

CATHOLIC STUDENTS WELCOME NEW COMPUTERS AS SCHOOL YEAR BEGINS

As students streamed back into classrooms this week, they returned to the smiling faces of their dynamic Principal, Teachers, and Support Staff as well as to a wealth of facilities upgrades and a balanced budget for 2006-07. And if that wasn't enough to make them smile, then they certainly couldn't help but be excited by the latest in computer technology in their school labs.

According to Trustee for Kirkland Lake/Englehart Steve Malciw, the Board invested heavily in technology over the summer as an essential learning tool. "We purchased and installed 485 brand new computer workstations with the new flat screen monitors and enhanced performance ability," explained Malciw. "All computers in our school labs were replaced with the new hardware. In addition, we upgraded all of our classroom computers to increase RAM and operating efficiency. This is an investment in IT that will allow our students to access resources more efficiently using the internet, to communicate more effectively Board-wide and also to use advanced software applications for learning."



Students at English Catholic Central School in New Liskeard get a first look at the new computers in their school lab. The NCDSB replaced workstations in computer labs at every school within the Board over the summer.

From a programming perspective, Director of Education Paul Toffanello is confident that students will benefit from the resources available to support their academic and faith development in 2006-07. "We have a strong team of Special Assignment Teachers and Program Principals with a few new faces at the table this year," noted Toffanello. "They will be increasing their presence in our schools to support achievement in literacy and other academic areas through their interactions with our teachers and through more formal professional development workshops. The emphasis will continue to be on fostering proficiency in literacy as it underpins all learning. We have also purchased a new math program called 'First Steps' which will help us enhance teaching and support existing math programs for our learners. As well, our Pastoral Care Worker, Mike Buhler, has engaged in planning throughout the summer in order to roll out faith development activities for our students and staff as we grow together as Catholics. As part of his new full year mandate, he will visit each of our school communities and engage our youth through community outreach initiatives, faith celebrations, relationship building, counseling and retreats."



Continued from page 1...

Many school facilities were the focus of capital projects and maintenance work over the summer as part of the Board's commitment to keep our facilities in good repair. Highlights include the major construction project at O'Gorman Intermediate Catholic School in Timmins. A new full-size gymnasium was built, with the existing gym being converted into a music room, a lunch room, as well as additional classroom space to meet the rise in enrolment. At O'Gorman High School, in collaboration with the financial support of O'Gorman Parents for Kids, the Sylvia Gravel Theatre was outfitted with new stage curtains in time for this year's musical production of "Anything Goes". St. Joseph School in South Porcupine received new flooring in three classrooms as well as in the gym. At St. Paul School, new fencing was installed around the perimeter of three sides of the school yard. At Sacred Heart School in Timmins, a new basketball court was paved and new flooring was installed in the 3rd floor hallway. As well, a new playground structure which was purchased through fundraising by their Catholic School Council was installed.



A new climber was added to the playground equipment at Sacred Heart School in Timmins, thanks to funds raised by their Catholic School Council.

At English Catholic Central School in New Liskeard, new porcelain tiles were installed in the foyer and along the main hallway, as well as in the Junior Kindergarten hallway. The portapak and hallways were painted, while an ageing portable was demolished at the front of the school. At Holy Family School in Englehart, paving stones were repaired on the premises while the entrance canopy was repaired. Four outdoor basketball backboards were repainted in the school yard. Students at St. Patrick School in Cobalt received a new trophy case to house their prized awards, with new flooring was installed in two rooms. In Kirkland Lake, the gym floor at Sacred Heart Catholic School was refinished and varnished, while 60 additional lockers were installed to accommodate the junior and intermediate students.

At St. Anne English Catholic School in Iroquois Falls, the Junior Kindergarten classroom receive new flooring and a fresh coat of paint, with a few aesthetic projects to the front of the school property. At St. Patrick School in Kapuskasing, new flooring was installed in two classrooms as well as to a large part of the second floor, while electrical panels were upgraded to accommodate the increase in advanced information technology equipment in the school.

All of these preparations for the new school year were completed just as the Board finalized financial planning for the 2006-07 school year. Chair of the Board Colleen Landers is pleased to announce that the school year is beginning on the right foot with a sound financial plan. "At our August Board meeting, we passed a balanced budget for the upcoming school year in the amount of \$31,377,685 by accessing funds from our reserves," stated Landers. "These monies will allow us to maintain programming and services that we have been able to offer in past years. We continue to exercise fiscal responsibility with the dollars allocated to us to ensure that the needs of our students are being met in terms of programs, resources, staffing, training and facilities."

Families who wish to register for the 2006-07 may still do so by contacting the Board Office at 1-877-422-9322, or by visiting their local English Catholic school. A list of schools is available on our web site at www.ncdsb.on.ca.

For more information, please contact Mélanie Bidal-Mainville, Community Relations Officer

