



Director's Monthly Report November – December 2020

November 19 – December 10

While the last board meeting was only a few weeks ago, so much has happened across the system and throughout the city. We continue to contend with the realities of this pandemic which has resulted in a re-organization of both in-person and virtual classes as we continue to provide student learning at St. Anne Catholic Academy (virtual) and in-person in each of our schools throughout the system. Working closely with Toronto Public Health, we are monitoring, reporting, and supporting every case in each of our schools, and we are so proud of our staff's leadership and flexibility through these difficult times. It is at times like this when community is so important. We work collaboratively to support one another in such difficult circumstances, trusting in each other and in our God who watches over and protects us. Staff continue to go so far above and beyond in such creative and compassionate ways to support students and families. We truly are walking through this pandemic together, supporting, comforting, partnering, and caring. We are appreciative of parental and community support, staff compassion and professionalism, and community partnerships as we do.

As we walk together through Advent, we are a community in waiting and preparation for the Nativity of Christ, and the knowledge that Christ will come again. This is usually a joyous time of preparation, but we recognize this year is different and will be over the holiest days of the holidays. We pray for each family, student, staff member, community partner, and parish during this time, that they will feel the love of our Lord despite being separated from those we usually celebrate with. We will continue to pray in community as we wait in joyful hope for the coming of our savior Jesus Christ.

Highlights from the past month include:

- Weekly TCDSB **Board-Wide Advent Reflections** as we prepare for the coming of Christ at Christmas
- Celebrating **mass in memorial of TCDSB families** who have lost loved ones
- **Meeting with His Eminence Cardinal Collins** to discuss faith leadership in Toronto and in support of Catholic education

- Participating in the **Connections and Conversations series** focused on **Equity, Diversity, Indigenous Education and Community Relations**, creating a safe space to share, listen, and learn about equity, diversity, and culture
- Recognizing important observances such as the **Annual Day of Remembrance for Holodomor (Nov. 28th)**, the **International Day for the Abolition of Slavery (Dec 2)**, **International Day of Persons with Disabilities (Dec. 3)**, **The National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women (Dec. 6)**, the **Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Dec. 8)**, **Hour of Code Week (Dec. 7-13)** and **International Human Rights Day (Dec. 10)**
- Celebrating and recognizing the outstanding contributions of parents and TCDSB staff at the **OPACE 15th Annual Commissioning Awards Ceremony** recognizing TCDSB Parent Volunteers in our school communities
- Confirming system leadership for the Board and each of our important committees at the **annual caucus meeting on November 26**
- Continuing our newly launched “**Lunch with the Director**” **Facebook live stream Q&A** for parents and community members to connect with parents, answer questions and engage on important issues to parents, staff, and students.
- Participating on the **What is at the Heart of Catholic Education** with renowned Catholic theologian Dr. Thomas Groome
- Continuing **weekly meetings with the Deputy Minister of Education, Toronto Public Health, and the Ministry of Health** in support of provincial and local initiatives to keep students, staff, and families safe and healthy during this current COVID pandemic.
- Participating on and contributing to **provincial leadership committees** with Directors of Education and Health officials from across the province in support of TCDSB staff, students, and families, and to influence public policy decisions in support of education and health care.
- **Meeting weekly with Catholic Directors** from across the province in support of best practices, shared issues, solutions, and advocacy
- Continuing to meet with **Trustees, Senior Staff, Union Leadership partners, Principal and Vice Principal Associations, and Parent Groups** individually and at planned meetings to discuss our partnership and collective commitments for the immediate and the year ahead
- Continuing **weekly school visits** to connect with **school leaders, teachers, and students in schools** and communities through weekly school visits
- Continuing to **partner with Toronto Public Health** weekly to discuss school health and pandemic related support and initiatives to promote public health, and respond to COVID-related issues in on-going ways.