



Director's Monthly Report

September 2023

September is the real “new year” for all of us in education. June is “last year” and now that September is upon us, the “new year” has begun! I was blessed to spend time with so many students and families during the first week of school as we collectively readjusted to routine and set ambitious goals for the year ahead. We captured our annual back-to-school photo on the front porch of our house, and I saw so many smiling faces doing the same that morning. We approach this year feeling refreshed, invigorated, and optimistic about the year ahead.

We are happy to welcome students back to our schools, and we are particularly delighted to welcome students and families who are new to the TCDSB. Each classroom, community, and parish look forward to embracing our new students to ensure positive and smooth transitions in support of academic, social, and spiritual success.

We were pleased to kick off the new school year with a joint press conference supporting road safety at St. Aiden Catholic School in Scarborough. Local and national media captured so many smiling faces and proud parents and caregivers in their blue and white school uniforms! We were proud that the focus of back to school in Toronto was on Toronto Catholic.

The month of September is busy as new routines are established and clubs, teams, and activities get off the ground. From fall sports to student government, our students are encouraged to get involved in the many opportunities provided by our amazing staff who give so much of their time, talents, energy, and passion to the many extra-curricular activities throughout the system.

While the system, schools, and classes begin to settle during the month of September, we are appreciative of the support, partnership, and patience of all as we continue to work to ensure our students have the best opportunities for success academically, socially, and spiritually. It is through the intentional collaboration between home, school, and parish that Catholic education shines.

Looking forward to another wonderful year ahead!

During the Month of September, we Recognize and Celebrate:

Hospitality as the **Virtue of the Month** and important **observances** such as: Ukrainian Canadian Heritage Month, Labour Day, First Day of School for Students, International Day of Charity, Ukrainian Heritage Day, UN Literacy Day, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Awareness Day, Grandparents' Day, World Suicide Prevention Day, Rosh Hashanah (Judaism - New Year), Yom Kippur (Judaism - Day of Atonement), Franco-Ontarian Day, Rowan's Law Day, Sukkot (Judaism - Festival of Booths), National Day for Truth & Reconciliation/Orange Shirt Day

Highlights from the lead-up to and start of the new school year include:

- Attending the **Strengthening School Community Safety and Well-being Symposium and “SafeTO” Conference 2023-2024**
- Attending the **Annual Education Mass** at St. Michael’s Cathedral Basilica along with Trustees and Senior Staff from all five boards in the Archdiocese of Toronto
- **Director’s Annual General Meeting** - This annual event brought together leaders from across the organization as we embarked on a new school year with a focus on the year ahead. This in-person event **recognized all New Administrators and Business Leaders beginning this year, along with the Celebration of the Eucharist with His Grace Archbishop Leo** at the Catholic Education Centre
- **Back to School Week** – celebrating the return to school and student success by visiting schools and engaging with students, school staff, parents, and the school community:
 - First Day of School celebrations and welcoming students, parents, and staff at **St. Aiden Catholic School**
 - School visits to **St. Dorothy Catholic School, St. Lawrence Catholic School, St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School, St. John Bosco Catholic School, D’Arcy McGee Catholic School, and Cardinal Leger Catholic School**
- **Engaging with media** on behalf of the TCSDB on **(CBC)** in the lead-up to the beginning of the new school year
- Promoting Toronto Catholic through media engagement on the first day of school with **CP24, Breakfast Television, CP24, Global News, CBC, City TV, and the Toronto Star**
- Presenting at the **Toronto Board of Health** meeting about mental health and public health in schools
- Participating and delivering greetings at the **“Heart of Welcome”** Celebration of the Eucharist and as we extend a special welcome to those who are new to the Catholic Education Centre this year
- Along with Trustees and Directors from Ontario Catholic Boards, attending the **OCSTA 2023 Fall Regional Meeting**
- Welcoming in-coming Grade 9 Student leaders at the monthly **CSLIT** meeting

Standing Items:

- Participating on and contributing to **provincial leadership conversations** 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 with Catholic Directors** from across the province in support of best practices, shared issues, solutions, and advocacy throughout Catholic education in Ontario
- Connecting with our TCDSB Community through our monthly “**Lunch with the Director**” series