

Report to **Catholic School Councils & Parents**



Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic Schools
Believing, Achieving, Serving

Initial Meeting – December 2011

Chairperson stresses need for “courageous conversations” around education

In his opening address at the December 6th Initial Meeting of the Board, **re-elected Chairperson of the Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic School Board Patrick J. Daly** urged that those involved in Catholic education in the Province of Ontario would benefit from “courageous conversations” at this time in the board’s history.

“I raise the need for a number of courageous conversations, not to in any way suggest I have the answers,” he said. “I do so out of conviction that there is a need for the Catholic community, particularly those in leadership positions, to come together at the local and provincial levels and enter into discussions. I do so as well out of a sincere belief that this is a time of real opportunity for Catholic education. The real danger would be to be indifferent about the challenges that exist.”

Those challenges raise a number of questions, including how an education system should look in a digital world that is in a constant state of change, the type of environment in which young people should be educated, and seeing students as individuals rather than groups. These and other questions invite discussions that would serve to promote and strengthen Catholic education into the future, the chairperson said.

Proposing changes in the way education is provided, Daly suggested that structural changes, such as the balanced school day and year round schooling, particularly for socio-economically disadvantaged schools, are strategies worth seriously exploring. “More than ever, we need to embrace courageous conversations about how we promote and realize equity in educational opportunity for all students.”

Although students and schools continue to excel both academically and in co-curricular activities, Daly said courageous conversations need to take place to address the obvious topics of closing the achievement gap and improving student achievement in Equal Opportunity schools, as well as how to expand co-curricular opportunities for socio-economically disadvantaged students. He also spoke about the need for courageous conversations around faith formation opportunities and resources for students, parents, teachers and staff. Describing this as a time of great opportunity and hope, he cited countless examples of young people volunteering and performing charitable works in the community.

“How then do we assist teachers and others in our schools to help young people better make the connection between their striving to do good with their faith?” he asked. “We need to ask if we are employing all options and strategies and are providing the necessary resources to support them.”

Lastly, the chairperson focused on governance, and the significant number of regulations and restrictions in the education funding model which threaten to undermine the flexibility and autonomy required by Catholic school boards. “There needs to be a balance between central and local control. Again, these are conversations we need to promote and participate in.”

Daly concluded his address by expressing his appreciation to the Board of Trustees, members of senior administration, the bishop, priests and religious, parents, students, principals, teachers and other staff for furthering the mission of Catholic education in Hamilton-Wentworth. “I am filled with hope when I think about the quality, strength in character and goodness of all of those who serve through our Catholic school system,” he said. “I pray that, throughout this year, our conversations and decisions are sufficiently visionary and courageous to support parents, staff and parishes in ensuring the young people in our schools know that they are never alone. Jesus walks with them.”

Board Vice-Chairperson and committee memberships approved

Ralph Agostino, Trustee for Wards 3 and 4, was elected Vice-Chairperson of the Board and Carolyn Cornale, Trustee for Wards 12, 13, 14 and 15, was elected Chairperson of the Religion, Family Life and Instructional Services Committee.

Standing Committee Membership for 2012				
Religion, Family Life and Instructional Services Committee Mrs. C. Cornale (Chairperson) Mr. P.J. Daly Mrs. M. Nardini Mr. R. Agostino Mr. P. DiFrancesco Mr. J. Valvasori Mr. S. Agostino Rev. K.D. Kennedy Mr. M. Valvasori			Committee of the Whole All Trustees are members of this committee.	
Permanent Committee Membership for 2012			Statutory Committee Membership for 2012	
By-laws & Regulations Agostino, R. Agostino, S. Cornale, C. Valvasori, J. Valvarori, M.	Child Care Management Cornale, C. Nardini, M. Valvasori, J.	Equal Opportunities Agostino, R. Agostino, S. Valvasori, M.	Audit Committee Cornale, C. Nardini, M. Daly, P.J. (Chairperson of the Board)	Special Education Advisory Nardini, M. Valvasori, J. Agostino, S. (alternate)
HWCAA Constitution Agostino, S. Nardini, M. Valvasori, J.	International Languages Advisory Cornale, C. Nardini, M.	Pastoral Care Services Agostino, R. Kennedy, Rev. K.D.	Supervised Alternative Learning for Excused Pupils Agostino, R. Valvasori, M. DiFrancesco, P.	
Policy Review Cornale, C. Kennedy, Rev. K.D. Daly, P.J. (Chairperson of the Board)	Promotions & Communications Cornale, C. Nardini, M. Valvasori, M.	Resolutions & Awards of Merit DiFrancesco, P. Kennedy, Rev. K.D.	Civic and Other Appointments	
			Hamilton Safety Council Appointee: Mrs. L. Sippel (no set term)	Trauma Prevention Council of Hamilton-Wentworth Appointee: Dr. C. Davis (no set term)

Calendar

December 20, 6:00 p.m. – Religion, Family Life and Instructional Services

January 10, 6:00 p.m. – Committee of the Whole

January 10, 7:00 p.m. – Board

* Unless otherwise noted, all meetings are held at the Catholic Education Centre, 90 Mulberry Street.

Board of Trustees

Ward 1 & 2	Mark Valvasori	905-529-5980
Ward 3 & 4	Ralph Agostino, <i>Vice-Chairperson</i>	905-317-6654
Ward 5	Sam Agostino	905-536-0789
Ward 6	Fr. Kyran D. Kennedy	905-627-6381
Ward 7	Patrick J. Daly, <i>Chairperson</i>	905-525-2930
Ward 8	John Valvasori	905-679-6523
Ward 9, 10, 11	Mary Nardini	905-664-6336
	Paul DiFrancesco	905-662-7447
Ward 12, 13, 14, 15	Carolyn Cornale	905-627-4830