



# Trustee News

CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF EASTERN ONTARIO

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## Together in Faith

Together in Faith is a campaign launched by the Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association which aims to demonstrate to political leaders and the people of the province, that a diverse base of support exists for Catholic education. The campaign provides supporters with information about what they can do to show their support for Catholic education, and aims to build a unified voice for Catholic education in Ontario.

Catholic schools have been part of Ontario communities for over 170 years and play a vital role in the province by producing graduates who are collaborative contributors to the common good of society.

Parents are invited to sign up and join in strengthening our community of support for Catholic education by visiting [www.togetherinfaith.ca](http://www.togetherinfaith.ca). Once registered with the site, users will be provided with ongoing information about our Catholic system and will be counted among the many Ontarians who want to protect our incredible Catholic schools.

For more information visit: [www.togetherinfaith.ca](http://www.togetherinfaith.ca)

## Sandy Lake Service Trip

For the fourth consecutive year, a group of CDSBEO students participated in a service trip to Sandy Lake First Nation in Northwestern Ontario. This initiative was organized by the department of Religious and Family Life Education, providing the opportunity for new adventures and a chance to build stronger connections between CDSBEO and the Sandy Lake Board of Education to eight students from three Cornwall area schools (Holy Trinity CSS, St. Matthew CSS, and St. Joseph's CSS). The trip focused deeply on developing a clearer understanding of the living conditions of an isolated First Nation community, learning the traditions of First Nations people, as well as building positive relationships. Students also had the opportunity to learn Oji-Cree, the main language of Sandy Lake.

The CDSBEO plans to continue to offer the service trip opportunity to secondary students in various regions of the Board.

## Safe Schools Update

The creation of intervention plans, including Prevent, Teach and Reinforce plans, as well as Violence, Threat, Risk Assessment plans, are key elements for supporting students with social, emotional, and behaviour needs. The Ministry of Education Safe School Policy requires boards to have safe school procedures and protocols in place to ensure that all Ontario schools are safe, accepting and inclusive. The CDSBEO has implemented several specialized programs and supports to assist with prevention and targeted intervention for at-risk students.

The CDSBEO employs several prevention programs for students, including WITS (Walk Away, Ignore, Talk it Out, Seek Help), Roots of Empathy, and the Zones of Regulation program, which teaches calming techniques, self-regulation, and sensory integration. In addition, the Board also uses various targeted intervention strategies such as Individual Education Plans (IEPs), and student resiliency action plans, along with restorative justice to resolve any issues that may arise.

"The ABLE programs are an alternative program that students attend for six days or more. The Turning Points program is intended for students that are connected to services due to mental health concerns of varying degrees," noted Behaviour Crisis Consultant Shari King. "The majority of these students are not in the program as a result of actions of a violent nature."

"Our VTRA Protocol (Violence Threat Risk Assessment) is a good resource for assisting with solving these thoughts of violence. Placements in the ABLE program helps students to build capacity and get back to their home schools. We always focus on the strategies we need to teach, and on the mindsets we need to adjust – to teach students the strategies they need to return to school."

Goal setting and strategies to keep students on track once they move back into their home school is a key component in creating a successful outcome for the student. Some of the students in the ABLE program will return once a week, after leaving the ABLE program, to help them maintain their mental health supports through the agencies that are involved with the program.