

Solid foundation

Board chair calls on colleagues to 'carry on rich traditions'



Rear, from left: Fred Alexander, Bernie Mastromattei, Frank DiTomasso, Father Larry Brunet, Fabio Costante, and Fulvio Valentinis. Front row, from left: Mary Dimenna, Barbara Holland, Susan Tope, and Lisa Soulliere.

(Windsor, Ontario, Wednesday, Dec. 3, 2014) – A newly elected board of trustees was called upon by its chairperson last night to use their gifts and talents to work collaboratively to achieve the same excellent results of their predecessors, who laid the foundations for Catholic education.

“Each of us takes our place in a history that started in 1816 when school trustees became the first democratically elected representatives in Ontario,” Barbara Holland told the eight other trustees who make up the 2014-18 Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board of Trustees.

“We are called to carry on our rich Catholic educational traditions and improve them as advocates who liaise with our parish and community partners to ensure that our policies and programs meet the needs of our schools, students and taxpayers who expect us to use the funds granted effectively and efficiently for student success.”

Holland, who has served on the board as a trustee since 2000, begins her fourth term as chair, having been acclaimed to the position for her second term in a row.

Mary DiMenna was also acclaimed to the position of vice-chair, and said she is looking forward to serving another term with dedicated trustees and staff who are “committed to educating the whole child in a Christ-centred environment.”

“I would like to personally thank these people for their unwavering dedication to Catholic education,” she said.

Fulvio Valentinis, who comes to the board as a trustee after serving as a councillor with the City of Windsor for 20 years, said Catholic education is facing a number of challenges in Ontario and the board needs to work hard to solidify its future.

“We really need to start emphasizing the positives and the accomplishments,” he said. “Promoting those accomplishments will ensure our survival and our growth.”

Echoing those sentiments, newcomer Susan Tope said strengthening the board through good governance will enhance its credibility within our schools and the broader community.

“We need to get the good word out there,” she said, “and we need to continue providing our children with a diverse range of opportunities they need to succeed.”

Fabio Costante said he’s excited to be joining the board at a time when education has never been more important, especially in terms of growing the economy and preserving a sense of social justice.

“I want to be a consensus builder, and an advocate,” he said. “I want to make sure that no matter where you come from, you’re afforded the same opportunity as any other kid.”

Frank DiTomasso, meanwhile, said he plans to advocate on behalf of Catholic education by working towards ensuring that it continues to be adequately financed.

“We need to ensure that we are funded properly and equally,” he said.