

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

# Climate Crusaders

## *New precipitation data collection program launched*

(Windsor, Ontario, Monday, March 26, 2018) – Thousands of students throughout Windsor-Essex will become ‘citizen scientists’ while supporting a better understanding of weather trends in the area with the launch of a new climate program to be headquartered at the STEM Academy at Holy Names Catholic High School.

Climate Crusaders is a new program kicked off today with the help of David Phillips, a senior climatologist at Environment and Climate Change Canada and a graduate of the University of Windsor.

“With the rapid changes we’ve seen in our climate over the last several decades, as well as some of the recent flooding we’ve seen in Windsor-Essex, it is increasingly important that we get as much reliable local data as possible to help us understand trends and better prepare for further weather events,” he said. “Enlisting the help of local students will provide us with more comprehensive data, but will also promote a greater love and enthusiasm for science.”

Under the new program, Grade 8 students throughout WECDSB schools will be provided with rain gauges they can set up outside their homes. They will record precipitation levels and upload their data, which can then be collated by STEM Academy students for analysis by scientists at the University of Windsor.

“This is a great example of scientific collaboration,” said UWindsor Dean of Science Dr. Chris Houser. “Through our partnership with the Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board, we’re going to be able to fill a void by gathering more complete information about weather patterns in our region. It’s going to be a very valuable learning experience for all the students involved at every level, and one that will produce some very useful data.”

The new \$1.2 million STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) Academy was launched at Holy Names in September of 2017. There’s a strong emphasis on robotics and coding as well as Environmental Sciences, especially for Grade 11 STEM Academy students.



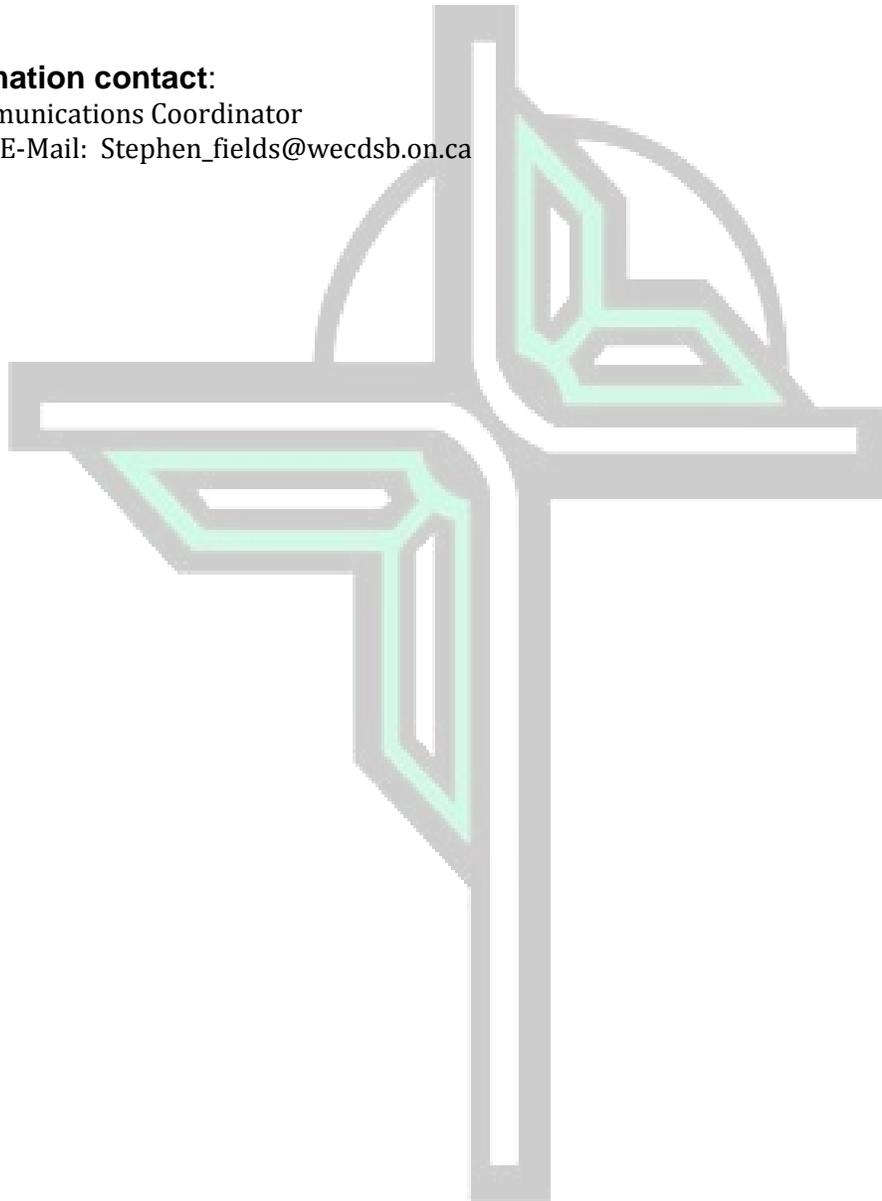
“Some of our students have witnessed the effects of climate change first hand when their homes and schools were impacted by recent flooding, so they have a very real understanding of the issue,” said Dan Fister, WECD SB’s Executive Superintendent of Innovation and Human Resources. “This initiative will provide our students with more pragmatic opportunities to learn about fundamental research concepts, but even more importantly, how to use the data they collect to substantiate the need for meaningful action to mitigate the impacts of climate change.”

In September, two new STEM Academies will be launched at St. Anne Catholic High School and St. Thomas of Villanova Catholic High School, which will increase the number of students available to participate in the initiative, Fister added.

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