



**WINDSOR-ESSEX CATHOLIC  
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**

**Student Achievement K-12**

1325 California Avenue  
Windsor, ON N9B 3Y6

CHAIRPERSON: Barbara Holland

DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION: Paul A. Picard

Telephone: (519) 253-2481 FAX: (519) 253-0620

**PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING  
MINUTES**

**Thursday, November 29, 2012 at 6:30 p.m.**

John Paul II - Board Room

Catholic Education Centre

***PRESENT:***

F. Favot, Trustee

**Board Representatives:**

Paul Picard, Director of Education

Mario Iatonna, Executive Superintendent of Business

R. LoFaso, Vice-Principal, Safe Schools

**Elementary Parent Representatives:**

S. Bolger – Holy Names Family Rep.

Position Vacant – F. J. Brennan Family Rep.

D. Tonus – St. Thomas of Villanova Family Rep.

**Secondary Parent Representatives:**

H. McAuley – Assumption Family Rep.

Position Vacant – Catholic Central Family Rep.

Position Vacant – Alt. Secondary Rep.

A. Carlini – Special Needs Representative

Position Vacant – ELL Representative

M. Houston - Post Secondary Representative

C. Switzer - Representative at Large

***REGRETS:***

J. St. John - St. Joseph's Family Rep. and Chair of PIC

D. Thachuk - Cardinal Carter Family Rep.

A. Mason – St. Anne Family Rep.

H. Sawyer - Elementary Alternate Rep.

J. Blevins - Elementary Alternate Rep.

Rev. Fr. B. Remark – Diocesan Representative

**Recording Secretary:**

Simone Lira

AGENDA ITEM	DECISION/ACTION TAKEN
<b>CALL TO ORDER AND OPENING PRAYER</b> -Vice-Chair Tonus in the absence of	Meeting called to order at 6:40 p.m. and opened with the PIC Prayer.

	<p><i>Schools</i>, dated September 17, 2012. All of the obligations in Bill 13 would promote a safe and inclusive learning environment, the acceptance of and respect for others and the creation of a positive school climate.</p> <p>To date, the WECDSB has had two requests for gay/straight alliances in our secondary schools. The Board has provided training of board personnel including clergy, administrators, campus ministers, teachers and other employee group representatives who were in-serviced regarding board policy about Social Justice/Equity Clubs and Safe and Accepting Schools. Superintendent John Ulicny and Vice-Principal of Safe Schools Rosemary LoFaso who currently work with safe schools issues, are key personnel for the bullying portion of the policy. There was a question about parents being included or at least being informed when there are presentations at the schools. Ms. LoFaso spoke to the group about the Values, Influence &amp; Peers (VIP) program in the elementary schools and presentations that take place at the secondary level regarding the BRAD program (bullying, relationships, alcohol, drugs) in partnership with local police services. She advised that information is disseminated to parents but varies from school to school. There are often opportunities for parents to hear the messages that are being heard by the students through evening sessions for parents. Although these are widely publicized, the challenge is to get the parents out to these sessions.</p> <p>A question was brought up about the existence of any board policy in place about what would be considered appropriate or inappropriate displays for Halloween. Mr. Seguin advised that these school types of events are handled at the discretion of the schools and school principals. There was also a question of possible inappropriate reading material or books in the schools and regulating what is acceptable for students. Superintendent Seguin advised that he would look into these matters.</p>
<p><b>ACTION ITEMS</b></p> <p>- Vice-Chair Tonus</p> <p>- C. Switzer</p> <p>- Vice-Chair Tonus</p>	<p>a) PIC Vacancies D. Tonus advised that in the absence of Chair St. John the PIC vacancies item on the agenda must be deferred and moved forward to the next meeting, as she may be in possession of other parent applicants. Applicant Stephanie Kirk, the Chair at St. Rose School introduced herself to the committee. She has applied for the Brennan Family of Schools Representative on PIC.</p> <p>b) Business Cards Colleen investigated the pricing for producing business cards for PIC members and advised that it is costly, as there is a minimum order required. She suggested that like OAPCE members who print their own cards, PIC have the cards printed by someone at the Board if this is a possibility. Vice-Chair Tonus asked the Director if this was possible, and he thought it would be. <b>Motion by:</b> Heather McAuley <b>Seconded by:</b> Shelley Bolger <b>That once the new PIC logo is approved, the Board have one sheet of business cards per PIC member printed. Carried</b></p> <p>c) Formation of by-law (Terms of Reference) review and budget committee formation</p>

	<p>Dana asked for volunteers to serve on a committee to review the Terms of Reference. <b>Dana Tonus volunteered to chair the committee and Michael Houston offered to assist.</b></p> <p><b>ACTION ITEM: They agreed to meet before the meeting in February and come back to the committee with suggestions for changes.</b></p> <p>It was determined and agreed by all that there is no need for a budget committee, as long as the finances are reported on at each meeting.</p> <p>d) Composition of letter to Barbara Holland welcoming attendance of Trustees at all school council meetings and distribution to CSAC chairs <b>ACTION ITEM: The committee will follow up with Julie St. John at the next meeting.</b></p> <p>e) Contact information forms completed by CSAC chairs <b>ACTION ITEM: The committee will follow up with Julie St. John at the next meeting.</b></p> <p>f) PIC Letter to the Editor <b>ACTION ITEM: The committee will follow up with Julie St. John at the next meeting.</b></p>
<p><b>SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS</b></p>	<p><b>Parent Engagement – H. McAuley</b> Heather reported that she is still trying to pull something together for the spring, 2013. She and Shelley are looking at some topics for engaging parents, with the assistance of the material ordered through the Regional PRO grant. Heather promised to determine some dates as well. There was a comment made that it is sometimes difficult to get parents out at night, however there were suggestions made around the table for topics. <b>ACTION ITEM: Heather, Colleen and Michael Houston have committed to working on an information night on scholarships for February 2013.</b></p> <p><b>Parent Reaching Out (Regional) – S. Bolger</b> Shelley reported on the resource kits purchased with the funding, which will be piloted at certain schools sometime soon. Heather McAuley is looking at one of them for a workshop. Shelley’s school Principal has agreed to distribute them and house them at her school until they are requested by school CSAC chairs or principals. Shelley has courier bags as well as descriptors for each kit for principals and council chairs. A memo went out to all CSAC chairs about the kits, as well as information on completing a survey to get some feedback on the kits for Ministry reporting on the PRO grant which provided the funding for the kits. Included in the funding from the Ministry were monthly newsletters and calendars entitled <i>Parents Make the Difference</i>, which are now live on the Board website-PIC webpage today. As they are sent from the Parent Institute, the information will be sent out to Principals, CSAC chairs and PIC members electronically for upload to individual school websites.</p> <p>A large portion of the Regional PRO grant from the Ministry is being used to create a new PIC website by Wired Solutions, which will include a large range of information for parents, including the Parents Make the Difference newsletters, calendars, the ability to blog and communicate and hopefully the capability of linking to each school website. It was determined that there is no need to vote on approval of the site, as the Regional PRO grant sub-committee was given approval to submit their request to the Ministry of Education. It is hoped that the website is</p>

	<p>up and running by mid-January. At the moment, Shelley is working with Superintendent E. Byrne, Elaine Carr, Jessica Owcher and some of the students at Assumption College High School to produce a new logo for PIC to be used on the website. The final logo project submissions designed by students will be voted on December 17, 2012.</p> <p><b>ACTION ITEM: Colleen Switzer and Anita Carlini volunteered to assist with choosing the new logo on that date.</b></p> <p>The final project initiated to utilize the PRO grant with the assistance of Superintendents Byrne and Shea, is the creation of three-fold pamphlets of information for parents. Shelley handed out rough drafts to the committee to peruse. Possible topics may include: a) Promotion of PIC, b) Primary, Junior, Intermediate and High School Reading and Math, c) University Scholarships (M. Houston agreed to assist with this topic) and Transition to High School from Gr. 7 &amp; 8. Timelines are tight as feedback is required soon for Ministry reporting.</p> <p><b>ACTION ITEM: Shelley requested assistance from PIC members for content suggestions.</b></p>
<p><b>UPDATES/ REPORTS</b> -Vice-Chair Tonus</p>	<p>a) Email communication – FirstClass Alternative/ Options This topic has been discussed at various PIC meetings. Most members have advised that they would rather use personal email addresses to conduct PIC and school board business, or at least have a FirstClass email address that includes their name so that they are recognizable to PIC and CSAC chairs. Director Picard explained that the IT Dept. personnel are risk-focused. The concern is trying to find a generic way to get information disseminated to all involved when there are personnel changes from year to year. Also being considered is the problem of hackers getting in and getting access to sensitive documents and parts of the mainframe. To change from FirstClass would mean having someone responsible to change email address lists and groupings from year to year. <b>It was determined that we put the discussion on hold and once the new website is up and running, perhaps we can use email through the website.</b></p> <p><b>ACTION ITEM #1: Shelley Bolger will ask the designer of the website about email and blogging. Heather McAuley offered to look into the issue with Shelley.</b></p> <p><b>ACTION ITEM #2: PIC representatives are asked to contact their chairs and make sure they are up and running on FirstClass.</b></p> <p>There was a request by Anita Carlini to contact SEAC and Special Education personnel so that she can attend a meeting. She would like to share Special Education issues and information parents may not have access to on the new website. D. Tonus asked Anita to obtain that information which she feels should be on the new website in order for parents to access it on the PIC website once up and running.</p> <p>b) Follow-up from Bob Upgren- Engaging our Future It was reported that the event was very positive, but more could be done to relay the message to parents. It was suggested that there be more meetings in the schools to gather families together because the communication has to begin at home and there is a need to act on the message presented. There was a suggestion to have prayer among staff members each morning. There was discussion about faith within the Board, but there is a need for more prayer. Our children must learn what their spiritual gifts are as this will carry them throughout life in good times and bad.</p>

<p><b>NEW BUSINESS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Director Picard</li>   <li>- Director Picard</li>   <li>- C. Switzer</li> </ul>	<p>a) Playground Equipment and Board Policy  Director Picard advised that recommendations will come out within the next few weeks. There has been a change of the policy to priority status in terms of policy review process and there will be more to discuss as the Board moves forward insofar as consultation involving redundant or unsafe playground equipment. He advised that all policy reviews involve parents, Principals and relevant parties as it progresses to the final version on the website.</p> <p>b) Elementary Sports Council  The Director advised that the elementary sports council has been in existence for a number of years, with a mandate to provide an environment for sport that downplays competition and moves more toward participation. To ensure compliance of the fundamentals, there is a group of volunteers, Principals, VPs and teachers that put together the schedules and act if it is determined there is too much competition. Further discussion involved the issue of parent volunteers, the risks involved and the Board policy which allows parents to coach if there is a teacher unavailable to oversee the program. The Director suggested that volunteer coaching is a very delicate and sensitive issue. It is welcomed, but there are certain expectations involved, both contractually for teachers and involving the safety of the children. In the future Boards will be grappling with co-curricular issues as communities, and whether or not they will even exist. The whole concept requires tact and respect to deal with the issue.  <b>ACTION ITEM: The Director suggested that at some point PIC invite Dan LaPorte, the Chair of the Sports Council to a meeting to discuss long-term mandates.</b></p> <p>c) Ontario Association of Parents and Catholic Education (OAPCE)  Colleen Switzer Director of OAPCE for the Windsor and Essex Region gave a broad overview of OAPCE and their mandate, as many parents are unaware of the organization and its purpose. The organization meets 4 times a year and they also hold Skype meetings. A memo went out to all CSAC chairs in the schools in an attempt to update OAPCE records and to assure schools receive information from the organization. Information dissemination to parents includes curriculum and policy-based, fully entrenched Ministry of Education facts and data. The goal is to communicate and be effective leaders in education so that the Ministry is aware that Catholic schools are important. OAPCE's focus is on funding for Catholic schools, including regulation 612. There are 24 regional directors in Ontario. Their next annual conference is in Peterborough on May 25 – 25, 2013 and includes amazing workshops. Colleen gave examples of some of the workshops that both inform and advocate for parent engagement in schools. It is hoped that all parents will be informed and will send representatives.  <b>ACTION ITEM #1: Colleen is hopeful that at the next PIC meeting two members will agree to attend the conference in May, using parent engagement funding.</b></p>
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<p>-C. Switzer &amp; Director Picard</p>	<p><b>ACTION ITEM #2: Colleen is requesting that the sub-committee involved in reviewing the Terms of Reference, include a statement that there be a representative from OAPCE as a member on PIC.</b></p> <p>d) How to identify and incorporate families that have special talents Colleen believes that there is far more room for families to stick together and assist within the schools and at the Board level if they have talents or businesses that could be used to bring communities together and even save money for projects in the system. It is goodwill on the part of the Board to reach out to these families.</p> <p>The Director advised that he believes this must be approached delicately in view of the perception of favouritism. He admits that this is a critical component of Catholic education, but in our highly legalized society, we must be cognitive of the optics involved and we must be very sensitive as to how this is approached. The concept of bringing the community together by sharing in their talents is a fine concept, but it must be approached sensitively so that the Board is not accused of preferential treatment.</p>
<p>-Director Picard</p>	<p>e) Major challenges facing the Board In order to begin the discussion, the Director strongly suggests that it would be most beneficial for this group to meet as a group and discuss the challenges they feel are being faced in order to identify the solutions, opportunities and future direction. It is critical that all the constituent groups are involved in a culture of open, honest and straight-forward consultation and discussion because he believes it involves massive culture changes. The Director believes that the time is ripe for such a discussion.</p>
<p>-Vice-Chair Tonus</p>	<p>Dana Tonus suggested that the committee choose a date when they can meet and discuss the challenges facing the Board. She suggested a date in mid-December for submission of ideas. It was further suggested that committee members contact each school to consider the challenges and report on them. <b>ACTION ITEM: Heather McAuley offered to send a Google calendar to schedule a meeting. Dana suggests that everyone come forward with a positive input item and encourage their family of schools to do the same by sending a personalized email to each chair.</b></p> <p>f) PD – Parent outreach workshop There was discussion again about holding a tangible session to train parents on a topic of interest. Heather McAuley will spearhead this project for sometime in 2013, with assistance from Shelley Bolger, Anita Carlini, Colleen Switzer and any other interested parents. A decision was made to defer this topic to the next PIC meeting when a possible topic, date and place can be determined. Some topic suggestions included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ school councils – running effective council meetings</li> <li>➤ scholarships – university college (for February 2013)</li> <li>➤ transitioning into high school (March 2013)</li> <li>➤ transitioning from KP to grade 1</li> </ul>

**DIRECTOR &  
SENIOR  
ADMIN.  
REPORT**

- P. Picard

Director Picard gave an overview of the public consult which is taking place and will be on the board website in the next week. It will involve the Board's strategic priorities, which are different this year due to the whole supervision piece. It is an attempt to give everyone a picture of the direction the Board is going in. The Board is facing major challenges at present and strategic priorities are a key component to turning things around. He spoke about the Bob Upgren presentation and the value of having parents from all schools, Principals, Vice-Principals, Trustees, priests, the entire senior administration, PIC and SEAC members together to work on the challenges. Three hundred individuals came together as a Catholic community connected and committed to the process of education. They were made to understand just how critical the situation is for Catholic education as we look at the secularization of the school system in Ontario, despite our constitutional rights. They were advised that it is imperative to think about five years down the road and the challenges for the future of Catholic education. There is a need to recommit ourselves to Catholic education. We need to stop where we are, look at the value of our education system and cease fighting one another on issues. We must be a united front and we must stand together committed to this gift. There is constantly damaging information in our social media regarding education and it seems to fly faster than the good. One critical component is JK/SK registration when parents bring children to consider their future within our schools. We need to relate differently to these individuals, engage them in the enthusiasm of our Catholic faith-based schools.

The other critical component is speaking to our parents and students about Catholic high schools in grade 7 instead of waiting to grade 8. We must send out the message of the academic integrity within our secondary schools and tout it in public. We have amazing educators and programs in our schools. A major example of this excellence is our IB program at Assumption College High School. There is excitement in the air and it was very evident at the open house last week.

Our school administrators, staff and other critical partners are being asked to engage all concerned and to move forward with positive, confident thinking. Norbert Hartmann will tell our story and then engage everyone once again, until the final report including the restructure of the Director's strategic priorities for the Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board.

-M. Iatonna

**Budget Report** – Mario Iatonna advised that the year end is being completed. It looks positive and Business will be sending statements to Mr. Hartmann on December 18<sup>th</sup>. The Board is presently preparing revised budget estimates based on October numbers, which are due to the Ministry of Education on December 15<sup>th</sup>. The Board is cautiously optimistic that we are not dropping in enrolment as quickly as what had been predicted earlier, as we are still over 20,000 students. Schools do not have their budgets at present but have been advised that they can spend up to 80% of last year's budget until they get their numbers. There is nothing in writing yet until Mr. Hartmann and the Trustees are advised.

Chair St. John	
<b>RECORDING OF ATTENDANCE</b> -Vice-Chair Tonus	The vice-chair welcomed and thanked Superintendent Mike Seguin for attending the meeting.
<b>APPROVAL OF AGENDA</b> -Vice-Chair Tonus	<b>Motion by:</b> Heather McAuley <b>Seconded by:</b> Shelley Bolger <b>That the November 29, 2012 PIC Meeting Agenda be approved. Carried</b>
<b>DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST – PURSUANT TO THE MUNICIPAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST ACT</b> -Vice-Chair Tonus	None
<b>APPROVAL OF MINUTES –</b> -Vice-Chair Tonus	<b>Motion by:</b> Colleen Switzer <b>Seconded by:</b> Heather McAuley <b>That the September 13, 2012 PIC Meeting minutes be approved. Carried</b>
<b>PRESENTATION</b> -Mike Seguin, Superintendent of Faith Formation	Superintendent Mike Seguin spoke on Bill 13 – The Accepting Schools Act. He supplied documents for PIC members, with additional information for their perusal. These documents are included as appendices to these minutes. Most of Bill 13 is centered on Safe Schools legislation including bullying, discrimination and harassment. Superintendent Seguin gave a brief summary of the obligations and expectations of all school boards by the Ministry of Education, which were to be in place by September 2012. Board policies that are impacted by Bill 13 need to be reviewed and updated by February 1, 2013. The Ministry of Education will provide direction regarding the changes to Policy/Program Memorandum 144 (Bullying Prevention and Intervention) and 145 (Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour) and boards will be expected to have their revised policies in place by the February 2013 timeline. Some of the items included in the policy changes are communication protocol surrounding suspension and expulsion, reporting by professionals such as psychologists and social workers, conducting school climate surveys of students, staff and parents at least every two years. Our board has already addressed some of these initiatives through awareness programs for students and parents on topics such as sexting, bullying, relationships, alcohol and drugs and getting along digitally (GAD). Under Bill 13, students may request groups to address bullying issues and inclusive schools may use the name gay-straight alliances or another name. Our plan is to provide guidance and supports to schools with a structure in place that has a Catholic dimension based on the Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association <i>Administrative Guidelines for Student Groups in Catholic</i>



	PIC budget with the carryover included shows a budget of \$15,212 with \$13,476 remaining. He will send out a report to the committee.
<b>CORRESPONDENCE &amp; CURRENT PIC INFORMATION</b>	No discussion required. All information in PIC Information Folder on FirstClass.
<b>VICE-CHAIR'S REPORT</b> - Vice-Chair Tonus	Vice-Chair Tonus reported that there is no need for the formation of a PIC budget committee as long as the members are updated on the budget at each meeting. The committee will move forward with this protocol from here on. She suggested that if anyone was interested in attending the upcoming OAPCE or Ministry conference (once we have information), that they advise the committee at the next meeting. <b>ACTION ITEM: Dana requested that the dates of the upcoming supervisory meetings be put in the minutes for next meeting.</b>
<b>NEXT MEETING DATE</b> - Vice-Chair Tonus	Thursday, February 21, 2012 at 6:30 p.m. at the Catholic Education Centre
<b>CLOSING PRAYER &amp; ADJOURNMENT</b> -Vice-Chair Tonus	Closing Prayer and Adjournment at 9:00 p.m. <b>Moved by Shelly Bolger</b> <b>Seconded by Anita Carlini</b> <b>That the meeting be adjourned. Carried</b>

***NOTE: PLEASE SEE ATTACHED INFORMATION FROM THIS MEETING***

*“Learning together in faith and service”*

# Creating Safe and Accepting Schools: Information for Parents about the Accepting Schools Act (Bill 13)

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We know that a safe, inclusive and accepting school is essential for student achievement and well-being.

That is why the government introduced Bill 13, the *Accepting Schools Act*, which has now been passed into law.

## What is Bill 13?

Bill 13 requires school boards to prevent and address inappropriate and disrespectful behaviour among students in our schools. These behaviours include bullying, discrimination and harassment. The new law makes it clear that these behaviours are unacceptable in our schools. It promotes respect and understanding for all students regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation or disability or any other factor.

## How does Bill 13 help schools and boards prevent and address inappropriate behaviour, including bullying?

It builds on the work already done by school boards and schools. Bill 13 requires boards to:

- Have policies in place on progressive discipline, bullying prevention and intervention, and on equity and inclusive education.
- Consider tougher consequences for students who bully others. This can include suspending and considering expulsion if:
  - the student has already been suspended for bullying and the student's presence in the school creates an unacceptable risk to the safety of others or
  - the bullying was motivated by bias, prejudice or hate.

The Education Act already requires supports for suspended and expelled students:

- If students are expelled or on long-term suspension (more than five school days), they will receive academic/non-academic support through a [suspension/expulsion program](#).

Students who are suspended for up to five school days will receive a homework package.

- Provide training and information to teachers and other school staff on an annual basis about bullying prevention and promoting positive school climates.
- Include goals around positive school climate and bullying prevention in their multi-year plans and make these plans available to the public.

## Does Bill 13 change the role of principals?

- The bill gives principals new, specific responsibilities. They are now required to:
  - Investigate any incident reported by a board employee which could lead to a student being suspended or expelled, including bullying.
  - Notify the parent/guardians of students who have harmed another student about the incident, when the students' behaviour could lead to them being suspended or expelled. Also invite the parents to discuss the supports that will be provided to their child.
  - Invite the parents/guardians of the student who was harmed in the incident to discuss the supports that will be provided to their child. Principals were already required to notify these parents.
  - Communicate with teachers and where appropriate, other board employees, who reported an incident which could lead to a student getting suspended or expelled. Principals will be required to inform them about the results of their investigation into the incident.

## How does Bill 13 support boards and schools to engage parents, students and other staff and stakeholders?

The bill helps parents to learn more about the support available to their children through the school and the efforts the school is making to build a more positive school climate.



reach every student



Boards are required to:

- Set up a process for parents to follow if they have concerns about the support their child is receiving.
- Develop a procedure that allows students, parents and others to safely report incidents of bullying.
- Conduct school climate surveys of staff, students and parents at least every two years.
- Offer parents more opportunities to learn about student safety and school climate.

### How does Bill 13 support students?

Bill 13 requires:

- Schools to provide support to students who have engaged in inappropriate behaviour or been affected by inappropriate behaviour.
- Schools to provide programs, interventions or other supports to both victims and bullies, and to those who witness the incident.
- Schools to provide ways for students to safely report incidents of bullying.
- Boards and schools to allow students to form groups at their school to raise awareness and understanding of all students on topics such as:
  - anti-racism;
  - people with disabilities;
  - gender equity;
  - sexual orientation and gender identity.These groups may include Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs).

Boards and principals will not be able to prevent students from using the name GSA or another name the students may choose for these groups.

Students may form other types of groups based on the needs of their school.

- The name of the student-led group must help promote a positive school climate that is inclusive and accepting of all students.

### How does Bill 13 affect organizations that rent space in public schools?

Bill 13 requires third parties, such as sports leagues and community groups, to follow standards of behaviour that are consistent with the Provincial Code of Conduct when they use space in public schools. The Code helps ensure that all members of the school community are treated with respect and dignity. It has been in place for many years.

### How does a “whole school approach” make schools better places to learn?

Building a positive and inclusive school climate requires a “whole school approach” that is based on healthy and respectful relationships throughout the whole school and the community.

Safe, inclusive and accepting schools support students to do their best in the classroom and beyond. Everyone has a role to play in achieving safe, inclusive and accepting schools, including the government, school boards, school staff, parents, students and community members.

Together we can create positive school climates that help all students learn, grow and thrive.

### Bill 13 is part of a comprehensive action plan

The legislation builds on our Equity and Inclusive Education and Safe Schools Strategies. The legislation is part of a larger action plan which includes:

- Introducing more mental health workers in schools and expanded video counselling services with a psychiatrist for kids in rural and remote communities.
- Finding ways to include more equity and inclusive education principles and bullying prevention strategies throughout the curriculum, building on recommendations from the Ontario Curriculum Council.
- Conducting a public awareness campaign to highlight that all Ontarians have a role in preventing bullying.
- Creating an Accepting Schools Expert Panel to provide advice on resources and practices that focus on a whole school approach, including bullying prevention and intervention.

### More questions?

Parents can learn more online about Ontario’s:

- Action Plan for Accepting Schools at [www.ontario.ca/acceptingschools](http://www.ontario.ca/acceptingschools)
- Safe Schools Strategy at [www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/safekit.html](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/safekit.html)
- Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy at [www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/equity.html](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/equity.html)
- Provincial Code of Conduct at [www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/safeschools/standards.html](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/safeschools/standards.html)



**Administrative Guidelines  
for Student Groups in Catholic Schools**

September 17, 2012



Ontario Catholic School  
Trustees' Association

## **Administrative Guidelines for Student Groups in Catholic Schools**

The Catholic faith respects all individuals. The goal of each Catholic School is to create for all of its students a loving and positive learning environment accepting of all students and consistent with Catholic teachings.

As such, the Board considers violence, harassment and/or bullying on the basis of race, colour, ethnicity, culture, citizenship, ancestry, origin, religion, creed, family status, sexual orientation, gender identity, socio-economic status, disability and/or any ground protected by the *Human Rights Code* or any other immutable characteristic to be unacceptable. Please see also the Board's Code of Conduct, Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, and Safe Schools Policy.

The Board supports the use of positive practices to prevent such behaviour and recognizes that student groups and activities may assist in creating a positive, loving learning environment consistent with Catholic teachings and free of bullying, harassment and violence motivated by bias, prejudice or hate and supports such groups and activities.

Students may establish "Respecting Difference" groups and are permitted by the *Education Act* to establish 'gay-straight alliances' consistent with the following objectives.

### **OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of such students groups and activities to promote a positive, loving learning environment consistent with Catholic teachings and free of bullying, harassment and bias, prejudice or hate motivated violence are as follows:

- To support and affirm the dignity of all students in all aspects of school life regardless of their immutable characteristics;
- To improve understandings of the lives of all students and find ways to increase respect for the dignity of each other in ways appropriate to the school setting;
- To clarify and give definition to appropriate terms, behaviours and actions to promote greater awareness of and responsiveness to, the deleterious effects of bullying, harassment and hate motivated violence;
- To promote timely and effective responses to prevent and respond to bullying, harassment and hate motivated violence to ensure the maximization of safety for all pupils;
- To provide education for all students consistent with the Catholic faith with respect to bullying, harassment and hate motivated violence prevention in schools;
- To provide resources consistent with the Catholic faith to support pupils who are impacted by bullying, harassment and hate motivated violence;
- To provide opportunities for pastoral and spiritual guidance for young people;
- To encourage students to report incidents of bullying, harassment and bias, prejudice or hate motivated violence safely in a manner that minimizes the possibility of reprisal or breach of

confidentiality and is consistent with best practices in relation to counselling and/or Chaplaincy involvement;

## **PRINCIPLES**

All student groups and activities to support positive, loving learning environments consistent with Catholic teachings and free of bullying, harassment and bias, prejudice or hate motivated violence shall comply with the following principles:

- **All activities and groups shall be opened to all students who wish to participate in an appropriate manner;**
- **The activities and groups must be respectful of and consistent with Catholic teachings;**
- **All mentors and supervisors of student groups and activities must know and be committed to Catholic teachings; and**
- **All outside speakers invited to speak to a group or to provide a school activity must respect Catholic teachings.**

## **PROCEDURE FOR APPROVAL OF A STUDENT GROUP OR ACTIVITY**

1. One or more students who desire to establish a student group or to organize a specific student activity must submit a written proposal in the form attached as Appendix A for the review and consideration of the principal. The nature, purpose and mandate of the student initiated group or activity shall be clearly articulated.
2. The principal, in consultation with other school staff, as appropriate, shall review and consider the written proposal with respect to the following:
  - a. The purpose and goal(s) of the activity or group;
  - b. The allocation of student supervision, school space, and other resources needed; and
  - c. Whether or not the proposal is consistent with the principles identified in this procedure.
3. The principal is responsible for ensuring that each approved student group and activity is supervised and supported.
4. Prior to an initial meeting of the student group, the principal shall:
  - a. Carefully consider which staff volunteer is most appropriate to supervise and support the group and its activities. The staff advisor must be an individual who is knowledgeable about and committed to Catholic teaching;
  - b. Invite the Chaplaincy leader to participate in group meetings whenever possible;

- c. Clarify the objectives of the group with the staff advisor and provide any necessary in-service:
  - i. See: Pastoral Guidelines to Assist Students of Same-Sex Orientation (2004) and the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops statement, “Pastoral Ministry to Young People with Same-Sex Attraction” (2011).
5. The principal must ensure that vulnerable students have access to support from Social Workers, Child and Youth Workers, and/or Chaplaincy staff members, where deemed necessary by the principal or staff advisor.
6. The principal must ensure that student groups and activities are not used for protest against or advocacy for anything that is not in accord with the Catholic faith foundation of the school.
7. All materials for group use must be reviewed and approved by the staff advisor and all materials for school/community awareness must be reviewed and approved by the staff supervisor and administration.
8. All students involved must agree to respect the personal privacy of student participants. Restrictions shall be placed on the use of personal electronic devices during meetings, posting personal information on social media sites or disclosure of personal information in any other manner. Failure to comply may result in the suspension of the group and/or one or more group members.
9. The staff advisor must be present for each meeting in its entirety.
10. If a matter arises that requires the involvement and/or intervention of outside agencies (such as, Children’s Aid, Children/Youth Mental Health, or law enforcement) these services should be sought at the earliest opportunity. Please refer to the Board’s procedures regarding Reporting a Child in Need of Protection and Police Protocol.
11. The principal shall recommend that groups established under these guidelines be named “Respecting Difference” groups; however, when requested by one or more students, the principal shall permit, in accordance with the *Education Act*, the group to be named ‘gay-straight alliance’ or by another similar name.

Appendix A

**Student Group and/or Activity Proposal**

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student Grade \_\_\_\_\_

**Request for Student Group**

Please identify the nature of the group, its purpose and objectives:

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Please identify the estimated number of participants: \_\_\_\_\_

Please identify the frequency with which the group wishes to meet: weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, or once each semester.

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Please identify the nature of the meetings:

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Please provide any other information that would assist the principal to make a decision regarding whether or not to permit the student group:

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**Request for Student Activity**

Please identify the nature of the activity, its purpose and objectives (i.e. external speaker; mentorship; fundraising; awareness campaign):

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Please identify the estimated number of student organizers: \_\_\_\_\_

Please identify the estimated number of student participants (whole school; particular grade:

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Please identify the frequency of the activity: (once; once each semester etc.:

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Please provide any other information that would assist the principal to make a decision regarding whether or not to permit the student activity:

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## Bill 13 – Accepting Schools Act

### Summary of Legislative Requirements: Compliance Statement

The ministry believes that the following new obligations will require adjustments to current local board procedures and are expected to be in place in **September 2012**.

- 1) Principal's duty to investigate any incident reported under section 300.2
  - *currently being adhered to ... review for the fall*
- 2) Principal's notification to parents/guardians of students who engaged in behavior for which the student could be suspended or expelled and which resulted in harm to another student.
  - *Following the protocol – review for fall*
- 3) Principal's duty to invite parents of victims and parents of those students who have engaged in any behavior for which the student could be suspended or expelled that resulted in harm to another pupil to discuss with the principal the supports that will be provided to their children.
  - *Currently being practiced ... safe schools involved with serious/repetitive incidents. Dr. Picard and Marylou Cortese have been involved in these meetings as well regarding interventions . Under review*
- 4) Supports for students who want to establish and lead activities or organizations that promote a safe and inclusive learning environment, the acceptance of and respect for others and the creation of a positive school climate. This may include activities and organizations that promote gender equity, anti-racism, awareness and understanding of and respect for people with disabilities and people of all sexual orientations and gender identities, including organizations with the name Gay-Straight Alliance or another name. - done
  - *Direction/support required where requests for Gay-Straight Alliances (or another name) exist. There will be ongoing in-servicing of school administration. We are planning for a structure that has a Catholic dimension to it - OCSTA "Administrative Guidelines for Student Groups in Catholic Schools".*
- 5) Requiring organizations using school property to follow standards consistent with the Provincial Code of Conduct –
  - *There will need to be a policy review/update regarding this (PPM 128).*

The ministry expects that the following legislative requirements will result in school boards making more significant changes to their local policies and procedures. For this reason, it is expected that these requirements will be operationalized by February 1, 2013, to give boards time to provide training to principals and notice to students and parents regarding new consequences, these include:

- 1) New definition of bullying
  - *under review – policy update as well*
- 2) Changes to Section 310(1) of the *Education Act* (which set out the circumstances in which a pupil must be suspended and considered for possible expulsion) which now includes certain circumstances related to bullying and to activities that are motivated by bias, prejudice or hate
  - *under review - definitions of what constitutes bullying (definitions)*
- 3) Amending board multi-year plans to include the goals set out in Bill 13 around a positive school climate and bullying prevention.
  - *under review - we are already doing this – school climate surveys etc.*

Bill 13 has a number of legislative requirements that cannot be accomplished until the ministry has provided policy direction to school boards through changes to Policy/Program Memoranda 144 (Bullying Prevention and Intervention) and 145 (Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour). The ministry expects to get these policy changes to boards shortly, and boards will be expected to have their revised policies in place by **February 2013**. Some of these include:

- 1) Principal's duty to communicate with teachers and where appropriate, other board employees who reported an incident for which suspension and expulsion must be considered following a principal's investigation.
  - *We already do this - To be reviewed once Ministry provides policy direction*
- 2) Reporting by professionals such as psychologists and social workers
  - *to be included in review/policy update – need clarity from Ministry regarding what this “reporting” looks like*
- 3) Conducting school climate surveys of their students, staff and parents at least every two years.
  - *Students were surveyed March 2012. Reviewing staff and parent surveys currently. Staff/Parent surveys have been conducted by individual administrators.*
- 4) Supports for students; awareness raising opportunities for parents.
  - *Researching initiatives that would interest our communities (i.e. through the police liaison committee, a joint venture between GECDSB and WECDSB in which Mr. M. Neuts would speak to bullying and Melissa James from the Diversion program would address sexting.)examples: The BRAD program with Windsor Police already in place (Bullying, Relationships, Alcohol & Drugs) GAD (Getting Along Digitally)*
- 5) Professional development programs for teachers and other staff.
  - *Looking at offering drug education and online offence education (sexting, threats, hate motivated violence etc.) to administrators in the fall of 2012. Looking at PD training for other staff.*

**Parent Engagement - Board Amount  
Program #305  
2012-13 Revised Estimates**

**Grant:**

Board Amount	\$ 5,000
Enrolment based amount	3,576
Total Allocation	<u>\$ 8,576</u>

<b><u>Expenditures:</u></b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Actual Spending at Nov. 29/12</b>	<b>Remaining</b>
Board Amount - Text & Learning Materials	\$ 2,000	\$ 236	\$ 1,764
Board Amount - Supplies	3,576	-	3,576
Board Amount - Food & Beverage	3,000	1,484	1,516
Sub-total 2011-12 Board Based Amount	<u>8,576</u>	<u>1,720</u>	<u>6,856</u>
Add: Prior-year (2011-12) carryforward <sup>(1)</sup>	<u>6,636</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>6,620</u>
Total Funds available	<u>\$ 15,212</u>	<u>\$ 1,736</u>	<u>\$ 13,476</u>

**Notes:**

(1) Represents allocation provided in 2011-12 that was not spent (and therefore carried forward at year-end).



1325 California Avenue  
Windsor, ON N9B 3Y6  
CHAIRPERSON: Barbara Holland  
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION: Paul A. Picard

## **SUPERVISED DELEGATION MEETINGS SCHEDULE 2012 – 2013 School Year**

Tuesday, September 19, 2012 - Special  
Tuesday, September 25, 2012  
Tuesday, October 23, 2012  
Tuesday, November 13, 2012 - Special  
Tuesday, November 27, 2012  
Tuesday, December 4, 2012 - Special  
Tuesday, December 18, 2012  
Tuesday, January 29, 2013  
Tuesday, February 26, 2013  
Tuesday, March 26, 2013  
Tuesday, April 23, 2013  
Tuesday, May 14, 2013  
Tuesday, May 28, 2013  
Tuesday, June 11, 2013  
**MONDAY**, June 24, 2013

Unless indicated otherwise, all Regularly Scheduled meetings will be held in the John Paul II Board Room at the Windsor Essex Catholic Education Centre  
1325 California Avenue, Windsor, Ontario.

Closed Session: 6:00 p.m.

**Public Session: 7:00 p.m.**

*The agenda and supporting documentation will be available electronically on the Board's website the Wednesday preceding the scheduled meeting at: [www.catholicboard.ca](http://www.catholicboard.ca)*