



REPORT TO

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND WELL
BEING, CATHOLIC EDUCATION AND
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

VOICES THAT CHALLENGE 2023 CSLIT REPORT – INSPIRING ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP IN CATHOLIC EDUCATION

So let a man think of us as Christ's servants, and stewards of God's mysteries. Here, moreover, it is required of stewards, that they be found faithful. (1 Corinthians 4:1-2)

Drafted

September 18, 2023

Meeting Date

October 5, 2023

J. Goodluck, Student Trustee, CSLIT Co-Chair

D. Beshai, Student Trustee, CSLIT Co-Chair

A.M. Jorge, Catholic Student Leadership Resource Teacher

M. Caccamo, Superintendent of Nurturing our Catholic Community, Safe Schools, Continuing Education, Policy Review and Development

INFORMATION REPORT

Vision: *IN GOD'S IMAGE: Growing in Knowledge, with Justice and Hope.*

Mission: *Nurturing the faith development and academic excellence of our Catholic learning community through the love of God, neighbour, and self.*



MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN
2022 - 2025

IN GOD'S IMAGE: Growing in Knowledge, with Justice and Hope



Brendan Browne
Director of Education

Adrian Della Mora
Associate Director of Academic
Affairs & Chief Operating Officer

Derek Boyce
Associate Director of Corporate
Services and Chief Commercial Officer

Ryan Putnam
Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer

A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report shares student perspectives on how positive change can be made within the Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB) community and beyond. It identifies three key pillars of focus that students have deemed relevant and important. This report provides a vision for what the Student Trustees, the Catholic Student Leadership Impact Team (CSLIT) Executive, and the CSLIT General Assembly will strive to achieve during the upcoming academic year, including proposals which address the recommendations brought forward by the outgoing CSLIT Executive Council and outgoing Student Trustee. In addition, this report reflects and fortifies student voice pertaining to the implementation of social justice initiatives.

The cumulative staff time required to prepare this report was 40 hours.

B. PURPOSE

1. This report complies with the requirement of an annual report to the Board of Trustees based on CSLIT's "*Voices that Challenge*" conference which occurred on Friday May 26, 2023 and a digital survey completed directly by 108 students from 32 TCDSB secondary schools during the President's/Student Council Central event on Friday, March 31st, 2023.
2. The areas of focus raised within the three pillars represent the collective voice of students across the board. The opportunity to present these concerns at the Board level ensures direct involvement and necessary dialogue regarding relevant issues that impact TCDSB students.
3. The Catholic Student Leadership Impact Team, embodies all of the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations as developed by the Institute for Catholic Education:
 - a. A Discerning Believer
 - b. An Effective Communicator
 - c. A Reflective, Creative and Holistic Thinker
 - d. A Self-directed, Responsible, Lifelong Learner
 - e. A Collaborative Contributor
 - f. A Caring Family Member
 - g. A Responsible Citizen

C. BACKGROUND

1. During the previous academic year, CSLIT's annual *Voices that Challenge* conference was held in-person, at the Catholic Education Centre on May 26, 2023 with 92 TCDSB students from 12 secondary schools in attendance. During this event, students were given the opportunity to advocate for social justice issues. In addition, student voice data was collected digitally from 108 students representing 32 TCDSB secondary schools during the President's/Student Council Central event on Friday, March 31st, 2023.
2. On Friday September 8, 2023, the newly appointed 2023-2024 CSLIT Executive Team consisting of 13 student leaders from 13 different secondary schools convened to review student data collected from the *Voices that Challenge* conference as well as the digital survey. During this time, student leaders focused on the third year of our TCDSB Pastoral Plan, Walking with Christ with Minds of Justice and Peace, gathering as a community of believers to plan the 3 Pillars of Focus with action plans for the upcoming school year.
3. During the first CSLIT meeting of the year, held on Tuesday, September 26, 2023 at the Catholic Education Centre, the new 3 pillars of focus derived from student voice collected during the "Voices That Challenge" conference and digital survey were presented to the student leaders. This General Assembly presentation allowed the Student Trustees to prioritize and create new action plans conducive to this year's educational climate.
4. To foster student success, the pillars of focus and the action items associated with each pillar will be assigned as a collective to the new CSLIT Executive Team and subcommittee members.
5. The practice of recommending initiatives from the *Voices that Challenge* conference through the outgoing Student Trustee and the previous CSLIT Executive Council to the incoming CSLIT Executive Council has become the adopted standard. This allows the current Student Trustees and CSLIT Executive to build upon the success of last year's Executive while developing new priorities enhancing the collective student voice.
6. The current recommendations put forth by the 2023-2024 CSLIT Executive will be more successful with the assistance of different departments and appropriate staff.

D. EVIDENCE/RESEARCH/ANALYSIS

1. A summary of CSLIT's 2022-2023 actions based on the Pillars of Focus from the 2022 Voices that Challenge Report can be found in the Appendix.
2. The following are CSLIT recommended actions for 2023-2024 (*"For nothing will be impossible with God."* – Luke 1:37):

Pillar of Focus #1: Mental Health and Well-Being

"Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in every way. The Lord be with you all." -2 Thessalonians 3:16

The collective student voice has again advocated for additional support for Mental Health and Well-Being. As a result, the first Pillar of Focus for the 2023-2024 academic year is to continue to raise awareness around mental health within our community. This year, the CSLIT Executive Team will explore pastoral care through Chaplaincy and faith-based resources as well as student support for addiction awareness, mindfulness, and time management. Additionally, we will continue to collaborate with the Board's Mental Health staff to create relevant and worthwhile programs that support mental health and balance.

Pillar of Focus #2: Student Support and Involvement

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. -Philippians 4:6-7

As a community, it is important that we strive to ensure every student has access to the same resources and opportunities, as we are aware of many challenges throughout our schools. This year, CSLIT will exemplify servant leadership by listening to the various student needs in all our school communities. As reflective thinkers, we will work jointly with TCDSB staff to support learning with a focus on safety both in schools and online. Also, as students experience de-streaming, we want to ensure that students are equipped with learning supports. Further, we will continue to advocate for increased student involvement, namely for Grade 9 students, in Catholic Student Leadership initiatives and events.

3. Pillar of Focus #3: Equity and Inclusion

This year, CSLIT will continue to advocate for students experiencing financial stress. Working together with Board staff, we want to provide resources that support the financial aspects of transportation and menstrual equity in continuation of the Pillar of Focus from the previous academic year.

The TCDSB student body is made up of diverse cultures from all around the world. This year, CSLIT advocates for Board-level support to raise awareness of equity issues in schools and to promote the implementation and continuation of cultural clubs.

The student voice also encourages equity and inclusion for neurodivergent learners and genders, in congruence with the words of Pope Francis:

“We are all equal – all of us – but this truth is not recognized, this equality is not recognized, and for this reason some people are, we can say, happier than others. But this is not a right! We all have the same rights. When we do not see this, society is unjust. It does not follow the rule of justice, and where there is no justice, there cannot be peace. I would like to repeat this with you: where there is no justice, there is no peace!”

Finally, we will continue working closely with the Community Relations Department and Superintendent of Equity to support events and initiatives.

Additional Board Support

1. The goal is to build a stronger Catholic Student Leadership community with TCDSB secondary schools. We ask that all Area Superintendents continue to reach out to each secondary school to encourage staff in Administration, the Religion Department, Chaplaincy, and the Student Council teacher moderators to participate in our CSLIT initiatives. Moreover, the CSLIT Executive Team will strive to contact student council presidents at all schools and monthly attendance can be provided to Area Superintendents to monitor if their region is being well represented.
2. The goal is to have continued support of the Elementary Catholic Student Leadership Impact Team (ECSLIT). We ask that all Area Superintendents continue to reach out to their elementary schools to encourage participation in our ECSLIT monthly meetings and other initiatives. Monthly attendance can be provided to Area Superintendents to monitor if their region is being well represented.

E. METRICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

1. Students should feel supported to create positive change in the world through active participation in the Catholic Social Teachings. The current Student Trustees will be engaging the CSLIT Executive and relevant subcommittees to work with various staff members to address their specific recommendations. Students feel that Board policies must include student voice and perspective when addressing current and relevant local and global issues.
2. The Student Trustees and CSLIT will report annually to the Board on the impact of their initiatives.

F. CONCLUDING STATEMENT

This report is for the information of the Board of Trustees.