Evenings
- Yes I Can Awards
- Program for Academic and Creative Extension (PACE) Parent Information Night
- Transition Back to School: Summer Camp for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and their parents (20 students and their parents participated)

### ASD Demonstration Project

YCDSB and York University continued to work on a collaborative project to support students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) who will be transitioning to college or university. As part of this initiative a new Learning Strategies curriculum for students with ASD was once again offered as a summer school course for students entering Grades 11 and 12 and shared with all high schools. A proposed transition model for use throughout the Province has also been developed as a result of this multi-sector partnership.

### Transition Planning Symposium

A Transition Planning Symposium was held for parents on May 18, 2016 at the Board's Catholic Education Centre. A variety of workshops focusing on transition planning for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder and Developmental Delays were offered. A further component of the evening included the participation of various community agencies. These agencies provided information on resources and supports for parents.

### World Autism Day

Students celebrated World Autism Awareness Day by participating in the Raise the Flag event and various other activities. A display showcasing the artwork of students with ASD was held at the Catholic Education Centre during the month of April to celebrate this event.



## A Review of the Northern Initiative in Georgina

The YCDSB's Multi-Year Strategic Plan sets priorities, provides direction, and calls for program reviews to position the Board for continued success as one of the top-performing school boards in Ontario.

Program reviews are conducted to ensure that our assets and resources are allocated and aligned to achieve the best possible outcomes for our Catholic school communities.

In 2002-2003, Our Lady of the Lake Catholic College School in Georgina welcomed Grade 7 and 8 students from Prince of Peace, St. Bernadette and St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Elementary Schools. The establishment of the K-6 / 7-12 model was referred to as the "Northern Initiative".

In 2015-2016, the York Catholic District School Board began a review of the Northern Initiative. The review was to assess the successes and challenges of the "Northern Initiative" in the context of the Board's new Mission and the Vision we have for our students in Georgina.

The review of the Northern Initiative involved consultation with parents, students, alumni, teachers, support staff, administrators and the parish priest to identify:

- Success and challenges of the present K-12 Model
- Ideas and suggestions that would enhance and enrich the educational experience of students as they progress from grade to grade and life after high school
- Preferences related to the Grade 12 Graduation Ceremony at Our Lady of the Lake CCS

Online Surveys and Focus Groups were used to capture suggestions and data. Over 600 stakeholders in Georgina participated and shared their success stories and identified issues. The Board heard their call for action and the following recommendations were approved for the 2016-2017 school year:

- Differentiated Supports for Prince of Peace, St. Bernadette, St. Thomas Aquinas and Our Lady of the Lake
- Repair of the field at Our Lady of the Lake Catholic College School (pending approval of Capital Funding from the Ministry of Education)
- Funding allocations to enable more experiential learning opportunities
- Funds to initiate a marketing campaign to promote YCDSB's Georgina schools

The YCDSB thanks the many families, staff and community members in Georgina for their input and the suggestions.



# Feedback From Our Student and Parent Communities

## Exit Survey

York Catholic conducted its fourth annual Exit Survey for graduating elementary and secondary students. The survey assesses students' perceptions about their experiences at their school and their plans for continuing their studies. Students complete elementary school in Grade 8 in all York Catholic schools, except in the Town of Georgina, where students graduate in Grade 6, and attend a Grade 7-12 high school.

Nearly all of the Grade 6 students in our Georgina schools indicated that they planned to enrol in a York Catholic high school. The top reasons given by Grade 6 students for enrolling in a York Catholic high school included the attendance of siblings and friends at the school and the uniqueness of the Grade 7-12 program.

Most Grade 8 students who were surveyed throughout the rest of the Board indicated that they planned to enrol in a York Catholic high school because of the location and a sibling, or friends, were attending a York Catholic high school. Grade 8 students who participated in the Exit Survey noted that their schools provide them with strategies and opportunities to achieve their goals and they indicated that they require support to develop their abilities to identify and monitor progress in meeting their goals.

Grade 12 students who completed the Exit Survey indicated that their Catholic education experiences helped prepare them for their post-secondary destination. More specifically, their schools helped them:

- Develop a clear sense of their initial post-secondary destination;
- Formulate post-secondary plans and goals;
- Identify strategies to achieve their goals.

## School Climate Survey

York Catholic invited parents/guardians/caregivers and school staff to participate in the 2016 School Climate Survey. Stakeholders indicated that students, from Kindergarten to Grade 12, feel respected and welcomed. They reported that York Catholic schools are doing a good job of fostering an appreciation of diversity and promoting inclusivity and respect among students. Moreover, they perceived that York Catholic 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.

### *What We Are Doing Well*

- Parents perceive that schools model a Catholic world-view that encourages students to put the Catholic Virtues into action.
- Parents and school staff express strong feelings of safety and security at the school.
- Parents and school staff say that they are provided with opportunities to be actively involved in the school.

## Keeping Our Communities Informed

In June 2016, YCDSB shared the Annual Trustee Newsletter, which highlighted the successes of the 2015-2016 school year. The Newsletter also addressed the role and duties of Trustees, updated policies, Catholic School Support Declaration and more. To view a copy of this newsletter, visit: <http://www.ycdsb.ca/trustees/documents/year-in-review.pdf>



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