



Honouring Trustee Nancy Kirby

The Board of Trustees and CDSBEO administration honoured Lanark County Trustee Nancy Kirby, on what was her final board meeting with the CDSBEO. Trustee Kirby has served for 24 years as a Catholic School Board Trustee, first with the Lanark Leeds and Grenville Roman Catholic Separate School Board, and then with the CDSBEO beginning in 1998 after amalgamation. Trustee Kirby chose not to seek re-election in the October 22 municipal election.

Trustees paid tribute to Trustee Kirby with reflections on her many accomplishments.

"Nancy has always had an amazing ability to keep us on track, she always grounded our conversation to where it should have been, often providing the devil's advocate view, and acting as our voice of reason," noted Trustee Brent Laton. "We were all so pleased to have campaigned for her election as president of OCSTA, and our little Board was very proud to see her become president, and witness all that she did for our Board and in the province to preserve and protect Catholic education."

Trustee Kirby served as Vice-President of the Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association from 2008 to 2010, when she was then elected as President, serving until 2012. She served as Chair for the Lanark Leeds and Grenville Roman Catholic Separate School Board and CDSBEO from 1997 to 2000, and as Vice-Chair for the CDSBEO from 2003 until 2009.

Trustee-elect Jennifer Cooney, who was acclaimed at the October 22 election, will be sworn-in at the Inaugural Board Meeting on December 4, 2018.

Remembrance Day Reflection – St. John Catholic High School

Director of Education, John Cameron, presented a video slideshow sharing the Remembrance Day activities which took place in CDSBEO schools. Schools participated in many services to honour those who serve, or have served, our country, including Eucharistic celebrations, visits to cenotaphs, guest speakers, school assemblies and presentations.

Students Henry Monkhouse, Emma Kealey and Tyler Street from St. John Catholic High School attended the CDSBEO meeting of the Board of Trustees, along with teacher Jeff Peters, to highlight the school's Remembrance Day commemoration traditions. A very elaborate theatrical presentation, including tableaux and a feature performance at the school assembly, is planned by student leaders each year, who organize the event, prepare scripts, gather props and costumes, and coordinate all actors, photo slide-show presentations, and music accompaniment.



Student Tyler Street noted, "A large amount of preparation was required to depict scenes leading up to the war, scenes of battle, and scenes of the battle that continues after the war, when soldiers must deal with all that they have witnessed."

On Friday, November 2, the school hosted the 3rd Annual Spartan Army Run. The event is a dress-down day which raised money for the Project Trauma Support and The War Amps. The initiative raised over \$800, which was donated to these organizations.

Harry Potter – Cognitive Behavioural Therapy

The Harry Potter Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) Novel Study began as an exciting partnership with Dr. Mark Sinyor, psychiatrist at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, and the University of Toronto, and Dr. Donaleen Hawes, Superintendent of School Effectiveness with the Board. The strategy brought together the principals of CBT and the novel *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, linking the novel to opportunities around increasing mental health literacy and coping skills in youth.

Donaleen Hawes introduced Claire Dulmage, Psychological Associate with the CDSBEO, who presented information about the Cognitive Behavioural Therapy Novel Study, and how it provides an authentic learning experience for students.

"The project infuses the principles of CBT within a novel study," began Dulmage. "It's designed for students who are in grade 7 and 8, and that's because Harry Potter, in this novel, is 13 years of age - so it creates an opportunity to maximize identification of the characters for the students."

Over the last three years the Board has developed a teacher resource full of lesson plans and other activities, which also highlights the specific components of cognitive behavioural therapy that students will learn as they study the novel. The students study the novel through a CBT lens, and learn from Harry what it means to become depressed and anxious.

"They also understand how Harry uses cognitive behavioural therapy skills to find a path to resilience," noted Dulmage. "Throughout the project, we promote discussion of how thoughts, emotions and behaviours influence and impact each other."

The approach is an innovative and experiential way to learn about mental distress and how to overcome it. The novel study teaches improved mental literacy and resilience, an understanding of the right strategies to help overcome distress, and application of these strategies.

"The project is preventative and is presented before the occurrence of later mental health problems. Students can relate to the characters in the book, and can learn about the things



Harry is going through, and the strategies that he applies in dealing with his distress," added Dulmage.

Angela Bingley, Lead CBT - Harry Potter Teacher, explained the benefits of the program through a video testimonial.

"The project is helpful to student mental health because it allows them to disassociate with the "me" aspect – it's about Harry, it's about Hermione, it's about Ron, and we can talk about all of their dealings with anxiety and depression."

Teacher training around the project included an overview of how the chapters are studied through a CBT lens, and seven CBT principles that are addressed throughout the novel. Teachers were provided with optional lesson plans and activities to help support the learning throughout the novel study. In each section of the novel, key learning goals are presented, and students have an opportunity to learn about and normalize stress and anxiety. In addition, students develop skills and strategies to help deal with their own stress and anxiety, including the development of a "stressbuster toolkit."

The project has been received positively in the CDSBEO learning community by both teachers and students.

"Thank you for this great presentation. We appreciate how this initiative is helping to give our students new perspectives around dealing with anxiety and depression, and this is certainly an impactful and effective means to reach them through a very popular novel," concluded Chair Lalonde.