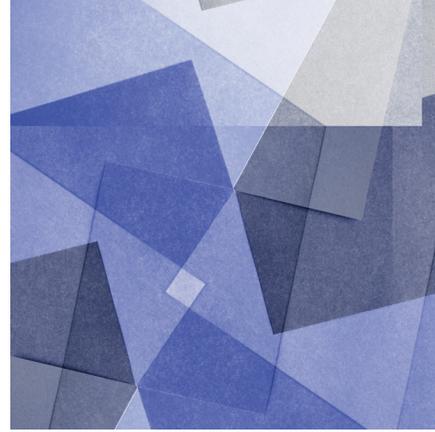


SECTION THREE:

Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association



OCSTA: One Provincial Voice for Catholic Education

The Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association (OCSTA) represents the interests of all English-language Catholic District School Boards in Ontario. Together, Catholic district school boards in this province educate 600,000 students. Catholic schools in Ontario represent the largest jurisdiction of publicly funded Catholic schools in the world.

OCSTA articulates the distinctive needs and perspectives of Catholic school boards to the provincial government and education partners across the province and the country. Catholic schools are part of the rich diversity of this province and an integral part of the foundation of our provincial education system. As the voice for this distinctive system, OCSTA is often called upon by the government to provide insight and advice on education legislation and policy. The insight and advice shared by OCSTA reflects the educational expertise and experience of Catholic schools in Ontario. That experience spans over 150 years and is enhanced by a distinctive approach to education that is focused on the development and well-being of the whole child – mind, body and spirit.

Fulfilling a Call to Service

All of Ontario's schools teach students life skills that prepare them for postsecondary education or the workplace and for their roles as responsible citizens. Trustees on Catholic school boards have the same powers and duties as those on public boards. Although having much in common with the public boards, Catholic school boards have a philosophy of education that is quite distinct. In addition to carrying out the duties that they share with public school trustees, Catholic trustees, as representatives of the Catholic community, must ensure that the mission of Catholic education, as part of the broader mission of the Church, is fulfilled.

The Catholic school is an integral part of the Church's mission to evangelize youth. Catholic parents send their children to Catholic schools expecting them to be

socialized into a faith community in which a Christ-centered approach is central to instruction in all subject areas. Catholic schools provide a complete academic program in an environment that integrates religious instruction, Gospel values, and spiritual formation into all aspects of the curriculum.

The Catholic school is a faith community in which spirituality and the witness and practice of faith are lived out in the daily experiences of staff and students. Religious instruction is not confined to specific periods on a timetable. All subjects that deal with social issues, moral values, ethical decision making, and the impact of technological advances are approached and taught from the distinctive worldview reflected in our Gospel values.

The Mission of OCSTA

Inspired by the Gospel, we provide leadership, service and a provincial voice for Catholic School Boards in promoting and protecting Catholic education.

Roman Catholic trustees, who are elected by Catholic ratepayers, carry out their role in alignment with the convictions and commitments of the Catholic faith. The same distinct role guides OCSTA in providing services to its members.

Services

OCSTA provides opportunities for member boards and local Catholic school communities to enhance their professional and faith development goals through the following services:

- Regular faith formation opportunities at OCSTA events
- Labour relations support and coordination services;
- Finance reform leadership and support;
- Analyses of legislation;
- Educational resources and training opportunities developed specifically for Catholic trustees

More information is available at www.ocsta.on.ca. You can also follow OCSTA on Twitter @CatholicEdu.