

CATHOLIC STUDENTS GRADUATING WITH SOLID FAITH FORMATION



Grade 8 graduates from Sacred Heart Catholic School in Kirkland Lake: Kayley Sinclair, Kelsie Howg and Brooklyn Hack

Grade 8 students from throughout the Board are taking one last look at their school this week, as they reach a milestone in their learning journey, their graduation. This step is particularly significant for our students who live outside of the Timmins area, because for most of them, it will mean leaving the formal Catholic education system.

Director of Education Paul Toffanello reflected on the significance of this event as he attended several graduations throughout the Board. "I am filled with pride as I look around the church at our graduating Grade 8 students, knowing well that they will make the transition to secondary school with a solid faith formation," shared Toffanello. "During their years within the Catholic school system, they have had the opportunity to grow not only intellectually, physically and emotionally, but more importantly, spiritually. In our schools, learning is more than just the acquisition of knowledge. It is also about human development through Christian values of justice, courage and service towards others. Because of our focus on Catholic graduate expectations, we are confident that our students are leaving us with the wisdom to make responsible, informed decisions with a good moral conscience. They are well prepared to be self-directed learners, to live a meaningful life and to contribute to the common good in their community."

Graduating Grade 8 student Brooklyn Hack from Sacred Heart Catholic School in Kirkland Lake is appreciative that religion and pastoral services permeated her learning environment. "I'm glad that I went to a Catholic School because I felt comforted knowing that God was always there for me," explained Hack. "We celebrated our faith as a school community through many liturgies and masses. It was great to share my faith with my classmates."

For parent Laura Alarie also of Kirkland Lake, seeing her son graduate from a faith-based school setting brings a sense of confidence. "I send my children to a Catholic School so that they will learn more about Christian and family values, and so that they can share with others the faith I was taught growing up," explained Alarie. "I'm proud to now send my son to high school knowing that he has these values."

Within the jurisdiction of the Board which stretches from Cobalt to Kapuskasing, English Catholic secondary education is currently only available at O'Gorman High School in Timmins. The Board has on many occasions considered extending this opportunity. The right to Catholic separate schools are constitutionally preserved by virtue of Section 93 of the Constitution Act of 1867. It is an ongoing dream of the Board to one day be able to provide our students with access to a Catholic learning experience at the secondary level throughout our district. And we continue to look at different ways in which we can offer this opportunity in all locations.

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