



**WINDSOR-ESSEX CATHOLIC  
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD  
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION**

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Dear Friends,

As educational sector employees, we all know the best way to ensure that children and youth have the most opportunities in life is by providing them with the best possible schooling.

We also know there's no shortage of research demonstrating that the most vulnerable among us are less likely to succeed in school if they aren't properly cared for and fed.

This is why I am appealing to you to support this year's WECDSB campaign for the United Way Centraide Windsor Essex County.

As educators you've undoubtedly seen some of the negative impacts of poverty in your classrooms. Children living in sub-standard conditions often bring their difficulties, whether those are behavioural or otherwise, into the classroom, severely inhibiting their ability to learn.

The statistics for this area are staggering. One in four young people in Windsor-Essex live in low income families; almost 25 per cent of our youth live in poverty, far worse than the provincial average of 17 per cent; about 4,000 children in this region who will not escape the cycle of poverty; and almost half of all single mothers in Windsor Essex are living in poverty.

The United Way has made a clear commitment to addressing the root of these problems. Besides funding programs that directly aid those living in poverty, the United Way supports initiatives that attempt to correct poverty's underlying causes, through strategies that support kids and families, and strengthen neighbourhoods.

One such initiative is the **On Track to Success** program. A network of collaborative partners, this program provides support and services to at-risk youth – some of them students within our board – to help them graduate from high school and attend post-secondary institutions.

I fully understand that this has been a difficult year, plagued by uncertainty. That being said, I hope that given most of that concern is behind us now we can focus our attention on providing for the most vulnerable among us by supporting the United Way.

In the next week or so, you'll receive e-mail notifications about this year's campaign. In the coming weeks, you will hear from the United Way School Champions who will also provide you with paper pledge forms.

I hope that you will give generously to this year's campaign out of the genuine belief that supporting the least among us benefits all.

Sincerely,

Paul A. Picard  
Director of Education  
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*"Learning together in faith and service"*