

# NORTHEASTERN CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

YOU ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD!



2007

## Director's Annual Report





## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



Welcome to the 2007 Annual Report of the **Northeastern Catholic District School Board**. Within, you will find a report on activities, achievements and celebrations that demonstrate how we are making a difference in the lives of the children, families and communities whom we serve in the Catholic education system. This report will also provide you with a glimpse of some of our continued plans for the 2007-2008 school year in which we are currently operating.

The year began with a significant effort on the part of the Superintendent of Education, our support staff and our Trustees to communicate to our schools the firm beliefs and values espoused by the Board. Our fundamental beliefs are:

- ✓ FAITH IS OUR REASON FOR BEING
- ✓ LITERACY UNDERPINS ALL LEARNING
- ✓ ALL STUDENTS CAN SUCCEED
- ✓ STUDENT LEARNING BEGINS WITH TEACHER LEARNING

In this effort, the team visited each school, met with all staff members, provided an overview of the Board's commitment to these beliefs and values and offered an opportunity for feedback. There was a clear requirement that our schools embrace, adopt and embed these board beliefs and values into their own consideration of a school vision and through the school improvement plan.

As well, this year, under the guidance and direction of Michael Buhler, our board Chaplain, we introduced the theme of **"You are the Light of the World"**. Through a collaborative and interactive effort, all stakeholders had the opportunity to provide input and consideration to the board theme, and in the fall, this theme was adopted. We are encouraging all schools to build their Catholic faith activity and planning around this theme, and Mr. Buhler in his travels across the Board will continue to perpetuate the beauty and opportunity afforded to us through the theme and through God's love.

The **Northeastern Catholic District School Board** continues to initiate and support changes that impact on the excellence of Catholic education ultimately benefiting the students who we are here to lead. Our achievements are a function of our partners - home, school, parish and the community - working together to the benefit of our students. Our strength lies with our teachers, principals, support staff, administration and trustees. We are committed to a path of excellence and we endeavour to achieve this end.

Most importantly, we continue to strive in every way and measure to be a beacon of hope for our children; a source of light and direction as we are called to do by Jesus Christ. He is our inspiration and it is through the grace of God that we accept our roles as servant leaders. This is manifested in the many ways that we purposely perpetuate and engender faith, love and hope in our children; in this, it is realized through our celebrations of the Eucharist at our schools, our engagement with our Clergy, Bishop and Church community, our attention to social justice issues, and in the fostering of a spiritual culture guided by the Catholic Graduate Expectations and directed through the Word of God in the Scriptures.

In the end, we offer a very unique and different form of educating children, and that is through the purposeful development of the whole child - including the nurturing and development of the Spirit. I hope that you find this report to your satisfaction. Our doors are always open. I would encourage you to contact us at any time should you wish to comment, offer insight or share a concern.

God Bless,

**P. Toffanello**, Director of Education





# *FAITH IS OUR REASON FOR BEING...*

## *CHAIR'S MESSAGE—Our Catholic Schools-The Third Millennium*

Today, Ontario's Catholic school system exists as a full partner in the province educating over 800,000 students or nearly one third of the young people in Ontario from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12. The **Northeastern Catholic District School Board** provides over 2500 elementary and secondary school students in the Districts of Timiskaming and Cochrane with a solid faith-based education in 13 schools district-wide. Our mandate is excellence in Catholic education for all children and the bar is set high when it comes to the teaching of our faith, student achievement, healthy learning environments, innovative programming, state-of-the-art technology, accessibility for all, and safe schools, only to name a few. We take pride in the work done by all members of our staff to ensure that each and every child in our schools receives an excellent Catholic education.

I know that I speak for my Trustee colleagues when I say how proud we are of the work of our teachers, principals, support staff and senior administration and all of their efforts in bringing to our children, families and Catholic community an excellent educational opportunity rife with the Holy Spirit.



Over these next few weeks and months, I invite each and every one to visit our Catholic schools and spend some time discovering what makes us unique. Come and spend some time! I am sure that you will be pleased and, I am equally certain that, upon entering the school, you will be greeted with warmth, a trademark of our Catholic schools.

May God bless everyone!

**Rick Brassard**, Chair, Board of Trustees

## *PASTORAL CARE*

Pastoral Care across the NCDSB involves relationship building between students and staff, often through story telling, liturgical support, and retreat experiences.

Our faith tradition is full of stories of many varieties, and our faith is centred on the story of Jesus and the stories of his Jewish tradition, as found in the Holy Bible. Jesus himself was a story teller, as his many parables reveal. So, school visits by the Board Pastoral Care Worker often involve story telling with students of all ages, from Junior Kindergarten to grade 12 classes. Through this practice and the conversations which follow a story, the Pastoral Care Worker, teachers and the students can together reflect on the presence of God in the human heart and the many ways human beings search for faith and grow in wisdom.

Retreat experiences include the 'Ambassador Program', which is designed for teachers. Ambassador retreats involve teachers from each school in our Board, and are times when we pray together, celebrate the presence of God in our lives, and share ways in which to help bring the light of Christ to others, in classrooms, school communities, and in the larger, global community. Often, outside resource people from local parishes are invited to help facilitate these meetings and to offer their own ideas of how the faith can be animated in our school communities.

With secondary students, retreats such as the Development and Peace 'ThinkFast!' focus our attention to the injustices carried out against the poor overseas, and the call Jesus makes to us to be peacemakers. As well, a group of senior students are taken every year to Toronto to work in shelters and soup kitchens in order to reflect on the nature of our gifts and what forms Christian service can take. With our grade 9 students, the September retreat is focused on community building, which affirms the hope we always have as a Board to build communities of faith in our schools, and which contributes to the unique nature of the O'Gorman secondary school, which is often referred to as a 'family.'

Finally, for the past two years we have been developing the practice of retreats for our grade 7 and 8 students. These Intermediate level retreats takes many forms, from a retreat to support the Sacrament of Confirmation for our school communities in the Hearst Diocese to community building retreats for our grade 8 students in the Diocese of Timmins. In all cases, having students and staff reflect on their journey of faith is the hope we carry for these retreat experiences.



Peace,

**Michael Buhler**, NCDSB Chaplain



# LITERACY UNDERPINS ALL LEARNING...

## OUR PROGRAM TEAM

The **NCDSB** Program Team, led by our Superintendent of Education, Karen Rowe, adopted an “in house” professional development model called the Catholic Learning community. The Catholic Learning Community looks at the needs of the students and plans the professional development opportunities according to the individual school’s needs. The team shares their expertise on exceptional teaching strategies and the importance of a vocation in teaching within our Faith community. Collectively, they have researched and developed practices to help students reach their full potential. They continue to invest countless hours to develop job-embedded practices that foster a culture of data-driven instruction with a common vision that ALL students can succeed. The Team is well-known across our districts to have an unparalleled work ethic in terms of providing support and guidance for our educators to inspire students towards greatness. Our Program Team has been the driving force behind the positive changes within our Catholic education system and will take the necessary time to celebrate the successes and



Tricia Stefanie-Weltz, Supervisor of Student Success & Student Services, and Dan Loreto, Special Assignment Teacher.



Marc Hurtubis  
Special Assignment Teacher



Left: Melanie Dixon-Fleury, Special Assignment Teacher, Liz Mulholland, Supervisor of Student Achievement, Tracy Lalande-Kazur, Special Assignment Teacher, Erica Raymond, Special Assignment Teacher and Kim Hall, Special Assignment Teacher

## ANNUAL WRITING CONTEST & FORUM

The Fourth Annual **NCDSB** writing contest was a great success in 2007 with over 400 entries submitted by our students across the districts from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12. Once our judges selected the top two winners in each category, the Board held its’ Annual Writing Forum on May 1st during Catholic Education Week. This event provided a special opportunity for our students to celebrate their talent and interest in writing.

Canadian Author Maggie L. Wood led the students in an interactive workshop providing them with personal writing techniques to further enhance their present skills. "The Princess Pawn," a young adult fantasy novel, became Maggie's first book and was nominated for both the Red Maple and Stellar Book Awards. Her new book "The Princess



Mage" came out in the spring of 2006, and she is currently working on "The Princess Heir," the third book in her Mistolear series.

Other district writers also provided the students with a variety of workshops. Arron Pickard, Daytime News Editor for the Daily Press, has been a Journalist for almost eight years. The students had the opportunity during this workshop to take on the role of journalist and interview others.

Elza McLean, published author of the book “The China Doll” and now a teacher with **NCDSB**, guided the students in a workshop about the power of writing using metaphors and similes. Students participated in a variety of hands-on activities to further their understanding of metaphors and similes.

Brian Beaudry, Custodian at **St. Patrick Catholic School** in Cobalt and lead for their Poetry Club, has written over 300 poems since the year 2000. Mr. Beaudry inspired the students that poetry is a great method to express one’s dreams, feelings and ideas as well as enhance their literary skills.

The awards ceremony for the winners of the 4th Annual Writing Contest, launched in February, ended the day. The winners received plaques, gift certificates and the 2007 edition of *Whispers*, a collection of their poetry, fiction and non-fiction entries.



# ALL STUDENTS CAN SUCCEED...

## ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY & NCDSB

Assistive/Augmentative Technology is a 'modern' answer to an ancient question: "How do we help children with complex learning difficulties to become more literate?" The **Northeastern Catholic District School Board** embraced modern technology not as a panacea, but as another tool for those with learning difficulties to use. The **NCDSB** Assistive Technology Initiative could not have come to fruition without the help of the Provincial Demonstration Schools (PDS) and John Lubert, the AT Project Manager for the PDS.



John and his team introduced our students, teachers and educational assistants to some of the best software intervention tools ever designed. Students can now use **Kurzweil**, text-to-voice software, to read texts and web pages and **Word-Q, Speak-Q** and **Dragon Naturally Speaking**, voice-to-text software, to assist with writing. The teachers were instructed on how to design lessons incorporating this technology not just as a special education intervention piece but as an instrument facilitating differentiated instruction.

These lead educators brought their newly acquired skills back to their schools for dissemination and our students are now among the most technologically serviced students in Ontario. John and his team have returned to our school board four times since our partnership began for follow-up training. We are now engaged in an action research intent on measuring the success of our technology-based interventions. We believe that our efforts have improved the abilities of our students with special needs reach academic success.

## LINK CREW—STUDENTS HELPING STUDENTS SUCCEED

**O'Gorman High School** started the school year by implementing a new and powerful transition program for grade nine students - Link Crew, led by teacher—Doug Basso. This initiative is designed to establish a welcoming atmosphere for new students as they enter high school. **Northeastern Catholic District School Board** has embraced this program as part of our Student Success Initiatives and O'Gorman is currently the only secondary school in Northern Ontario to deliver this type of program.

Twenty-seven grade eleven and twelve students were trained to be Link Leaders, who, as positive role models, will lend their support and guidance to the new students throughout their first year. Having the right students as role models for the incoming grade nine students helps create an environment that builds on the Catholic values and school spirit that has made **O'Gorman High School** what it is today. The Link Leaders facilitated a variety of activities on the first day of school to encourage team building and a sense of belonging. The intent was to break down the barriers and make the grade nine students feel comfortable in their new school.

Link Crew provides structure for grade nine students by means of assistance from grade eleven and twelve students, who have been through the challenges that high school poses, and understand that the transition to a larger school can sometimes be overwhelming.

Link Crew begins with a powerful orientation day that makes grade nine students excited and proud to be attending their new high school and allows them to begin developing relationships and strategies that

will contribute to their high school's success.

Throughout the school year Link Crew provides a variety of both academic and social follow-up activities. The academic follow-ups are lessons presented by trained Link Leaders during visits to grade nine classes.

*"The Link Leaders help me make the right decisions. It's a good feeling to know that there are people who care about you!" Steven, Grade 9 student*





# STUDENT LEARNING BEGINS WITH TEACHER LEARNING

## NCDSB SUMMER INSTITUTE PROGRAMS

Northeastern Catholic District School Board offered the opportunity for our educators to participate in the 2007 Summer Institute-Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat Summer Program during the month of August. This professional development training included the choice of four workshops:

- ✓ *Assessment and Planning, K-6, 7-12*: effective classroom and school assessment practices
- ✓ *Problem Solving, 4-6*: what teaching and learning through problem solving looks, sounds and feels like in the classroom
- ✓ *Comprehending in Action, K-6*: a deeper understanding of the active nature of making meaning from texts. Participants reviewed reading comprehension strategies and examined how they are used in an interactive and integrated fashion
- ✓ *Writing, K-3*: a focus on writing and engaging writing activities supported by a variety of assessment practices



## DEVELOPMENTAL READING COURSE

Nipissing University and the **Northeastern Catholic District School Board** are pleased to be offering Part One of the Developmental Reading Course to all our principals who don't currently hold these qualifications. This course has been tailored to meet the needs of our administrators, to focus on strategies for instructional leadership around literacy goals of the province of Ontario and our Board and to study current trends, problems and procedures in teaching reading.

### The course focuses on:

- ✓ Components of a comprehensive literacy program
- ✓ Assessment leading to informed practices
- ✓ Ability to bring current research and best practices to their staff as Instructional Leaders

A group of **Northeastern Catholic District School Board** educators from Cochrane, Iroquois Falls, Englehart, and Timmins, gathered for one of four Summer Institute programs, the Writing workshop, facilitated by Kim Hall, Special Assignment Teacher for **NCDSB**, and Dana Vaillancourt, Resource Teacher and Literacy Support Teacher at **St. Joseph Catholic School** in South Porcupine.

The two-day training provided a platform for educators to focus on:

- ✓ the elements of writing in Balanced Literacy (Guided, Shared, Independent, Interactive and Modeled Writing)
- ✓ instructional strategies for teachers to use in their classroom
- ✓ the importance of oral language in improving writing
- ✓ motivational strategies for writing
- ✓ the 6+1 traits of writing (Voice, Word Choice, Presentation, Ideas, Sentence Fluency, Conventions and Organization)

*"It's a wonderful experience because it has allowed me to grow as a writer and expand my knowledge of the writing process. As a life-long learner, participating in such workshops are very stimulating for a teacher."*  
Jennifer Vallier, Gr. 1, French Immersion Teacher at **Sacred Heart School** in Timmins.

## RELIGION COURSE

**NCDSB** hosted the AQ Religious Education Course which was sponsored jointly by OECTA & OCSTA. The course, under the leadership of Fr. John Lemire, consisted of over one hundred and twenty-five hours of instruction, reading and assignments from September until January to 58 participants. The course was taught "live" in New Liskeard and video-conferenced to Timmins, Iroquois Falls, Kirkland Lake, Cochrane and Kapuskasing providing a greater opportunity for our surrounding communities to take part in the training.

The course was divided into four strands:

- 1) **Faith Formation;**
- 2) **Scripture;**
- 3) **Sacraments & Prayer; and,**
- 4) **Ethics & Morality.**

Based on evaluation forms, most participants felt that their personal faith journey and their ability to teach as a Catholic Educator was enhanced & supported by the course.



# *SUCCESSFUL INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES...*

## *BATTERY OF ASSESSMENT TOOLS*

We believe that all students can succeed. Effective instruction begins with an understanding of the individual needs of each student. BAT (Battery of Assessment Tools) data can be used to inform and support curriculum delivery with tiered interventions to address the individual needs of all students. The data will allow our teachers to implement interventions for their students in whole group and small group settings. In order to help students become better readers, specific interventions are applied to the areas of:

- ✓ **Phonological Awareness,**
- ✓ **Oral Language,**
- ✓ **Concepts about Print,**
- ✓ **Letter Identification,**
- ✓ **Letter-Sound Identification, and,**
- ✓ **Word Knowledge.**



Tracking BAT assessment data over the course of the year will allow our teachers and principals to monitor their students' progress and allow for more focused instruction than ever before.



## *2007 EQAO RESULTS*

The **Northeastern Catholic District School Board** is pleased with our continued growth in Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) testing results for the 2006-2007 school year. Our Board assessments at the Grade 3 level demonstrate consistent results to last year. Our greatest progress has been achieved in the Grade 6 assessments by surpassing last year's results in both Reading and Numeracy.

Upon receipt of the EQAO data, the Administration staff of the **Northeastern Catholic District School Board** evaluates the results with our Program Team members, Principals and Educators of our schools to further examine the opportunities for additional support needed to achieve provincial standards.

Collectively, we will:

- ✓ **take time to celebrate individual school successes;**
- ✓ **look at the specific needs of our learners;**
- ✓ **reflect on past practices;**
- ✓ **improve and further develop school and board improvement plans; and,**
- ✓ **provide professional development for educators.**

The **NCDSB** utilizes EQAO results as one resource to assess current instructional practices and drive future professional development for our educators. All implemented instructional strategies are researched based and focused on job embedded opportunities where teachers work together in classroom settings.





# PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

## CATHOLIC SCHOOL SYMPOSIUM

The **Northeastern Catholic District School Board** hosted the *Catholic Schools: Engaging Parents Symposium* on November 3rd at **O’Gorman High School** in Timmins. Over one hundred Parents, Community Members, Clergy, Teachers, Principals and Administrative Staff from across the districts attended the one day workshop that focused on increasing parental involvement within our Catholic school communities.

The day began with a prayer from Bishop Paul Marchand and opening remarks from Paul Toffanello, Director of Education. The rich and powerful history of Catholic education was shared. The Catholic Graduate Expectations were presented. The day focused on the importance of shared leadership, strong parental, community and parish involvement. Each school developed an action plan that focused on developing these relationships.

The **Northeastern Catholic District School Board** will continue its efforts to provide opportunities for school communities to become engaged in achieving our goal of helping our students reach their full potential.



## NCDSB PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

The Board’s Catholic Parental Involvement Committee, under the leadership of Rena Keenan Buhler, developed the Parental Engagement Toolkit that includes an amazing array of information and activities to be used by our Catholic schools and their Catholic School Councils. The toolkit is divided into sections to help in parent engagement activities including:

- ✓ *Resources to help assess the current parental involvement opportunities in our schools*
- ✓ *New strategies to involve parents within the school community*
- ✓ *Volunteer recruitment and recognition ideas and practices*
- ✓ *Planning tools*

This toolkit was designed to encourage, invite and inform our parents of the many opportunities to become more involved in their child’s learning. The Parental Engagement Toolkit offers an opportunity to enrich the lives of the children in our schools through participation and planning with other parents and school staffs.





## ***PARTNERSHIPS...***

### ***SAFE SCHOOLS***

On June 5th, 2007, the Education Amendment Act (Progressive Discipline and School Safety-Bill 212) was passed, amending Part XIII of the Education Act dealing with behaviour, discipline, and safety.

As a result of the amendments, the **Northeastern Catholic District School** along with our Safe School Committee (members from the Timmins Police, Child & Family Services, Community Policing, District Social Services Administration Board, Trustees, Teachers, Northeastern Unit President of OECTA, Child & Youth Worker and Administration Staff) has revised and/or replaced affected policies by the February 1st deadline.

The most significant changes affected by the legislation included:

- ✓ Requiring school board to implement revised code of conduct policies;
- ✓ Implementation of bullying prevention & intervention policies;
- ✓ Revise progressive discipline policy to include strategies designed to change the inappropriate behaviour of pupils;
- ✓ Adding bullying as a behaviour for which suspension can be considered;
- ✓ Clarifying that pupils can be disciplined for behaviour that occurs off school property in “circumstances where engaging in the activity will have an impact on the school climate”;
- ✓ Expanding the list of mitigating factors to be considered;
- ✓ Removing the “mandatory” aspect of suspensions;
- ✓ Restricting the authority to expel to school boards;
- ✓ Removing the mandatory aspect of expulsions and providing principals with the discretion to recommend that the board expel; and,
- ✓ Requiring school boards to provide a program to pupils who are serving on long term suspensions or expulsions.

### ***BUILDING BRIDGES***

**Northeastern Catholic District School Board** is dedicated to guide our students while providing quality Catholic education and ensuring success for all learners, including Aboriginal students.

Our Board along with its partners (Ojibway & Cree Cultural Ctr., Timmins Native Friendship Ctr., Kunuwanimano Child & Family Services, Métis Nation of Ontario, Taykwa Tagamou First Nation, and Beaverhouse First Nation) are working together to improve achievement among First Nation, Métis and Inuit students to ensure they realize their educational goals.



### ***BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS***

The Before & After School Program is being offered at **English Catholic Central School** through Temiskaming Child Care. This is an opportunity for our working parents to drop their children off at school wherein they may participate in meaningful activities and be supervised in a safe environment until school begins. Children also participate in the program in the hours after school dismissal. Another such program operates out of **St. Joseph Catholic School** in South Porcupine and **St. Paul Catholic School** in Timmins.

The Temiskaming Child Care also offers an Early Learning Program at **St. Patrick Catholic School** in Cobalt. This program is in line with our focus on early access to learning and its positive effects on the academic success of our future learners.



# FINANCIAL SERVICES



Financial Services is responsible for the administration of our Board's financial affairs, including internal and external financial reporting related to the annual budget, year-end audited financial statements, the treasury function and risk management (insurance) activities.

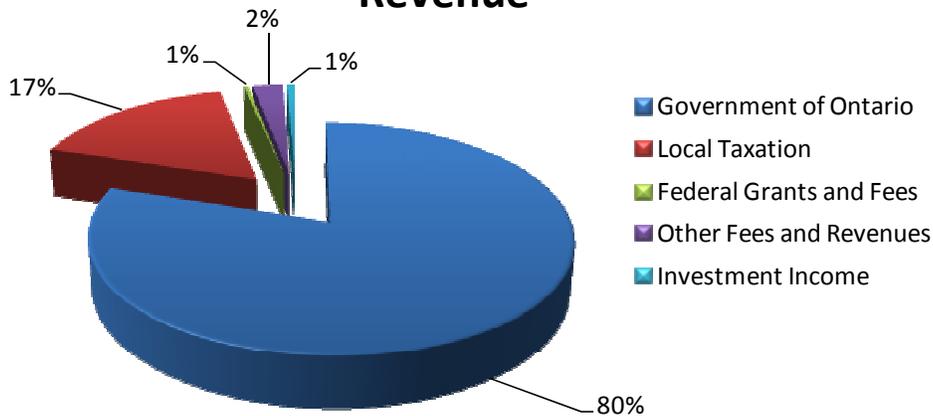
Financial Services is also responsible for the administration of Information Technology Services, as well as Transportation and managing enrolment data.

In June 2006, the Board approved balanced operating and capital budgets for the 2006-07 school year in the amounts of \$30,737,513 and \$1,828,000 respectively.

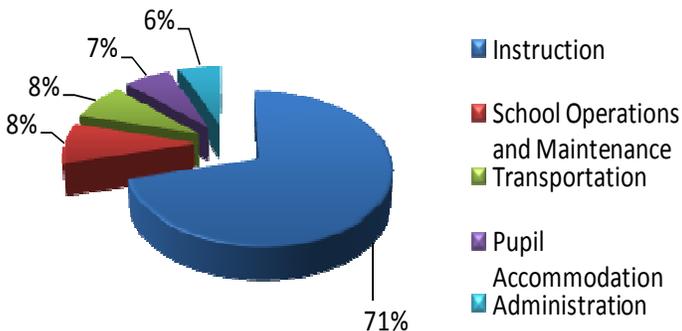
The use of these funds is depicted by major function and operating expenditures in the accompanying graphs.

To accommodate the Ministry of Education's new Ontario Schools Information System (OnSIS), a number of Board/School information systems were upgraded. The objective is to streamline the Ministry reporting process while continuing to ensure that data quality and integrity are maintained.

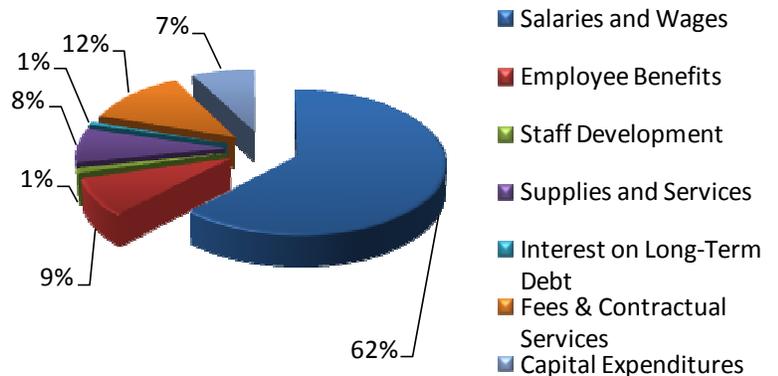
## Revenue



## Operating Expenditure By Major Function



## Operating Expenditure By Major Object





## *HUMAN RESOURCES... EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM*

The Board launched a confidential Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for all permanent employees with the help of FGI world and their affiliates across Canada.

Supporting employees and their immediate families in times of need is important to us, as our people are our strength and our future. We recognize that some employees may, at times, be faced with personal, family or work-related problems that would be helped by counselling. The program provides an avenue for support in these situations that respects a person's right to privacy. The EAP service is completely confidential.



## *HEALTH AND SAFETY*

In the interest of reducing the incidence and severity of injuries, the Board focused strongly this year on the prevention of slips, trips and falls. Measures included due diligence in sanding and salting procedures as well as a communication campaign aimed at enhancing awareness about hazards, particularly when there are icy conditions as well as due diligence in sanding and salting procedures. Each site was provided with large yellow sand and salt bins that are easily accessible as needed.

The Health and Safety Committee was very active over the year in identifying other hazards, including the need for more specific procedures when dealing with a power interruption in our schools. Guidelines are now in place to ensure that individuals are designated to perform monitoring tasks in the interest of student and staff safety.

## *STAFFING*

In 2007, the Board used new features in the HR/Accounting system to conduct staffing functions. While there were certainly some initial hurdles in ensuring that the intricacies of our staffing models be accurately represented, the new system will facilitate reporting to the Ministry. We are appreciative of everyone's cooperation in making this system work effectively.

## *PLANT... INVESTING IN OUR SCHOOLS*

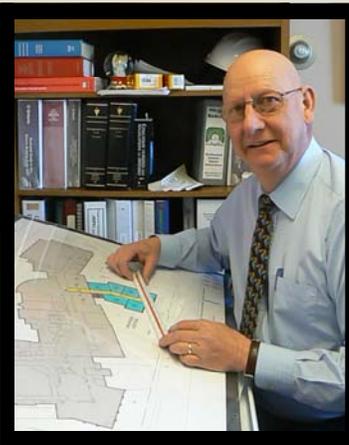
Our Board is committed to our School Renewal initiatives with several schools benefiting from capital projects in 2007. Minister Wynne was on hand to officially open **O'Gorman Intermediate Catholic School's** beautiful new addition and full size gym. The grade seven and eight students are benefiting from a new music room, classrooms, and gymnasium in the years to come.

As part of our Accessibility Plan, **Northeastern Catholic District School Board** is committed to improving access to our Catholic school facilities for students, staff and parents with disabilities. The recent addition of a new elevator at **St. Patrick Catholic School**, in Kapuskasing,

has ensured the availability of programs and services to all members of our school community.

**St. Jerome Catholic School**, in Kirkland Lake, received new windows and the installation of a new furnace. Our Board also invested in a new roof at **St. Joseph Catholic School**, South Porcupine, and **St. Patrick Catholic School**, Kapuskasing, due in part of funding received from the **Good Places to Learn** initiatives from the Ontario Ministry of Education.

**St. Anne English Catholic School**, in Iroquois Falls, began to see the benefits of a two phase major construction project in 2007. Phase one of this project included renovating the front of the school building including new windows and doors. **NCDSB** will be proceeding with Phase two in 2008.



## FROM THE DESK OF OUR SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION



One of the greatest notions to arise from a multitude of research over the past number of years is that very belief which we hold at **Northeastern Catholic District School Board** that *student learning begins with teacher learning*.

Our efforts in this regard have fostered a focused approach to providing our teachers with as many learning opportunities as is possible in areas that are demonstrated to having the greatest and most positive impact on student success. Our teachers have been responsive to a model whereby we offer *job embedded learning* which allows them to gather together routinely to engage in professional dialogue about student performance, the data that speaks of the same, and the next steps for improvement.

The professional norms that apply in these meetings allow our teachers to work proactively, collaboratively and profitably. Each meeting begins with a prayer and celebration of our faith and it is within this context that our teachers plan for improvement in teaching and learning. Clearly, research has shown that an inverse relationship exists between how far off-site professional development takes place and the impact it has on teaching and learning; therefore, we attempt to keep the learning as close to “home” as possible with the idea that practices can be shared and exercised in the classroom following a learning opportunity that considers children in a specific way.

We are so very proud of our teachers who invest countless hours outside of the classroom in order to plan effectively and to reflect on their own practice. They educate the head as well as the heart through our faith values, ensuring that Christ is at the center of the learning experience. The following are only a few ways in which our teachers demonstrate their commitment to the children and the families in our schools. Our teachers have been involved with:

- † Faith Ambassador program where they enhance their own faith development and bring the richness of it back to the classroom;
- † Religious Education Additional Qualification course taught by Father John Lemire which had almost 50 participants this year alone;
- † A strong commitment to literacy and numeracy evident throughout our education system;
- † The development of tracking boards to better discern where interventions will assist students in need and monitoring student achievement and success daily, weekly, and monthly;
- † The consideration and application of research practices illustrating high-yield strategy approaches in the classroom;
- † EQAO learning opportunities.

I could go on, but it is clear that our teachers, in their frontline positions, have taken up the challenge of teacher-learning as they understand, believe and enact the notion that *student learning begins with teacher learning*. In this effort, we praise our teachers for their high level of professionalism and in their commitment to a Christ-centred education for all of the children.

Blessings,

*Karen Rowe*, Superintendent of Education



### **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

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 Colleen Landers, Vice-Chair  
 Peter Del Giudice, Trustee—Timmins  
 Liz King, Trustee—Cochrane, Iroquois Falls  
 Denis Lincez, Trustee—Kapuskasung  
 Martin Drainville, Trustee—Cobalt  
 Steve Malciw, Trustee—Kirkland Lake, Larder Lake  
 Fred Salvador Jr., Trustee—Timmins  
 Taylor Columbus, Student Trustee—Timmins

### **SENIOR ADMINISTRATION STAFF**

Paul Toffanello, Director of Education  
 Karen Rowe, Superintendent of Education  
 Bob Landry, Manager of Plant  
 Melanie Bidal-Mainville, Human Resources Generalist  
 Mary-Lou Pollon, Manager of Financial Services



**NORTHEASTERN CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**

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