



# WINDSOR-ESSEX CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD



## Director's Annual Report TO THE COMMUNITY

# 2019

**“The greatest danger for most of us is not that our aim is too high and we miss it, but that it is too low and we reach it.”**

*-Michelangelo*

Every morning, thousands of staff members of the WECDSD arrive at their schools and offices and do one thing in common: they aim high. We have set lofty goals for ourselves and the students we serve, and we hold ourselves and each other accountable in our collective desire to meet and exceed our objectives.

Looking back over the last calendar year, it's plainly evident that we are meeting and exceeding the high standards we have set for ourselves. Throughout the next few pages of this report, you will see that evidence; along with that, there are some highlights that are worthy of special mention.

Despite numerous financial challenges throughout the last year, we delivered a balanced budget that responsibly allocates our precious resources towards providing faith-based Catholic education to more than 20,000 students while maintaining our steadfast commitment to care for the most vulnerable among us.

In keeping with the government's focus on fundamental math skills, we have implemented strategies that have paid dividends for our students; our EQAO results show that in all math categories, we continue to exceed provincial averages and have made significant increases over last year's results in most categories.

We continue to promote a wide variety of pathway options for our students, with a particular emphasis on apprenticeships and skilled trades. The first cohort of our WECDSD Construction Academy graduated in 2019, and every one of them has found meaningful employment in their field. This year, one of our schools launched its first all-female section of a Grade 9 Exploring Technologies course as a way to make girls more comfortable and to introduce them to careers in the trades. The course reached capacity almost immediately as soon as it was offered.

We continue to provide inclusive and fair teaching and learning environments, where culturally responsive pedagogy is the norm. We support the achievement and well-being of FNMI learners, while increasing our own knowledge and understanding of indigenous perspectives for the benefit of all students.

While we are proud of the progress we have made, we continually look for ways to improve. We are meeting our strategic goals and priorities, but we revisit them on a regular basis to discover new ways we can better serve our students and their families.

I look forward to working with you on fulfilling our mission to know every student, to inspire them to follow the example of Jesus, and to empower them with the knowledge and skills they need to live purposeful, meaningful lives.

Sincerely,

**Terry Lyons**  
Director of Education





## Priority: Our Students

- Students exceeded provincial averages in all nine EQAO categories, achieving results that were among the highest in Southwestern Ontario.
- Graduation rates increased and once again exceeded provincial averages.
- Continued to review and analyze achievement data, school climate surveys and other data in order to be more responsive to the needs of our learners.
- Elementary math leads continued to support and facilitate mathematical learning in primary and junior divisions, with a focus on fundamentals in the areas of number sense and measurement.
- Continued to provide focused and precise support to students through small group instruction for both literacy and numeracy.
- Peer Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS) continued to support our primary students with early reading skills such as phonemic awareness, letter sound fluency and word identification, while providing additional data to support the early identification and intervention of learning disabilities.
- Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) established at the secondary level to enhance cross disciplinary implementation of literacy-related strategies such as making connections, drawing inferences and developing ideas and opinions.
- Welcomed an increased number of English Language Learners who have recently arrived in Canada and expanded the English as a Second Language program.
- Secondary English Language Learners continued to be supported by evidence-based instructional strategies such as guided reading to further support their language acquisition and comprehension.
- Students in Assumption College Catholic High School's International Baccalaureate program exceeded global standards in all exams taken in June of 2019 for the first time in the history of the 15-year-old program.
- Grade 5 students from two families of schools participated in a day of promoting positive body, mind and spirit workshops that were led by secondary leadership students. The day included a workshop led by our Indigenous Consultant. Community partners included BANA and Ontario Student Nutrition Program.
- Continued focus on the collection, analysis and use of data to support student achievement and well-being for students who self-identify as Indigenous.
- Partnered with our local First Nation Caldwell and Indigenous elders on a Water Walk for students in Leamington to learn more about protecting natural resources.
- Elementary students from around the Board participated in the 4th annual Pow Wow at St. Clair College to celebrate and learn more about Indigenous peoples.
- Grade 8 students participated in a social justice forum at the University of Windsor, which focused on issues that affect youth, including the stigma around mental health issues and the status of water for many Indigenous communities.
- Secondary students participated in a social justice forum on the topic of consent at the University of Windsor.
- Continued to support the well-being and achievement of Indigenous learners by working with the Indigenous Education Advisory Committee, strengthening partnerships with Indigenous community members and parents, and increasing the knowledge and understanding of Indigenous perspectives, history, current realities, and ways of knowing.
- Continued monitoring of the collection, analysis and use of data to monitor progress and equity and inclusion goals.
- Continued to participate in the Learning Disabilities Pilot Project to support students with reading skills.
- Renewed our Individual Education Plan guidelines, templates and forms to improve the planning and accommodation process for students with special learning needs.



## Priority: Our Faith

- Provided in-service training for the new Grade 10 Religion program and the Grade 5 Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ curriculum, which in cooperation with the Institute for Catholic Education and the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario, were completely re-written.
- Provided in-service training for the New Teacher Induction Program on the Role of the Catholic Teacher.
- Provided an opportunity for student senate to acquire leadership skills in faith-focused workshops.
- Provided an information session for campus ministers on mental health strategies from the Canadian Mental Health Association.
- Held the annual Together in Faith Day at the WFCU Centre for over 2000 employees. The keynote speaker, Luke Stocking from Development and Peace, focused on this year's theme: "Faith without action is dead."
- A group of 10 educators attended the When Faith Meets Pedagogy Conference 2019 where they participated in faith-based workshops.
- Held the annual Catholic School Council Commissioning ceremony where administrators and parent school leaders celebrated mass and shared in fellowship to welcome, appreciate and support parent partners.
- Continued to offer two employee retreats where the focus was on Lent and Advent. All employees were invited to participate.
- Hosted Bishop Ronald P. Fabbro and Auxiliary Bishop Joseph Dabrowski for school visits on October 24th prior to the 16th annual Bishop's Dinner to support the St. Peter's Seminary Foundation and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. Both spoke to students about vocations related to Catholic faith.
- Held our Annual Student Senate Faith Day led by our Student Trustees; students from our eight secondary schools participated in faith-based activities that promote leadership, stewardship and a commitment to faith development.



The multi-year strategic plan of the Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board is built upon the two fundamental pillars of student achievement and faith formation. The highlights shown reflect a focused and collaborative commitment to excellence.



## Priority: Our Innovative Programs

- Expanded our Reach Ahead summer program and doubled the number of Grade 8 students who were provided with the opportunity to earn a Grade 9 credit and become familiar with their new high school.
- Celebrated increased enrolment in our innovative academy programs – including STEM, Construction, and Sports – to more than 1,000 students.
- Launched Future Saints basketball early morning academy program at St. Anne Catholic High School, providing excellent physical activity and skills development while improving relationships with elementary feeder schools.
- Created an “all-girls” section of our Grade 9 Exploring Technologies course at St. Joseph’s Catholic High School to make females more comfortable while learning necessary skills for a career in the trades; will look to expand the model to other schools.
- Expanded our adult ESL credit courses and programming for new Canadians and mature students, as well as our Mature Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (MPLAR) program, designed to give credit for previous school, work and life experiences.
- In partnership with St. Clair College, sponsored a summer skills camp for Grade 7 and 8 girls to learn about carpentry, CNC/CAD, welding, robotics, while enjoying field trips to local industry to explore trades in STEM related fields.
- Partnered with the University of Windsor to introduce virtual dissection labs in our high school science classes as a way to eliminate animal testing, while exposing students to virtual reality modeling in such disciplines as anatomy and biology.
- Celebrated the graduation of our first cohort of Construction Academy students, all 17 of whom have completed a significant portion of their Level 1 apprenticeship and have landed jobs in the sector upon completion of their program.
- Expanded use of new technology to support literacy and numeracy curriculum from K-12, including use of robotics and coding for everything from demonstrating directionality and dimensional shapes and app development.
- Launched new Specialist High Skills Major programs in Non-Profit at St. Joseph’s, Health and Wellness at Cardinal Carter and St. Thomas of Villanova, and Hospitality and Tourism at Holy Names.
- Students in our Construction Academy participated in their 10th and 11th home building projects for Habitat for Humanity Windsor-Essex.
- Expanded our investment in virtual and augmented reality technology and equipment by purchasing an additional 90 Google virtual reality kits.
- Certified 20 schools as Ontario EcoSchools, marking a 25 per cent increase over the number of schools to earn that designation from last year, with 11 of them being named gold status schools.
- In partnership with the YMCA, created the Camp Henry Experience at Point Pelee so that Grade 6 students from selected schools could have a meaningful outdoor education experience.



# Priority: Our Team

- Due to increased enrolment numbers, offered 27 permanent positions to teachers on our occasional staff list.
- Hired two mental health workers to support students in our secondary schools.
- Hired a Program Specialist to support students with autism and other exceptionalities.
- Launched our new KUDOS! Peer Recognition Program to acknowledge those employees who go above and beyond in service of our students, dedication to employee wellness through creativity, innovation, commitment to excellence, outstanding leadership and community involvement.
- Improved our professional development for aspiring principals and vice-principals by making leadership training more accessible and making the process more transparent.
- Provided in-service training for administrators from an equity lens: Bias Awareness from the Council of Ontario Directors of Education.
- Provided in-service training to Grade 4 students and Grade 10 teachers regarding Indigenous education.
- Provided in-service training for secondary teachers that focused on Culturally Responsive and Relevant Pedagogy (CRRP) by applying an equity lens to important social justice and human rights issues.
- Included specific goals on equity and inclusion in school improvement plans and provided guidance to system leaders on delivering these goals by connecting them with student achievement and well-being data.
- Provided educators of Grade 6 students a day of professional development that focused on well-being, faith and Indigenous education.
- Used climate surveys to integrate feedback from students, parents and community partners to improve the learning environment for all students and maintain a positive school climate by identifying and removing barriers that negatively impact student well-being and achievement.
- Expanding use of our Google+ communities to improve communication, build a greater sense of team and celebrate our staff and student accomplishments by encouraging more people throughout the system to be regular contributors.
- Adopted a new governing statement to be included in all Board of Trustee approved policies up for review which declares a commitment to the principles of equity and inclusive education, consistent with our Catholic teachings, which value and promote human rights and social justice in all operations and practices.
- Primary and junior teachers were provided professional learning opportunities to enhance their knowledge regarding a balanced approach to teaching mathematics.
- Grade 7-9 teachers were provided with strategies to create “thinking” classrooms, environments structured in such a way to better engage students in mathematical learning, (i.e. vertical surfaces).
- Student Success Intermediate Transition Teachers continued to help Grade 7-8 students better prepare for high school, especially in the areas of literacy and numeracy.
- The Early Years Teacher Facilitator continued to help early years educator teams and students implement kindergarten curriculum with a focus on inquiry-based learning and self-regulation.
- In partnership with Queen’s University, participated in a Ministry of Education Building Parent Engagement two-year project in two of our elementary schools to enhance parental involvement in the area of mathematics.
- Provided special education teachers with additional training to review Individual Education Plan requirements and ensure compliance.
- Provided resources and training to support the delivery of the Peer Assisted Learning Strategy reading program in primary grades.



# Priority: Our Resources

- Developed a \$260M compliant budget for 2018-19 that supports student success and faith formation.
- Ended the 2018-19 fiscal year with a \$3M in-year surplus, bringing the accumulated surplus to \$17M.
- Increased stakeholder input into the 2019-20 budget development process with a streamlined budget survey that generated 1,299 responses – up 1,089 responses from the prior year.
- Completed the Ministry of Education’s broadband modernization initiative, with all sites being upgraded to a state of the art network for improved speed and connectivity; allows for continued expansion into new technologies that support student learning that require more bandwidth.
- Continued to expand virtual and augmented reality opportunities for students in order to provide more engaging ways to access curriculum.



# Student Achievement Success

The results from the administration of the 2018 Assessments of Reading, Writing and Mathematics: Primary and Junior Divisions, the Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics and the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test indicate that the students of WECDSB are becoming more proficient in their literacy and numeracy skills and are amongst the most successful students in our region.



Rev. Larry Brunet,  
Board Chaplain

## Board of Trustees 2018-2022

### FRONT ROW FROM LEFT:

- Mary DiMenna (Essex County – Area 2)
- Lisa Soulliere (Essex County – Area 3)
- Mary Heath (Essex County – Area 4)
- Kim Bouchard (City of Windsor - Wards 6 & 7)

### BACK ROW FROM LEFT:

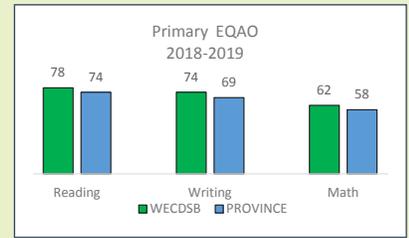
- Fred Alexander (City of Windsor – Wards 5 & 8)
- Bernie Mastromattei (City of Windsor – Wards 3 & 4)
- Fulvio Valentinis (City of Windsor – Wards 1 & 10)
- Frank DiTomasso (Essex County – Area 1)
- Tony Polifroni (City of Windsor – Wards 2 & 9)
- Amanda Ieraci (Catholic Student Trustee 2019-2020)
- Adam McDonald (Catholic Student Trustee 2019-2020)

## Senior Administration

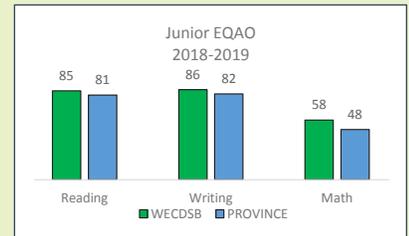
- Terry Lyons, Director of Education
- Emelda Byrne, Executive Superintendent of Student Achievement K-12
- Dan Fister, Executive Superintendent of Innovation and Experiential Learning
- Penny King, Executive Superintendent of Business
- Joseph Ibrahim, Superintendent of Student Achievement K-12
- Melissa Farrand, Superintendent of Student Achievement K-12
- Rosemary Lo Faso, Superintendent of Student Achievement K-12
- Colleen Norris, Superintendent of Human Resources
- John Ulicny, Superintendent of Human Resources

## Assessment of Reading, Writing & Mathematics: PRIMARY & JUNIOR DIVISIONS

WECDSB has surpassed the Provincial achievement results by 4% in Primary Reading, 5% in Primary Writing and 4% in Primary Mathematics.

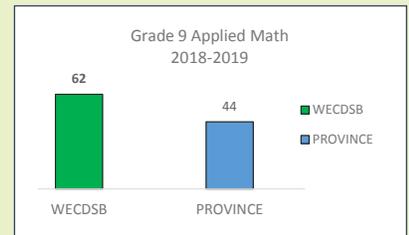
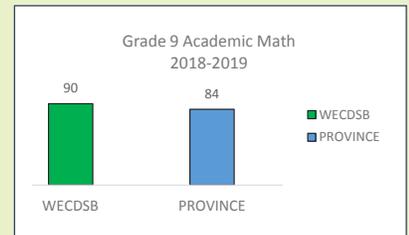


WECDSB has surpassed the Provincial achievement results by 4% in Junior Reading, 4% in Junior Writing and 10% in Junior Mathematics.



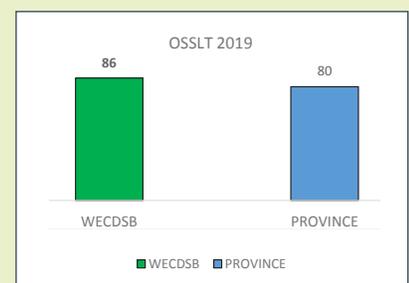
## Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics: ACADEMIC & APPLIED

WECDSB has surpassed the Provincial achievement results by 6% in Academic Mathematics and 18% in Applied Mathematics.



## Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT)

WECDSB has surpassed the Provincial achievement results by 6% in the OSSLT success rate.



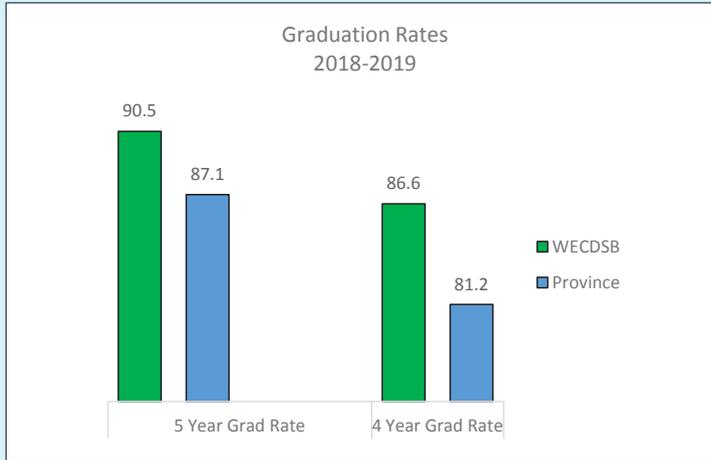
Please visit the EQAO website for a full report: [www.eqao.com](http://www.eqao.com)

## School Board Profile

The Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board operates **32** elementary schools, **3** middle schools and **8** secondary schools, as well as an adult education program that provides quality Catholic education to **20,513** students. The Board employs **1230** full time equivalent elementary and secondary teachers as well as **834** support staff, which includes principals, vice-principals, educational assistants, psychologists, mental health workers, child and youth workers, early childhood educators, sign language interpreters, speech pathologists, IT technicians, campus ministers, school office support, custodial and maintenance staff, as well as board office administration and other professional staff.

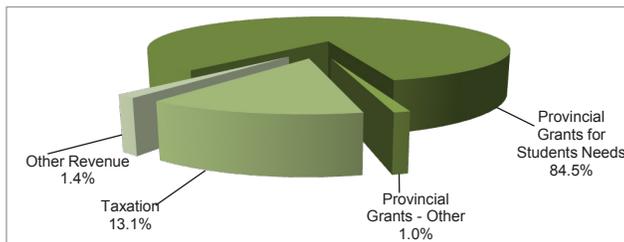
The Board's Multi-Year Strategic Plan can be found at the following link: [www.wecdsb.on.ca/cms/one.aspx?pagelid=77807](http://www.wecdsb.on.ca/cms/one.aspx?pagelid=77807)

In support of the Board's Multi-Year Strategic Plan, the Strategic Directions and System Priorities for the Director of Education and Senior Administration can be found at the following link: [www.wecdsb.on.ca/common/pages/DisplayFile.aspx?itemId=279065](http://www.wecdsb.on.ca/common/pages/DisplayFile.aspx?itemId=279065)

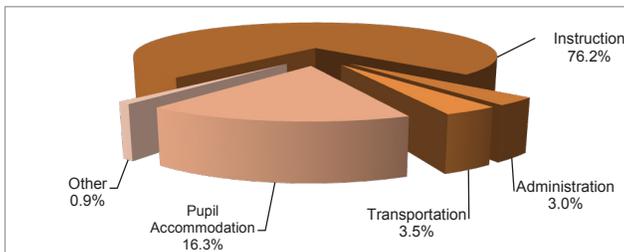


Graduation Rates	5 Year Grad Rate	4 Year Grad Rate
WECD SB	90.5	86.6
Province	87.1	81.2

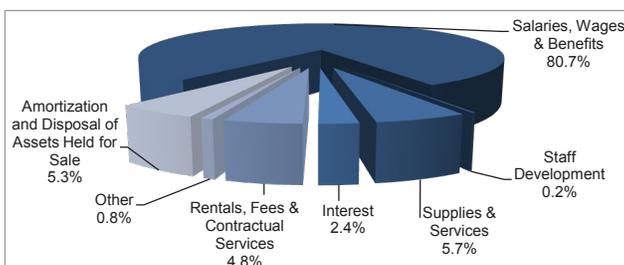
## Our Financial Story



2018-2019 Revenues		
Provincial Grants for Students Needs	\$ 222,752,347	84.5%
Provincial Grants - Other	2,626,273	1.0%
Taxation	34,490,488	13.1%
Other Revenue	3,660,657	1.4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 263,529,765</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



2018-2019 Expenditures by Category		
Instruction	\$ 198,563,353	76.2%
Administration	7,883,574	3.0%
Transportation	9,190,211	3.5%
Pupil Accommodation	42,364,283	16.3%
Other	2,453,045	0.9%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 260,454,466</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>ANNUAL SURPLUS</b>	<b>\$ 3,075,299</b>	



2018-2019 Expenditures by Object		
Salaries, Wages & Benefits	\$ 210,210,879	80.7%
Staff Development	490,845	0.2%
Supplies & Services	14,939,125	5.7%
Interest	6,379,794	2.4%
Rentals, Fees & Contractual Services	12,498,419	4.8%
Other	2,021,213	0.8%
Amortization and Disposal of Assets Held for Sale	13,914,191	5.3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 260,454,466</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



[www.wecdsb.on.ca](http://www.wecdsb.on.ca)

**“None of us, including me, ever do great things. But we can all do small things, with great love, and together we can do something wonderful.”** *-St. Teresa of Calcutta*

Looking back over the last year, I can say with a great deal of conviction that we have made tremendous progress on behalf of our students, which can be directly attributed to a culture of collaboration that permeates everything we do. We have all worked very well together, and as a result, have accomplished some very extraordinary things.

The evidence of our communal efforts is plain to see. Our graduation rates and EQAO results consistently exceed provincial averages and our enrolment continues to improve as more students and their families are attracted by the innovative, Catholic education for which we have become known in our community.

An essential part of our success is owing to the collegial relationship our Board of Trustees enjoys with our senior administrative team. That relationship is best characterized by the mutual respect we have for one another, and in knowing that regardless of the issue, we all have the best interests of our students, their families, and our staff in mind.

After the last municipal election, we welcomed three new trustees – Kim Bouchard, Mary Heath, and Tony Polifroni – who have brought new ideas and a sense of energy and enthusiasm to our school board. We are grateful for their contributions and their commitment to Catholic education.

Together we have responsibly managed our resources, approving a balanced, student-centred budget of almost \$260M which, despite some serious challenges, maintains our commitment to educating our students about the virtues of our faith, while caring for the most vulnerable among us.

Thanks to increased enrolment we have hired almost 30 new teachers, and our senior administrative team has created new leadership and professional development opportunities which will help us with capacity building, succession planning, and maintaining our positive momentum well into the future.

A major highlight of the year was learning that we had secured the funding to purchase property that will be home to a new high school that will replace Catholic Central. We look forward to the day when shovels will go in the ground and the new school opens, and we will continue to consult with the community throughout the process.

A challenge we face this year is the simultaneous expiry of contracts with all of our organized labour groups. We continue to closely monitor the central negotiations through the Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association, providing them with any support they require to negotiate fair agreements that balance the needs of our employees with our ability to manage our resources in the best interests of our students, their families, and our community.

In closing, I want to sincerely thank the parents who have entrusted the care and education of their precious children to us. It is a responsibility that we take very seriously, and you have our commitment that we will continue working together with a shared resolve to exceed your expectations.

**Fulvio Valentinis**

Chair, Board of Trustees