



## **OAPCE Report and Letter to CPIC February 20, 2025**

### **About the Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education:**

Since 1939, the Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education (OAPCE) is a provincial not-for-profit organization working with a network of education partners and volunteer parent leaders to promote and protect Catholic Education, as well as actively support parent involvement at all levels. It is the longest standing parent organization in Catholic Education, the only one recognized by the Ministry of Education in Ontario, and in 2024 we celebrated our 85th anniversary.

### **Our Vision:**

OAPCE is the voice of parents that advocates for, promotes and protects publicly funded Catholic Education in Ontario.

### **Our Mission:**

Our mission is to “Engage, Advocate, and Enhance” Catholic education at the provincial and regional level through the strength of our collective voice. By connecting to home, school, and church, OAPCE collaborates with local and provincial education partners to ensure the voice of parents is represented. We have strong relationships and the support of many Catholic partners. We support one another in promoting and protecting the gift of publicly funded Catholic education for generations to come. Our partners assist in promoting all our initiatives, meetings and events, including the OAPCE Conference.

### **What makes OAPCE unique?**

We are like no other, and there is no other. OAPCE is the only Catholic parent association recognized by the Ministry of Education and is mandated through the Education Act in Regulation 612 School Councils. OAPCE provides a voice for parents who share a common goal in advocating for the continuation and preservation of publicly funded Catholic education in the province.

Our central mandate is to share information with parents to better inform them of local school boards and Ministry of Education policies. As advocates for Catholic Education, by providing proper information and resources for parents, we support them to help their children succeed in

school. If all our children succeed, then Catholic education succeeds. Ensuring that our faith is paramount in schools integral to all that we do. We offer faith formation opportunities for parents and provide resources, guidance, and support in all aspects that impact them, both locally and provincially.

### **How does OAPCE represent the voice of parents?**

OAPCE Liaison Representatives:

As per Section 612 of the Education Act, when a school board pays membership, and since the TCDSB is a member, every CSPC is required to have an OAPCE liaison representative. This position is an additional voting parent member position to the usual school council membership and their purpose is to provide contact between the school council, our regional committee OAPCE Toronto, and the provincial Association. These OAPCE liaison representatives will sit as part of a Regional Committee and become the conduit to share parents' views and concerns with OAPCE.

OAPCE is committed to supporting parents and educators in their mission. It elevates the public education profile by providing parents with information and resources. It provides a platform for advocacy and engagement for parents to create an educational environment that nurtures the hearts and minds of children, enabling them to become informed, compassionate, and faithful Catholics who will positively contribute to our society.

### **Some great initiatives we would like to highlight with you:**

1. We recently held a Virtual meeting with all our Representatives with a special presentation *Pilgrims of Hope* by **Dr. Josephine Lombardi** who led an insightful session on the *Jubilee Year of Hope* and its significance in the Catholic faith, covering its origins, meaning, and how to participate in its graces.
2. **January Parents4Parents Press:** Check out the [January Parents4Parents Press](#) newsletter. It is full of updates on OAPCE's work, important news items within our parent communities, wonderful resources, uplifting faith messages, and interesting Catholic trivia. Our newsletters are always engaging and full of resources!
3. **OAPCE Parent Survey:** OAPCE is surveying parents across the province to help advocate for parents in Catholic education and provide feedback to the Ministry of Education. Please encourage all parents in your school communities to participate and complete [the survey form](#).
4. **Save the Date:** Saturday, May 24, 2025—OAPCE Conference in Niagara Falls at St. Michael's High School—Check the OAPCE website for updates and registration information.
5. **OAPCE New Social Media Campaign:** Follow OAPCE on Instagram, Facebook, and X.

### **OAPCE Conference:**

At this recent meeting many of the OAPCE Toronto Representatives and other parents expressed an interest in attending this year's conference which will take place in Niagara Falls, Ontario. While OAPCE will sponsor the conference fees for OAPCE Liaison representatives, they will not be able to cover mileage or accommodation expenses for all Representatives across the province. Additionally, non-OAPCE representatives will require funding to attend the

conference. We believe that with CPIC's assistance, we can offer more parents the opportunity to engage with other parents from the region as well as from across the province, enriching their

experience and fostering a stronger school and neighbourhood community. Our Conference is the only Conference for parents in Catholic Education that come together to engage with one another, gain valuable resources and share in the connection of their children in our system.

We respectfully ask that in the interests of parents of the TCDSB , and on behalf them to request the support of the Toronto Catholic District School Board's Catholic Parent Involvement Committee (CPIC) in providing funding for parents to attend the Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education (OAPCE) 86th Conference. This would include the \$25 Conference fee for non-OAPCE representatives, mileage and accommodation if requested.

Your support in this matter would be greatly appreciated and would make a significant difference in enabling more parents to participate in this valuable event.

Thank you for considering our request. We look forward to your positive response.

Yours in partnership,

Lucy Goncalves and Joel Tecson

OAPCE Toronto Directors