

Director's Monthly Report



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Highlights:

- Alexa McKinnon is armed and ready to rock!
- Mentors and New Teachers...Matches Made in Heaven.
- Any Canadian Living Magazine Readers Out There?
- New Minister of Education Appointed.
- Trustees Host Meet and Greet for New Staff

We are a Roman Catholic school system dedicated to excellence in education, the Christian formation of youth, and meaningful partnerships with family, community and the Church.



Intentionally, Fundamentally and Radically Catholic



The dynamic, captivating and engaging Sister Clare Fitzgerald, ssnd, Ph.D., inspired an entire gymnasium filled with educators, administrators and support staff to be *intentionally, fundamentally and radically Catholic* in these challenging and changing times. She challenged the Kenora Catholic District School Board to define and articulate what makes us Catholic and then celebrate and enhance those attributes.



Within 30 seconds of Sister Clair Fitzgerald opening keynote, the audience was absorbed in her animated story-telling style of teaching as well as her Boston accent. It was a rare honor and a pleasure to be able to hear such a brilliant Catholic Leader speak. She truly was a gift.

To read more about Sister Clair Fitzgerald, ssnd, Ph.D., or the many prestigious awards she has earned please click [here](#) or visit the National Catholic Education Association's website.

The Kenora Catholic District School Board's Spiritual Development Day was hosted at Pope John Paul II School on Friday, October 21st. Spiritual Development Day is an opportunity for the entire school board to come together and receive enriched professional learning as an entire group.

Catholic Schools Are: Supportive, Encouraging



Our very own, Nicole Kurtz, a Guidance Counselor by AM (STA) and a Vice Principal by PM (SMB), serving 2 different schools at the same time and wearing many different hats provided a very meaningful and heartfelt presentation to Catholic School Trustees from across the region at the 49th Annual Diocesan.

Kurtz was invited to share her story about her personal experience with Catholic education and how it's shaped the person she has become today. "In preparing for this presentation I realized that out of my 40 years I have spent 27 of those years in a Catholic School. From a student and graduate at St. Thomas Aquinas High School to a teacher and then the roles I perform today", says Kurtz.

"Catholic Schools are supportive, encouraging and compassionate and my Catholic education has impacted every aspect of my life, says Kurtz as she told her story shaped around the past the present and the future. I try to aspire to be a great Catholic role model for our students and I am open to seeing the signs of God's presence".

Kurtz presented at the 49th Annual Conference which was held in Thunder Bay. This year's conference was entitled "Celebrating our Successes". The Conference was comprised of a series of workshops featuring best practices in Catholic education and brought together clergy, trustees and school and system leaders from Northwestern Ontario.

"Hearing Nicole speak about her experiences as a student and now as a valued team member within the Kenora Catholic District School Board was very, very meaningful for me", says Phyllis Eikre, Director of Education. "I felt a tremendous amount of pride for Nicole in hearing her personal story". She is an asset and a Catholic role model within our board.

and Compassionate.

Alexa McKinnon comes armed and ready to rock!

Armed with her SO (Supervisory Officer) qualifications and ready to use it that is! Alexa McKinnon our new Supervisory Officer of Instructional Services joined our team on Monday, October 24th to begin her new career within our board.

McKinnon has over 27 years of experience in Catholic Education both as a teacher, vice principal and a principal. She joins us from Holy Cross Elementary School in Thunder Bay where she was the principal. She is a graduate of Lakehead University with a Bachelor of Arts, a Bachelor of Education and a Masters of Education. She is qualified at the primary, junior, intermediate and senior divisions and holds both her principal and supervisory officer qualifications. She also holds qualifications in religious education, computers in the classroom and special education.

"Serving within the Catholic school system is part of my vocation, it's not a job for me", says McKinnon. "As a Catholic Education system, our call to Evangelization provides us the opportunity to encourage and inspire our students to be **ALL that God calls them to be**. Educating our youth is a serious commitment and in times of many challenges and changes we must embrace academic accountability with a spiritual and religious foundation."

"We are happy to welcome Mrs. McKinnon to our board. She is intelligent, creative and energetic and will be a wonderful support to our students and our Catholic Schools", says Phyllis Eikre, Director of Education.

Alexa McKinnon has been married to her husband Rod McKinnon for 17 years. Rod McKinnon works for Stebbins Engineering.

Any Canadian Living Magazine Readers Out There?



If you are a Canadian Living Magazine reader, check out page 13 of the November 2011 edition. Our very own Tammy Bush was featured in the *Your Words* section of monthly reader feedback.



In the magazine Tammy writes about a meaningful experience when her Australian school made "Canada Day" extra special for her and one of her sons by surprising her with a copy of Canadian Living magazine and strawberry shortcake with a maple leaf on top.



"Today my class and I are dot graphing temperature between Narrandera and Kenora and today (October 19th) we are expecting 31 degrees, and I see that Kenora is 5 degrees. Yikes. As much as I'm looking forward to coming home – I'm not looking forward to winter", says Tammy Bush.

Tammy and her family are currently on a workplace exchange in Australia with her husband and three sons.

Trustees Host Meet and Greet for New Staff

On Thursday, October 20th Kenora Catholic District School Board trustees hosted an informal event to meet St. John's staff and new permanent staff from Kenora.



"Over the past 2 years our small board has grown tremendously and as trustees we wanted an opportunity to be able to get to know our our new staff", says Mike Favreau, Chair.

New Minister of Education Appointed



The Honorable Laurel Broten was appointed Minister of Education in October 2011 and she continues to serve as the Minister Responsible for Woman's Issues, a post she's held since 2009. Broten brings with her important experience in childcare, poverty and woman's issues.

The Ontario Catholic School Trustees Association has made a request for a formal meeting with Minister Broten and senior officials in the education finance branch to discuss the OCSTA's 2011 Financial Brief – as identified in the OCSTA Newswire released on October 27th.

We are pleased to work with the Honorable Laurel Broten as we continue supporting initiatives such as full-day kindergarten, says Phyllis Eikre, Director of Education.

Broten, who is fluently bilingual, lives in Etobicoke with her husband Paul and twin sons.



Mentors and New Teachers ...Matches Made in Heaven



In early October, mentors and new teachers met at the Catholic Education Centre for a one day training session. In keeping with the theme of "Walking in the Light of Christ", the focus of the day was the importance of the NTIP program and how it helps guide the path on the road to teaching excellence.

Providing new teachers with formal mentors can greatly improve their chances of success. To help them on this journey, topics such as the phases of a first year teacher, the Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession, and TPA's were covered", says Lois Dale, Curriculum Coordinator.

"I got time to get to know my mentor and other new teachers. I had time to discuss goals and strategies and time to communicate with others and hold professional conversations." "I feel more prepared for the road ahead".

In this program, the new teacher gains knowledge and confidence from the mentor, and the mentor gains the energy and excitement from the new teacher. It is truly a match made in heaven.