

# Director's Monthly Report



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## Highlights:

- Catholic Education Community Conversation
- Saints Add Another Gold to their List
- Good News for Haiti
- Kids Helping Kids
- Board Meeting Highlights

We are a Roman Catholic school system dedicated to excellence in education, the Christian formation of youth, and strong partnerships with parents and the church.



## Welcome Interim Director of Education



On March 23, 2010 at the Regular Board Meeting the trustees passed a board motion to appoint Mr. Kevin Debnam as Interim Director of Education and Secretary Treasurer to the Board starting on May 1, 2010 until October 31, 2010.

Debnam is acting on behalf of Phyllis Eikre who will be away from her duties as Director of Education, while she is on medical leave.

Debnam has an extensive career of serving in school boards in Northwestern Ontario. He was the Director of Education at Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board, Contract Lecturer for the Faculty of Education at Lakehead University, Supervisory Officer at the Atikokan Roman Catholic Separate School Board and a Supervisory Officer at the Red Lake Combined Roman Catholic Separate School Board (which was amalgamated into the Kenora Catholic District School Board June 2009).

*"Having Mr. Debnam act as Interim Director of Education during my absence just made the best sense, given his history with our board and the fact that the Board has already initiated plans with Mr. Debnam to lead our strategic planning session with Executive Council in the fall" – says Eikre.*

Kevin Debnam shared this message at the onset of his tenure: *"I am honored to be approached by the Board of Trustees to act in the capacity of Interim Director of Education during the absence of Mrs. Phyllis Eikre. Know also that I have held, and continue to hold the Kenora Catholic District School Board, its trustees, senior administration, principals and staff in the highest regard and it has been a privilege to have served the Board in various interim capacities over the past ten years.*

*Returning to a directorship is not something I had planned at this point in my life. However, upon hearing the need expressed by the Board of Trustees, the high regard I have for the Board, along with the support of my wife and family, I am prepared to serve the board with a full and unqualified commitment. Now, as in the past, the full range of my administrative experience will be at the Board's disposal throughout the term of our professional association."*

## Catholic Education Community Conversation



On March 9<sup>th</sup> the Kenora Catholic District School Board hosted a Community Conversation evening. The event brought together community partners, parents, and stakeholders interested in talking about the importance of Catholic Education in our society and ways to protect this important gift.



At the Board meeting of March 23<sup>rd</sup> Phyllis Eikre, Director of Education stated that there was a full house for the event at the Multi-Skills Training Center of Excellence. *"We've been enjoying a Catholic Education for 168 years and that is something to be celebrated. In Ontario there are 2.4 million ratepayers and 670,000 students that attend Catholic schools. That is 1/3 of all students in the province of Ontario"*.

*"The evening provided a great opportunity to bring people together so that everyone has the language and voice to share why a Catholic Education is so important to our society and our students"* stated Darryl Michaluk, Chair of the Board.



In recent years, there has been growing discussion around one school system and the funding of faith-based education. Despite its longstanding history of academic excellence and contributions to Ontario society, the funding of Catholic education has been drawn into this debate.

Spread the good news about Catholic Education! For more information about Catholic School Boards in Ontario please visit [www.ocsta.on.ca](http://www.ocsta.on.ca)

## Saints Win Silver at OFSAA Girls' "A" Volleyball Championship



Energy, enthusiasm and spirit radiated from of St. Thomas Aquinas High School on March 10<sup>th</sup> when the Saints Girl's Volleyball team won the Silver Medal during the OFSAA Girls' Volleyball Championship.

*"I feel very proud of the girls' volleyball team for winning the silver medal. It really means a lot to me as the coach to see the girls grow as a team and achieve this award. They really demonstrated fair game play throughout the tournament and showed incredible determination and perseverance"*, says Bob Kowal.

*"It was an incredible experience"* says Joanna Krisko who was part of a small team of approximately 15 teachers that organized the event as host school. *"It's the equivalent of hosting a 3-day wedding with 300 guests. Our team gave 150% to this event. It's our sixth time hosting an OFSAA Championship in our school and it makes us proud to win the silver medal as host school"*.

Principal Paul White said the school spirit was amazing. *"I was so proud with all the positive feedback we heard throughout the championship"*. The head coach of Monseigneur Bruyère (Gold Medal Winners) said during his speech at the banquet dinner *"the staff and students at St. Thomas Aquinas High school are genuine and truly want to help. I don't know how many times I was asked if I needed anything. I wish all the schools in Ontario could be like this."* Brian Riddell, Special Projects Coordinator for OFSAA said during the banquet dinner *"St. Thomas Aquinas High School is probably one of the best host facilities to run OFSAA. The school is so accommodating and everything is run so smoothly. The staff and students go above and beyond. Thank you for making this championship such a success."*

The Kenora Catholic District School Board couldn't be more proud of the spirit and enthusiasm of the staff and students at St. Thomas Aquinas High School. Congratulations on the silver medal.

## Good News for Haiti

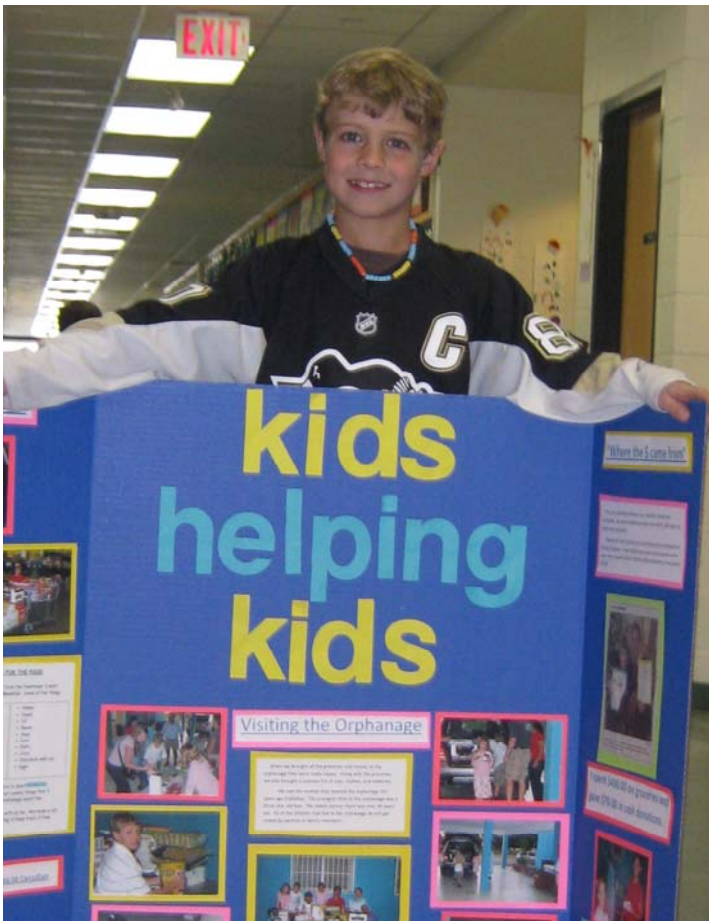
On March 23, 2010 at the Regular Board Meeting Director of Education Phyllis Eikre shared that the Kenora Catholic District School Board is very proud to announce that collectively our schools have raised \$17,019. The money raised will be donated to various programs such as the World Vision Haiti Relief, Save the Children and Red Cross for Canada to bring comfort and relief to those devastated in Haiti by the 7.0 magnitude earthquake that struck on January 12, 2010.

"We are very thankful for the generosity and support of our students, staff, parents and community", says Eikre. "This unfortunate event provided a firsthand opportunity for our students to learn about compassion, empathy and stewardship, which are some of our core Catholic virtues that we teach in character education and social justice. At the Kenora Catholic District School Board we take a great deal of pride in nurturing the academic, spiritual and character development of our students and this is another example of how that nurturing and care is then extended in a very meaningful way to help those in a time of great need."

The Kenora Catholic District School Board has approximately 4,474 students spread out over 5 schools.



## Kids Helping Kids and Truly Making a Difference



Dominique Novelli photographed proudly showing his pictorial display of his visit to the Mexican orphanage. Dominique made a presentation to his class.

Grade 3 student at École Ste-Marguerite Bourgeoys, Dominique Novelli, is a budding young philanthropist.

Just before his family's March break vacation in Mexico, Dominique decided he wanted to make a difference for children in a Mexican orphanage so he brainstormed ideas on how to raise money. He decided to host a fundraiser pizza lunch for his class. With his parent's matching financial contribution Dominique was able to raise \$500.

\$400 was used to purchase groceries and \$100 was given to the orphanage for items such as medicine and clothing for the children. "*Dominique insisted on being involved every step of the way*", says Dallis Novelli, Literacy Coach and Dominique's Mom, "*he did all the shopping himself in Mexico. This was a really rewarding experience for our whole family because we got to see firsthand how a little bit of money can go a really long way. It was really nice to take some time while on vacation to deliver the groceries ourselves and meet the children at the orphanage.*"

"*I was so impressed with all the food I was able to purchase in Mexico and it was really cool for me to see how excited the kids were at the orphanage*", says Dominique. "*Next year I want to branch out in the community and raise more money.*"

## REGULAR BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

The highlights below are from presentations made at the March 23<sup>rd</sup> and April 8<sup>th</sup> Board Meetings. For more detailed information please visit our website at [www.kcdsb.on.ca](http://www.kcdsb.on.ca) and review the minutes of the meetings.

### MARCH 23, 2010

#### St. Thomas Aquinas High School

Principal Paul White provided the trustees with a video presentation and PowerPoint presentation showcasing all the **achievements** over the school year at St. Thomas Aquinas High School. White and his team designed their presentation around the *5 pillars* of the board's strategic plan.

#### Operations and Capital Plan

Andrew Poirier, Manager of Operational Services presented on aspects of the Operations and Capital Plan. In his presentation Poirier explained that the **Green Clean Initiative** is a new program being introduced by the Ministry of Education. The program was piloted in 16 different schools across 4 boards. The program is mandated to be implemented by the 2011 school year. The intention of the program is to eliminate cleaning products from schools that are harmful to the environment and replace them with "green" products.

#### Information and Technology Plan

Kyle Williams, Manager of Information Technology led the trustees through a detailed overview of the Information and Technology Plan. Williams identified that he and his team (Darren Gerbrandt) are currently reviewing infrastructure and networking capabilities at **St. John's Separate School** and ideally would like to tie the Red Lake school into the board's network via a direct link which will allow for increased resource sharing and collaboration. Williams identified that careful consideration will have to be given to any process as there are no cost effective means to make this happen. Williams is currently in the process of exploring options to allow the board to expand video conferencing abilities to further bring **St. John's Separate School** into the fold of the board.

#### Healthy Schools

Andy Graham, Principal at Pope John Paul II School provided a presentation on the new School Food and Beverage policy that the Ministry of Education is implementing across the province through the Healthy Food For Healthy Schools Act that came into effect 2008. Graham explained that there is a very strong focus to limit the amount of trans fat that finds its way into a student's diet and increase the amount of **fruits and vegetables consumed by students**.

### April 8, 2010

#### St. Louis School

Trudy Cederwall, Principal of St. Louis School and 3 out of 9 teachers from the school provided a presentation to the trustees that showcased a truly remarkable school with a very **strong spirit and sense of teamwork**. During her presentation Cederwall presented on the status of the Full Day Learning Program for 4 and 5 year olds. Cederwall identified that St. Louis School currently has 19 junior kindergarten and 17 senior kindergarten registrations for the fall. Cederwall described the program as being very "child focused" with strong influence and collaboration with parents and families. Enrollment for the fall in grade one has gone from 15 to 17 and there is enough students enrolled in the Early Learning Program for 2 classes. There are 7 students registered for the before school program and 20 for the after school program. Cederwall stated that the program is so well received that the school is shining and the community recognizes it and is responding.

#### OFSAA Presentation

Joanna Krisko and Bob Kowal provided the trustees with a presentation on all of the **successes** over the past 16 months in sports for St. Thomas Aquinas High School:

- November 2008 – Senior Boys Volleyball – Gold Medal (STA hosted OFSAA)
- February 2009 – Nordic Skiing Individual Race – Gold Medal
- March 2009 – Senior Boys Basketball – Silver Medal plus they were the recipient of a Sportsmanship Award
- November 2009 – Senior Boys Volleyball – Gold Medal (2<sup>nd</sup> Consecutive)
- February 2010 – Nordic Skiing Junior Girls Team Relay – Bronze Medal
- March 2010 – Senior Girls Volleyball – Silver Medal (STA hosted OFSAA)
- Plus March 2009 – Senior Girls Volleyball team was recipient of the Sportsmanship Award

#### Finance Plan and Human Resources Plan

Erica Bailey, Superintendent of Administrative Services provided an overview of the Finance Plan. In her presentation Bailey stated that in accounts receivable the board was able to recover **\$50K in accounts receivable revenues** over the past year. The prior year the board was only able to secure \$14K – which demonstrates a tremendous amount of progress in this area.

Laurie Duggan, Manager of Human Resource Services provided a PowerPoint presentation on the accomplishments and future actions of the human resource component of the Administrative Operating Plan. Duggan identified that her goal over the past year has been to promote Human Resources as a separate and defined department within the board. Duggan has been reviewing current and past human resource practices and taking into account that the board has grown tremendously over the past 2 – 3 years. She is working on developing new practices that expand on former practices ensuring that human resources is as **transparent and open** to staff as possible.