

NEW TEACHERS AT CATHOLIC BOARD RECEIVE FAITH ORIENTATION

It was like the first day of school all over again for the new teachers of the Northeastern Catholic District School Board. Twenty-eight teachers from across the district gathered at Sacred Heart Church hall in Timmins today to take part in training that will facilitate their integration as Catholic educators within our system.



The day began with warm words of welcome and sound wisdom from Director of Education Paul Toffanello. He encouraged them to embrace their profession, and to take advantage of the opportunities to experience growth in their personal and professional lives, and on their faith journey. He explained that while the first few years will require a lot of work and effort on their part, the key is to take care of themselves both physically and spiritually. As Catholic educators, they are entrusted with Christ's most precious treasure, his children. Within this obligation is an inherent understanding that they will love them as dearly as they would love their own children.



The group was also introduced to the team of special assignment teachers and program principals who will be accessible throughout the year to support them in the areas of student achievement, information technology, curriculum, special education, and successful pathways for students. They outlined their areas of expertise, and emphasized that through their team approach, they will strive to provide the resources to facilitate teaching and learning in the classroom.

The main part of the morning consisted of a session called Celebrating Your Faith as a Teacher of the NCDSB. It was animated by O'Gorman High School's Pastoral Care Worker, Mike Buhler. He shared with them his own faith journey, and the importance of this dimension in the Catholic school system.



During the afternoon, they split into smaller groups to focus on literacy tools for their respective division levels. The primary group examined reading and writing strategies, the basics of running records and designing a literacy classroom. The junior level teachers explored the following topics: What Are You Worried About So Far?; CASI: How To Do It, How to Analyse It, How To Get Your Results In; and Assessment: Start Now So You Won't Panic Later! For their part, the intermediate and senior teachers tackled reading and writing strategies for any and all subjects, and looked at the use of 'picture books' in high school. They were also introduced to a number of resources that are available and their use in effective planning.

Overall, this orientation day will both strengthen their understanding of the role of faith in learning, while enhancing key pedagogical approaches.

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