



DURHAM CATHOLIC
Parent Involvement Committee

DCPIC Newsletter



CONTACT US

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DCPIC MEMBERS OFFICERS

Roxanne Horwitz, Chair
Tina Newth, Vice-Chair
Rose LoPresti, Secretary
Jim McGrorey, Past Chair

PARENT MEMBERS

Trevor Aitcheson
Eileen Bright
Nancy Sgro (Carpenter)
Dyan Cato
Tricia Chapman
Anita Colacicco
Sharmaine Doyle
Beth Hawkins
Liz Lyew
Paulette Palumbo

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES

Kim Beatty
Monique Forster
Connie Samson

TRUSTEE & DCDSB STAFF REPRESENTATIVES

Theresa Corless, Trustee
Karen Valentine, Trustee
Susie Lee-Fernandes, Principal Rep.
Joni MacLean, Teacher Rep.
Chris Szent-Ivany, Principal Rep.
Karen Ulrich, CUPE Rep.
Gerry O'Reilly, Director's Designate

MEETING DATES

September 12, 2013
October 10, 2013
November 7, 2013
January 9, 2014
February 6, 2014
April 10, 2014
May 8, 2014
June 5, 2014

Meetings are held in the Board Room

PIC acts as a direct link to the Director of Education and the Board of Trustees

Message from the DCPIC Chair

Dear Parents, Guardians and Partners in Education,

It is well documented that "good schools become better when parents are involved". We know that families are busy and time is a scarce resource today. As parents you can choose to be involved in a variety of ways – such as reading with your child, talking to your child about school, attending school events, meeting with teachers, volunteering at school, joining your school council and your PIC! What exactly is a PIC?

As outlined in Ontario Regulation 612, every school board in Ontario is required to establish a PIC – Parent Involvement Committee, which provides a strong voice for parents to support Catholic education in our school board.

The mandate of the PIC is to:

- support, encourage, and enhance meaningful parent engagement at the board level
- to improve student achievement and well-being;
- provide information and advice to the board on parent engagement;
- communicate with and support school councils;
- undertake activities to help parents support their children's learning at home and at school.

Your Durham Catholic PIC (DCPIC) has been in existence since 1998, which was then known as the Regional Council. It should be noted that this partnership between school and home was established before it was recently mandated by the government in 2011. This clearly demonstrates the respect for parents' voice and input at our school board. We look forward to working together with our schools and our parishes as we strengthen and promote our enduring gift of Catholic education.

Every parent has a valuable voice. As Pope Francis recently addressed in his Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*, "if we are to share our lives with others and generously give of ourselves, we also have to realize that every person is worthy of our giving." Please reach out to us anytime. We can

only do the work we do when we all work together.

On behalf of the DCPIC, I want to wish you and your families a blessed, happy and safe holiday season. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Warmest greetings,
Roxanne Horwitz
Durham Catholic Parent Involvement Committee, Chair
Contact: chair@depic.ca or roxannehorwitz@yahoo.com



DCPIC Orientation & Commissioning Mass, Oct. 30, 2013

Advent Prayer

O God, Who gladdens us by the annual expectation of our Redemption, grant that we, who now receive with joy Your only-begotten Son as our Redeemer, may behold him without fear when He comes as our judge, even the same Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen.

Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to prepare the ways of Your Only begotten-Son, that we may attain to serve You with purified minds, through His advent. Who with You lives and reigns in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, world without end. Amen.



Celebrating **15** Years

Durham Catholic Parent Involvement Committee

1998-2013

Orientation and Commissioning Mass

On October 30, the DCPIC hosted the Orientation & Commissioning Mass, an annual event which brings principals and school council chairs/members together. It is a wonderful opportunity to build partnerships and share best practices. It began with a Commissioning Mass which set us on the right tone for the rest of the day. Thank you to Father Keith Wallace and Dominic Pullano for officiating.

The event featured keynote speaker Michael Reist, who spoke about the importance of parent engagement. His book, *What Every Parent Should Know About School*, was given to the participants as another resource to help parents better understand our publicly funded education system. Please feel free to borrow this book from your school. There is a full report of this event that we will be sharing on our website.

This was a successful event due to the support of the following people: Director O'Brien, Chair Valentine, the Board of Trustees, Superintendent O'Reilly, Patti Ritchie and board staff from the custodians to the Information, Communications & Technology (ICT) department. Special thanks to the Orientation Subcommittee: Liz Lyew, Dyan Cato, Jim McGrorey, Tina Newth, Rose LoPresti and all the DCPIC members who actively continue the dialogue on parent engagement.

School Council News

The School Council Outreach Subcommittee was developed out of the DCPIC in order to place more emphasis on direct assistance and support to school councils in our school board. The initiatives of the committee are centered around enhancing student achievement by building parent engagement within school councils, clarifying roles within councils and sharing of best practices between schools.

Currently DCPIC members act as liaisons to several schools within the Board. As a result, some schools have begun direct communication and started great relationships and sharing of successful ideas.

In response to feedback from the Orientation and Commissioning Mass, we are developing a presentation outlining the clarification around roles, responsibilities and objectives of a school council, including

information about relationship building, accountabilities and expectations. This tool is scheduled to be launched in early 2014. This will be an exciting intervention that perpetuates consistency and clarity among all school councils in our region. We look forward to an invigorating year of collaboration and relationship building among all our school councils.

Communication Initiatives

The DCPIC is pleased to announce the launch of its new website, **DCPIC.ca**. This website is the result of many hours of collaboration between the members of the Board's ICT Department (Ronald Rodriguez, Bruce Gazley and Carlos Garcia) and the DCPIC Communications team – all of whose commitment to this project deserves special recognition and thanks.

We hope that you take the opportunity to explore **DCPIC.ca** in the coming weeks and provide your feedback.

In addition to the website, we use different forms of communication to reach parents such as this newsletter, emails, social media and face to face encounters. We thank you for your support and welcome your input.

Faith Formation

As a parent group, the Faith Formation Subcommittee is hoping to find ways to help parents and families grow in their faith. Our committee is excited to provide an Advent retreat in December for the DCPIC members, school chairs and vice-chairs at Manresa with guest speaker Patrick Sullivan. Patrick will provide our members with an opportunity to discover ways they can make Advent a rich experience for their families.

Future initiatives in the year include finding ways to help various parent councils provide enrichment opportunities for their communities through sharing information on various workshops, resources and parenting tips. The Faith Formation Subcommittee would also like to provide some kind of hands on workshops in the future such as a Lenten study, family night or workshop.

The DCPIC has regularly encouraged faith growth by attending conferences like Faith through Pedagogy, liturgical services and prayer. We hope to encourage and find ways for families to meet their own personal faith needs.

DCPIC AREAS OF FOCUS

Communications
Faith Formation
School Council Outreach (Parent Engagement)

10 Tips for School Success

1. Encourage reading in any way you can.
2. Treat your child as though he's an author.
3. Make math part of her everyday life.
4. Teach your child how to listen.
5. Support your child's teacher and the school rules.
6. Tell the teacher everything.
7. Make sure your child is ready for school.
8. Spend time in your child's classroom.
9. Encourage responsibility and independence.
10. Ask your child about school every day.

Source: Scholastic Parents

Subcommittees

Faith Formation

Beth Hawkins, Chair

Communications

Nancy Sgro (Carpenter), Chair

School Council Outreach (Parent Engagement)

Tricia Chapman, Chair

PRO Grant

Jim McGrorey/Connie Samson, Co-Chairs

Orientation

Budget

Anniversary

SAVE THE DATE

January 20 - The Developing Brain:

Why Kids Do the Things They Do

February - Literacy Fair

March 19 - Boys and Girls Learn

Differently

April 1 - Kevin Cameron

May 13 - Barbara Coloroso

Please check our **DCPIC.ca** for details or changes to the program.

DCPIC is always interested in your thoughts and ideas, and would welcome an opportunity to seek your feedback on ideas and events we are considering providing our Durham Catholic school community. Subscribe to our mailing list by visiting our website, **dcpic.ca** and filling out the form on the bottom of our homepage.