



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

French Immersion site to be named for St. André

(Windsor, Ontario, Jan. 29, 2015) – Naming the school for a new single-track French Immersion program in Tecumseh after the first male saint born on Canadian soil couldn't be more appropriate, according to WECDSB Chair Barbara Holland.

"Saint André was born in Québec and was fluent in both French and English," Holland said. "He welcomed all those looking for a ray of hope, and his spirituality and devotion to God make him a perfect role model for our Catholic school community."

Trustees approved a recommendation at Tuesday night's regular board meeting to name the school **St. André French Immersion Catholic Elementary School**. Located on St. Gregory's Road in Tecumseh, it was one of two sites recently approved by the board to expand French Immersion programming, bringing to six the number of elementary schools throughout the WECDSB that offer the bilingual curriculum.

The building, formerly home to St. Gregory's Catholic Elementary School, was closed last year due to declining enrolment, but trustees recently decided to reopen the school, with French Immersion being offered for junior kindergarten, senior kindergarten and Grade 1 students beginning in September of this year. Under provincial regulations, if a school is closed and then reopened, it has to be renamed.

The idea for the new name originated from Elisa Houston, the Board's languages consultant.

"The fact that St. André was actually born in St. Grégoire, Quebec just makes it so fitting for this location," Houston said. "He was the porter of Notre Dame College in Montreal for 40 years, so the name also has a great deal of educational relevance."

St. André was canonized at Vatican City in October of 2010, and during his canonization mass Pope Benedict XVI praised him as someone who "showed boundless charity and did everything possible to soothe the despair of those who confided in him." He noted that André "knew suffering and poverty very early in life" and "lived the beatitude of the pure of heart, that of personal rectitude."

Tecumseh Trustee Susan Tope said she loves the new name for the school.

“The school is getting a fresh new start with French Immersion, so it makes perfect sense,” Tope said. “I think once people learn more about St. André’s life story and realize the significance of the name they’ll see why it seems so perfect for this school.”

Director of Education Paul Picard said a proper naming ceremony will be held at the school an appropriate yet-to-be determined time.

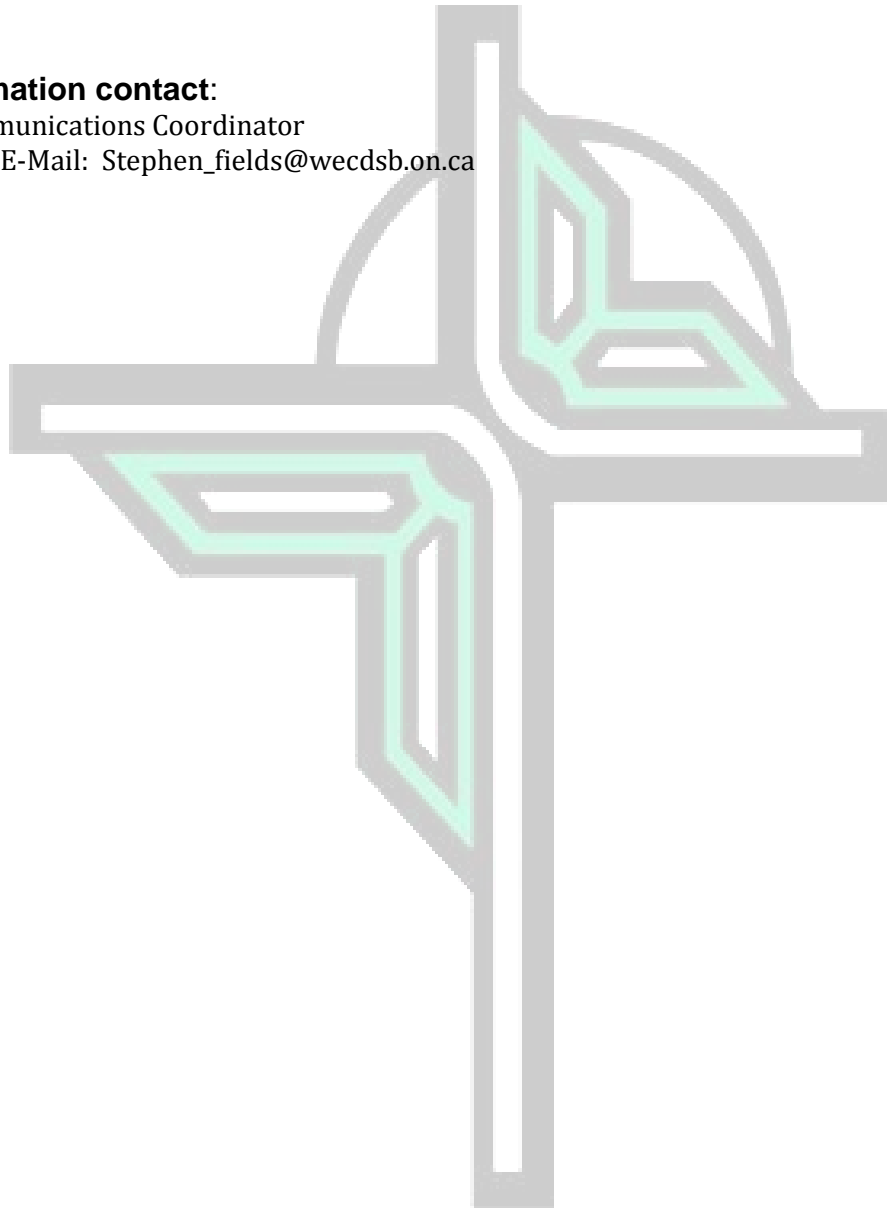


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