



# *St. Mary's Catholic Secondary School*

*"That They May Have Life" John 10:10*



October 11, 2016

## **Re: Request for School Name Change**

Dear Angela Gauthier,

I am writing to you in my capacity of St. Mary's Catholic School Parent Council Chair to recommend changing the name of the school in order to more appropriately represent the academic programming at the school. For many years, St. Mary's Catholic Secondary School was perceived as a non-academic school with many negative stereotypes, resulting in declining student enrolment and reduction of staff at the school. The staff, students and parents have been actively trying to dispel negative perceptions of the school and truly believe that a name change from St. Mary's Catholic Secondary School to **ST. MARY CATHOLIC ACADEMY** reinforces the movement toward progressive academic programming for all students.

St. Mary's is now an International Baccalaureate World School which is a demanding and academically enriched program recognized world-wide. In addition to stressing high academic standards, the IB programme also develops inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who are motivated to succeed. We are very proud of the first graduating IB Diploma Programme class of June 2016. We believe a name change will accurately represent and highlight the academic standards that are reflected in the International Baccalaureate Program, helping this program to grow and flourish at St. Mary Catholic Academy.

The St. Mary's community has worked tirelessly to improve and emphasize the quality of the school's academic programming. Evidence of this success is demonstrated by a significant improvement in students achieving at the provincial standard on EQAO assessments since 2011: 24% improvement in the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test and 24% improvement in the grade 9 Mathematics assessment. It should be noted that this achievement was formally recognized by EQAO who awarded St. Mary's the prestigious Dr. Bette M. Stephenson Recognition of Achievement.

As a result of the notable changes outlined, there has been a shift in perception from a non-academic, vocational type school to a progressive and dynamic academic community with specialty programs such as the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IB) and a Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) program in Automotive Technology.

We thank you in advance for considering our request.

Yours truly,

Sandra Nettleton, Chair  
St. Mary's C.S.S. CSPC

Cc: Barbara Poplawski, Trustee Ward 10  
Rory McGuckin, Associate Director of Education, Academic Services  
John Wujek, Superintendent of Education, Area 5

