
DURHAM CATHOLIC PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

CHAIR'S REPORT

TO: DCPIC, BOARD OF TRUSTEES, SCHOOL CHAIRS, STAFF AND PARENTS
FROM: ROXANNE HORWITZ
SUBJECT: JANUARY 2015 REPORT
DATE: JANUARY 8, 2015

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas celebration.

Our committee begins this year with more events geared to help parents with their children's learning and well-being. The bulk of which is from our Regional PRO Grant, funded by the Ministry of Education. The focus continues on mental health. We have Dr. Sandra Mendlowitz returning and will be speaking on January 27. In February, we have Dr. Bruce Ferguson who will be talking to us about "*promoting success in children and youth by considering all factors essential to well-being including health, home life, school, community life and peer relationships*". For these events and other events, please visit our website at www.dcpic.ca, for all the details.

Another project that our committee is working on is the Parent Resource Centre. We have started the set-up of this regional centre for parents in our school board, and we had hoped to have it ready for Fall 2014. However, we experienced some delays and we are working diligently to complete it by Spring 2015. We will be making an announcement of the grand opening and hope to see many parents visit our centre!

Lastly, I wanted to share what His Holiness, Pope Francis asked Vatican employees to do during his meeting with them before Christmas. It has been widely circulated and has been suggested as excellent New Year's resolutions:

"Take care of your spiritual life, your relationship with God, because this is the backbone of everything we do and everything we are."

"Take care of your family life, giving your children and loved ones not just money, but most of all your time, attention and love."

"Take care of your relationships with others, transforming your faith into life and your words into good works, especially on behalf of the needy."

"Be careful how you speak, purify your tongue of offensive words, vulgarity and worldly decadence."

"Heal wounds of the heart with the oil of forgiveness, forgiving those who have hurt us and medicating the wounds we have caused others."

"Look after your work, doing it with enthusiasm, humility, competence, passion and with a spirit that knows how to thank the Lord."

"Be careful of envy, lust, hatred and negative feelings that devour our interior peace and transform us into destroyed and destructive people."

"Watch out for anger that can lead to vengeance; for laziness that leads to existential euthanasia; for pointing the finger at others, which leads to pride; and for complaining continually, which leads to desperation."

"Take care of brothers and sisters who are weaker ... the elderly, the sick, the hungry, the homeless and strangers, because we will be judged on this."

Here is the update for this month:

January Report

- DCPIC Membership
 - a) Two available positions have opened up for parent members due to resignation and movement to Board of Trustees.
 - b) Advertisements will be placed shortly to ensure that we fill these two positions. All parents with children currently attending our schools are eligible and are welcome to apply. For more information, please contact the office of Superintendent O'Reilly.
- OAPCE (Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education)
 - a) OAPCE's next quarterly meeting will be in January 2015.
 - b) The OAPCE conference will take place on May 24-25. It will be in Pembroke, Ontario
 - c) As a Director for OAPCE, I attended the consultation for the Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline (PARG also referred to as ARC) meeting on December 1 at the Ministry of Education, hosted by Assistant Deputy Minister Gabriel Sekaly. The revised guideline is set for release on January or February 2015.

Why the PARG needs to be revised:

1. To make the accommodation review process more flexible and timely for school boards (at consultation, asked to add for school boards AND communities)
2. To be a less contentious process
3. To provide for sufficient information for well-informed community consultation and decision making processes.

Main areas for Proposed Changes:

1. Role of the committee
2. Committee membership
3. Municipal involvement
4. Timelines
5. Optional shortened process
6. Reports and School Information Profiles (SIP)

After the guideline is published this January or February, the Ministry will be creating a handbook or booklet for Parents about PARG. They are seeking feedback and will perhaps invite the parent groups and other organizations to consult.

- Conferences/ Professional Development
 - a) Ministry of Education PIC Symposium – April 2015 in Toronto
 - b) OAPCE – May 24-25, 2015 in Pembroke, Ontario
- Upcoming Events
 - a) January 27 – Dr. Sandra Mendlowitz presentation on anxiety (mental health). Please see our website (dcpic.ca) for details.
 - b) February 24 – Dr. Bruce Ferguson presentation on “Working Together to Make our Kids Successful”
 - c) Distinguished Catholic Volunteer Award Ceremony – April 15, 2015