



Trustee News

CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF EASTERN ONTARIO

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Board Launches New Math Strategy

The Renewed Mathematics Strategy is a Ministry of Education initiative which is designed to provide additional support to all district school boards, with a focus on improving achievement in mathematics. The Board implementation plan for the new strategy was developed in consultation with the Ministry of Education and various members of the Curriculum Department, in collaboration with school principals and school math leads.

The plan has four goals:

1. To engage students in mathematics learning, within supportive school mathematics communities;
2. To improve the comfort, fluency and pedagogy around mathematics for all members of the school community;
3. To improve teacher practice and assessment using sound data practices, and ensure that programming is personalized and responsive to students' individual needs;
4. To educate parents about mathematics and involve them in the learning and teaching process.

The year-long plan involves four distinct groups, and professional development will be offered to school educators to review current, research based mathematical teaching and learning practices, and to teach how to utilize data to optimize student achievement.

The Divisional Numeracy Team Meetings will also be held, involving grade 1 to 9 math teachers. These sessions will enforce that the strategy is a whole-school approach. This meeting is an opportunity for divisions to co-create lessons, assessments, and ensure a smooth transition as students move through the grades.

The Catholic Professional Learning Community (CPLCs) group will have sessions which focus on mathematics messaging and knowledge. Teachers will work collaboratively to develop engaging, relevant questions that will assess students' understanding, and to review effective, consistent assessment practices.

The Collaborative Learning Network gives elementary and secondary schools a unique opportunity to develop their school improvement plans within a collaborative environment. This year, an increased focus will be placed on mathematics teaching and learning within schools, and the session will give an opportunity to share engaging and innovative mathematics practices.

St. Thomas Aquinas YAY-BALE Project

A group of ten students from St. Thomas Aquinas CHS, known as the AVENGERS (A Very Energetic Nerdy Group of Environmentally Responsible Students), have been working very hard on an innovative environmental project, in conjunction with teacher coaches Ann Jackson, Blair Fitzsimons, and Brad Reid. YAY-BALE was created in response to the First Lego League (FLL) annual competition, which challenges students to develop solutions to real-world problems.

In speaking with local farmers and travelling to Lafleche Recycling Facility, the AVENGERS learned that plastic hay bale wrap and bunker plastic is a huge environmental problem. Rather than trying to find different ways to recycle the oil based plastic, students decided to look at ways that plastic could be made from starch, rather than fossil fuels. Through consultation with many different organizations about the issue, the group has developed an alternate product, along with a business model of how the product could be brought into production.

The newly developed plastic, which is both strong and completely biodegradable, was presented, along with the team's business model, at the FLL Global Innovation Awards on February 27 in Toronto, and the group moved on to become semi-finalists in the 2016 Trash Trek in Washington, in June. At the global challenge, the group was one of the top 20 teams of 30,000 that applied to enter the competition. The team has had the opportunity to present their project to the Honorable Catherine McKenna, Minister of Environment and Climate Change, and to Sean Wise, a Canadian mentor capitalist and consultant for CBC's Dragon's Den. The team is in the process of attaining a patent on their project working toward bringing the product to market.

Welcome Back Mass

On Tuesday, August 30, the CDSBEO hosted its annual Welcome Back Mass. The event was attended by CDSBEO educators, support staff, and administration. Mass was celebrated by Fr. John Whyte, Board Chaplain, and words of welcome were delivered by Board Chair, Brent Laton, and Director of Education Wm. J. Gartland.

New CDSBEO employees were also welcomed to the Board during the Mass. Each received a special blessing, and an official Board pin.