



DIRECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT 2022



Director's **Message**

It's hard to believe that another year has come and gone.

We began 2022 firmly in the grips of the COVID-19 pandemic, but as we emerged from the strongest restrictions just past the two-year anniversary, our schools came to life once again.

I am incredibly proud of the way our students, staff, and families navigated their way through this year, and shared their joy as we returned to in-person learning in March. Your patience, perseverance, and resilience were remarkable as we transitioned between remote and in-person learning. Your grace and compassion toward those who were challenged by these transitions was, I believe, the light of Christ shining within you and lighting the way for others.

I am grateful to everyone who worked so hard this year to ensure student success was top of mind. Every member of our team, from senior leadership to casual staff, focused on doing their very best to support students in every way possible. You embody our mission, vision, and values, and that is what makes Niagara Catholic so special.

This 2022 Director's Annual Report showcases many of the wonderful things that have happened this year, and it is my honour to share it with you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cipriano'.

Camillo Cipriano,
Director of Education, Niagara Catholic District School Board

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OUR MISSION

We are a
CHRIST-CENTERED
CATHOLIC FAITH community
that **celebrates diversity**
and fosters **SPIRITUAL GROWTH**,
inspiring ALL to **REACH**
their **FULL potential** in
MIND, BODY, & SPIRIT

OUR VISION

ENCOUNTERING SOULS
AND
OPENING MINDS
SO
that **all students**
SUCCEED

OUR VALUES

JUSTICE • COMPASSION • STEWARDSHIP
ACCOUNTABILITY • COMMUNITY • INTEGRITY • FAITHFULNESS





Faith Formation

Niagara Catholic schools are more than places where students learn about faith. With Jesus at the heart of all we do, our schools are places where faith comes alive.

While early 2022 presented some challenges in bringing student, staff, and our Chaplaincy team together, by springtime we were able to celebrate communions and confirmations in person.

Also in the spring, Niagara Catholic adopted a new theological theme, based on the Board's Multi-Year Strategic Plan *Called by Name: Listening, Learning, and Leading*. The theological theme will encompass the duration of the Board's five-year strategic plan. The 2022-2023 theme is *Called by Name, You are Mine*.

Under the guidance of the Board's Chaplaincy Leader Krista Olivieri, the Board's *Journey Retreat* program shifted to have Grade 8 students participate in a deeply meaningful one-day event at the start of the year, which allows elementary chaplains to spend more time with students in other grades throughout the year.

This year saw the return of the Annual Pilgrimage in a slightly different format, with secondary schools having the option to hold their Pilgrimage during the school day, or on the traditional Pilgrimage Sunday, the last Sunday in October.

Niagara Catholic sent a strong team to *When Faith Meets Pedagogy* in October, with two of our teams presenting. Niagara Catholic's long-time collaboration between Chaplaincy and our Mental Health Team for grief, bereavement, and trauma responses was one of the most popular workshops, with our Board Chaplaincy Leader and Mental Health Lead co-presenting to a standing-room only audience.



Mental Health and Well-Being

The Niagara Catholic Mental Health Team continued to focus on the importance of mental health strategies and initiatives for all students by providing additional support to students in need of clinical care. *The Mental Health and Well-Being Strategy*, with the annual Action Plan of activities addressed emerging and escalating student mental health needs. To support students and staff, School Mental Health Ontario (SMHO) resources are posted on the Niagara Catholic Virtual Learning Environment (NCVLE).

As part of our goal to intentionally connect faith and mental health, and recognizing that *Catholic Education Week* and *Mental Health Awareness Week* are aligned in Ontario, Niagara Catholic once again promoted both weeks, with the 2022 theme of Catholic Education Week, *Rebuild, Restore, Renew Together*. Elementary and secondary students submitted more than 800 entries of artwork and videos for the annual competition to demonstrate how they can improve their spiritual and mental well-being.

The Mental Health Team provided professional development for all staff with sessions presented virtually on professional activity days and as requested by schools. The team has also been actively involved in anti-sex trafficking training to support the

implementation of the Board's *Anti-Sex Trafficking Protocol* mandated by the Ministry of Education. Various training sessions, coordinated by our Mental Health Lead, have been provided to staff, particularly principals, vice-principals, school social workers, child and youth workers, chaplaincy leaders, ABA facilitators, mental health champions, and Indigenous champions, along with community partners, such as mental health nurses, to support mental health awareness and to build capacity for Tier 1 support in Niagara Catholic schools.

A highlight of in-person training for 2022 was the community session with Mary Gordon, founder of the *Roots of Empathy* program, with child and youth workers, coordinated through the Early Childhood Community Development Centre (ECCDC). Niagara Catholic has implemented *Roots of Empathy* for 20-plus years in Niagara Catholic schools.

Our Mental Health Team has received increased funding to continue to support student mental health in a variety of ways; including staffing, evidence-based programs, and initiatives in our schools, such as *Project Plaid* with our community partner Pathstone Mental Health, which encourages students and staff to normalize speaking about mental health challenges.





Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Niagara Catholic continues to foster inclusive, equitable and safe school communities where all students are welcome and “called by name” as stated in the system priority from the Board’s Multi-Year Strategic plan, *Called by Name, Listening, Learning and Leading*. Following Catholic Social Teachings, we teach and uphold the dignity of each and every human person. Students are taught to journey through their lives with compassion for one another, in contribution to the world, and as followers of Christ. As stated in the Ontario Human Rights Commission’s (OHRC) *Annual Report 2021-2022*, which was provided to all school administrators at a 2022 Principals’ Meeting, “We envision an inclusive society where everyone takes responsibility for promoting and protecting human rights; where everyone is valued and treated with equal dignity and respect; and where everyone’s human rights are a lived reality.”

During 2022, Niagara Catholic worked on the development of a student census that is required by the Ministry of Education for all school boards, in compliance with Ontario’s *Anti-Racism Act*. Student participation in the Board’s *Student Census* is voluntary. Niagara Catholic’s *Student Census* is an opportunity to identify diversity through the range of human qualities and attributes that make up our student communities. The census will provide us with a greater understanding of who our students are so that we can more precisely identify and address systemic barriers and disparities to support improved student achievement and well-being for all students.

In addition to the voluntary student census, school climate surveys, such as the *Middle Development Instrument (MDI)* and *COMPASS* study, provide opportunities for students and staff to respond to questions about safety, bullying, and their sense of belonging in schools.

The findings are shared with principals and their staff to inform their school improvement planning, and their school *Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan*.

The School Improvement and Equity Plan that each school develops with the principal and staff provides opportunities for each school to use the equity and inclusive lens under the pillars of *Catholic Faith and Community, Learning Recovery and Renewal, Achievement, Human Rights and Equity, Mental Health, Well-Being and Engagement, and Pathways and Transitions*.

In 2022, there were a variety of opportunities for learning in support of ensuring equity and inclusion, including professional learning through *unlearn* and the *Canadian Council of Muslim Women (CCMW)* to create awareness and address inequity issues, bias, and discrimination.

During *Black History Month* in Canada, we celebrated by learning about Black history in the region with *Niagara Bound Tours*. Workshops on anti-racism were also made available to all staff. Staff and students continued to engage in equity inquiry projects in support of culturally relevant approaches to teaching and learning.

Select elementary schools continued to engage in *The Recess Project* to support inclusion and a greater sense of belonging for improved recess experiences for all students, supported by a community grant of \$15,000 and Board funds.





Indigenous Education

Indigenous Education provides an opportunity for students and staff to learn about the beauty of Indigenous heritage, history, culture, and language through classroom activities, school curriculum, and special guests from the local Indigenous community.

With the guidance of local Indigenous agencies, spiritual leaders, elders, and knowledge keepers, Niagara Catholic students receive lessons based on lived experiences and traditional teachings that reflect the unique heritage of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit locally and across Turtle Island. Niagara Catholic has a growing number of Indigenous staff who are coming forward to lend their voice, share their connections and teachings as internal resources available within our schools and in the community.

We strive to ensure the inclusion of First Nations, Métis and Inuit histories, cultures, perspectives, and contributions throughout our school communities. By recognizing and promoting an awareness of these histories and contemporary realities, we support the well-being, engagement, and success of all students.

Self-identified Indigenous students enrolled in our schools receive expanded support and may also participate in programming that honours student voice and is supported by the Board's Indigenous team and Indigenous community partners.

This year, Niagara Catholic's Indigenous Lead coordinated a visit to Niagara by Phyllis Webstad, the driving force behind the *Orange Shirt Day* movement. Phyllis Webstad was joined by members of her family, and other activists within the Indigenous community. Their visit included a session about *Orange Shirt Day* for elementary and secondary students, a number of community-based events, and culminated in a sunrise ceremony at the brink of Niagara Falls on September 30, attended by the Prime Minister.

Niagara Catholic's *Soaring Eagles* program at Saint Kateri school was also in the spotlight this year, as a film crew from a show slated to air in 2023 filmed at the school in October.



Student Achievement, Success, and 21st Century Learning

Our vision statement clearly articulates our goal: *Encountering souls and opening minds so that all students succeed*. Success is measured in many different ways, from day-to-day classroom participation and tests, quizzes, and exams, to standardized testing.

In December, Niagara Catholic released its 2022 EQAO results, which provide a new baseline from which Senior Staff, consultants, administrators, and teachers will build upon in 2023 and beyond.

In February, Niagara Catholic was recognized in the Ontario Human Rights Commission's *Right to Read Public Inquiry Report*, which noted that Niagara Catholic's shift from a balanced approach to teaching literacy to a structured one as a way of supporting students at 12 Catholic elementary schools involved in a pilot project between the Board's Program and Innovation and Student Support Services departments. This program included using evidence-based programs such as the Lexia computer instructional reading program, as well as Heggerty resources and Empower.

Numeracy consultants continue to guide teachers in supporting learners as they grasp new concepts in mathematics. Regular visits to schools from the Board's Numeracy consultant and coaches helped staff to build capacity in both content and pedagogical knowledge. Program and Innovation staff were involved in writing projects to support secondary teachers as they continue to implement de-streamed and single streamed curriculum in a variety of Grade 9 subject areas.

Niagara Catholic continues to offer secondary students innovative opportunities as they discover gifts, talents, and interests that may grow into careers after graduation. Students have the opportunity to participate in a variety of experiential programming, including participating in co-op placements and the *Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program* and various technology programs at their

schools. These programs offer students the chance to meet and work with industry leaders and to gain important skills that they will use throughout their lives.

Niagara Catholic introduced the *Advanced Placement* program in two high schools in September 2022. The program, that is delivered in 60 countries worldwide, is recognized by 5,800 post-secondary institutions in the U.S. and 60 Canadian universities, including 24 in Ontario.

AP courses are open to all students who are willing and academically prepared to take on the challenge of a rigorous curriculum. Students in Grade 9 at Blessed Trinity Catholic Secondary School and Saint Paul Catholic High School had the opportunity to select an AP preparatory course in English, Math, Geography or Science.

Taking an AP course will help Niagara Catholic students build critical thinking skills, study skills, confidence, and essential time management skills to support student achievement and their pathway planning.

Last summer, 253 students in Kindergarten through Grade 7 participated in the *Summer Learning Program*. Students had the option of attending virtually or in-person, and the majority chose in-person learning. The program ran from July 11-29 from 9 a.m. - noon and provided an optimal environment for teacher-student interaction, student support, and engagement.

Student attendance and engagement was high at all four of the in-person sites, St. John Henry Newman in Niagara Falls, St. Teresa of Calcutta in St. Catharines, St. Martin in Smithville, and St. Andrew in Welland. Exit surveys confirmed the program provided the services students needed to re-engage with learning.



Student Achievement, Success, and 21st Century Learning

Niagara Catholic also offered a number of summer school programs to students through the Student Support Services Department. The programs were intended to support students in Grades 2-6 to improve their literacy skills. The summer learning program included faith formation, functional numeracy skills, and reinforcement of the *Zones of Regulation*, and offered support in the area of social-emotional well-being.

Niagara Catholic's *SOAR* secondary program, offered in partnership with the *Learning Disabilities Association of Niagara*, offered small-group transition support for students in Grades 7 and 8 with a diagnosed, identified, or suspected learning disability.

Classes were offered in the morning and afternoon for 90 minutes each from August 4-13. Students were selected for participation in this program by their schools.

Niagara Catholic's Student Support Services also implemented a Summer Transition Support Team which included 26 staff members who provided transitional support for students with special needs.

This included coordinators, program resource teachers, behaviour resource teachers, speech and language pathologists and special needs facilitators.

Student Support Services continues to find and create innovative problem-solving models to address challenging classroom behaviours in positive and supportive ways. This year, Niagara Catholic's Integrated Behaviour Team, comprised of Behaviour Resource Teachers and the ABA team, updated its delivery model to focus on early intervention for all students, targeted support for some students, and interventions for individuals. The Board is also creating Centres of Excellence to serve students in Grades 5-8 in a low-ratio classroom environment that provides students with the space, time, and support necessary to fortify their strengths as learners.





International Students

After a hiatus during the pandemic, Niagara Catholic was happy to welcome back larger groups of international students to our schools in 2022.

Although Niagara Catholic has many permanent students who come from 28 countries around the globe, the international student program adds a unique layer to our schools, as students billet with families. The international students are immersed in Canadian culture, and our host families learn about the language and cultures of the students they host. This cross-cultural opportunity allows students to better understand cultures from around the world.





Student Engagement

Niagara Catholic has very active elementary and secondary student senators who are committed to providing events and activities to support and engage students.

The annual *Student Leadership Conference* took place in the spring, featuring keynote speaker Sam Demma. The event was facilitated by the *Canadian Student Leadership Association*. Students participated in *Ontario Catholic Student Youth Day* on May 4 (as part of *Catholic Education Week* in Ontario), with a virtual Mass celebrated throughout the province. They also helped prepare materials for *Mental Health Awareness Week* in Ontario, which also takes place during the first week of May.

In November, Niagara Catholic's *Lead Out Loud Student Conference* brought together more than 100 student leaders from across the system for a day filled with Catholic-themed learning sessions and leadership training at Gethsemane Ministries on November 16.

The sessions were led by Development and Peace and moderated by student senators.

Student senators are currently involved in revising the Student Senate Policy and Administrative Operational Procedures (AOPs).





Parent Engagement

Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee Meetings continue to be held both in-person and virtually to support all members. NCPIC meetings are held on a bi-monthly basis, are open to the public, and are now livestreamed.

Throughout the 2021-2022 school year, the NCPIC welcomed presentations from the Niagara Catholic Mental Health Lead and Student Support Services, and a special presentation by Fr. Thomas Lynch, National President of *Priests for Life Canada*. The presentations were informative, and support our Catholic faith, student achievement and well-being, and Catholic education.

To support faith formation, the NCPIC hosted a virtual *Parent Synod Listening Session* to engage parents/guardians and hear their voice on how the church can be strengthened and supported. Feedback collected during the session was included as part of the Diocese of St. Catharines' synod responses being forwarded to Pope Francis.

PRO Grant funding from the Ministry of Education allowed us to provide three virtual learning math sessions for parents/guardians with Dr. Marian Small and a *Family Games Night*. Parents/guardians who participated in the virtual webinars with Dr. Small received PowerPoint presentations to continue to support their student learning at home.

Prior to the *Family Games Night*, math kits were sent to all registered participants. The kits included various grade-level games that would be introduced to engage families during the *Family Games Night*. More than 200 families participated, and positive feedback was received including how parents/guardians enjoyed engaging in math games with their children.

The November 3, 2022, meeting was the first NCPIC meeting for the 2022-2023 school year. Fr. Paul MacNeil presided over the commissioning ceremony of the new and returning members of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee as they publicly proclaimed their commitment to promote the Mission of Catholic education and the Mission, Vision, and Values of the Niagara Catholic District School Board. At this meeting elections the two co-chairs and the Niagara Catholic Regional Director for the *Ontario Association for Parents in Catholic Education* took place.

The *Special Education Advisory Committee* of Niagara Catholic continues to encourage families to work collaboratively with their child's home school to personalize programming on an ongoing basis. Parental input is valued and needed to assist in building meaningful programming. SEAC has been developing a survey that will allow parents to provide their important feedback and will be made available to families in 2023.





Continuing Education

Niagara Catholic's Continuing Education Department was busy throughout 2022, with a highlight being a new *Childcare Assistant Program* offered to those interested in working with children.

The 14-week program includes academic and experiential learning for students who aspire to working in childcare. Students have the opportunity to learn online or in-person, and receive employment and support services, including resume writing.

Launched in May, graduates receive certification in First Aid/CPR, WHMIS, safe food handling, infection control and service excellence. Individuals who successfully complete the program also receive credits toward their Ontario Secondary School Diploma.

This program not only provides individuals with a pathway to a career in childcare or early childhood education, it also helps support local schools and daycares with critical staffing shortages.



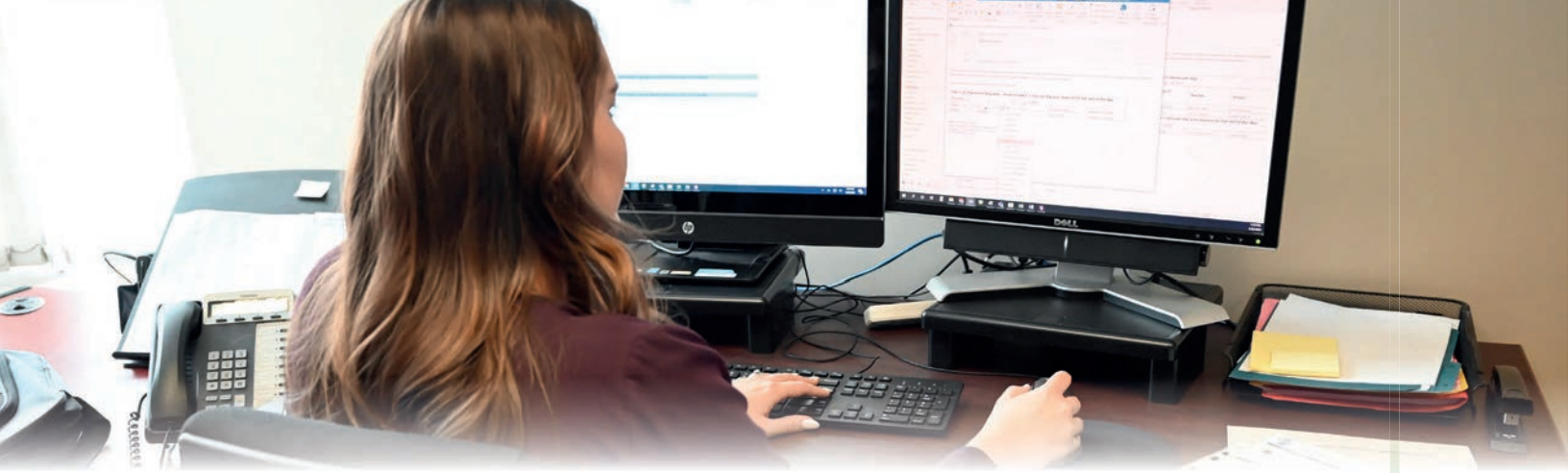


Business and Financial Services

Niagara Catholic's Senior Staff and Board of Trustees recognize and value the priority of strong financial stewardship. Niagara Catholic continued to show fiscal responsibility throughout 2022, balancing the budget allocation with expenses incurred as a result of the pandemic. We are in full compliance with Ministry of Education financial requirements and continue to ensure our resources align with Ministry of Education requirements and our Board's Strategic Directions.

Niagara Catholic continues to place a strong priority on COVID learning recovery, as well as mental health support for students who found reintegration to school challenging.





Human Resources and Staff Development

Niagara Catholic's Human Resources Services Department was busy throughout 2022, as we continued to work through COVID-related staffing issues. The early part of 2022 continued to focus on ensuring staff met all local and provincial COVID protocols and mandates.

Within Human Resources Services, we hired a Senior HR Data Analyst who will oversee all compensation analysis including pay equity. They will also provide greater human capital analytics that will help shape programming and initiatives affecting our front-line staff.

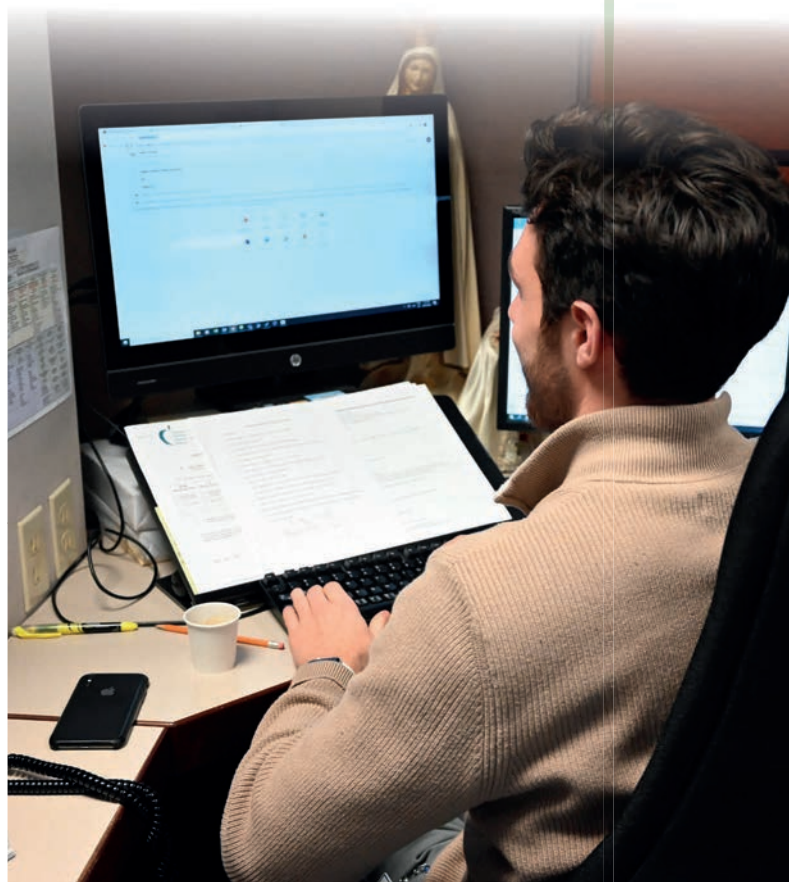
We also introduced a new time and attendance system that has improved service for both administrators and front-line staff in entering absences and pay, removing much paper and redundant workflows. The system also provides a greater engine for our call out to supply staff filling jobs faster and more frequently.

We have worked to modernize many of our recruitment strategies bringing greater reach and candidate experience to job classifications such as Educational Assistants, qualified French teachers and Occasional Teachers.

Much work has been completed in the area of health and wellness, including the recent hiring of a Health and Wellness Manager. This position will focus on bringing a framework to absence management, wellness programming, and return to work best practices and supports.

In the spring, Niagara Catholic hired a new Privacy and Risk Management Advisor to ensure we are compliant with all matters relating to privacy and that we are following best practices for risk management within the Board. We also added a new Communications Specialist to our team to support us in marketing and communications.

In 2022, Staff Development continued building capacity at all levels of the education system to support a culture of professional learning that is fundamental to the success of every student. Professional Activity Days focused on *Learning Recovery*, *Student and School Safety*, *STEM* (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) and *Equity and Inclusive Education*. Key system stakeholders and the school Indigenous Champions have participated in the exploration of Indigenous culture by providing a series of workshops focused on culture, knowledge, and perspectives of Indigenous peoples. In addition, Staff Development provided anti-sex trafficking training to a variety of employee groups throughout the system.



Facilities Services

Facilities Services continue to play a key role in keeping our buildings safe, clean, and efficient. During the pandemic, the Board invested more than \$4.1 million in upgrading our ventilation systems and has provided more than 1,500 portable HEPA air purifiers throughout our schools.

To date during the 2022-23 school year, we are managing approximately \$28 million in repair and renovation projects, including:

- Roof Replacements - 12 Schools - **\$5.1 million**
- Building Automation Systems (HVAC Controls) - 61 Schools - **\$690,000**
- Kindergarten Playgrounds - 14 Schools - **\$5.4 million**
- Asphalt Replacements/Upgrades - **\$1.0 million**
- Major Projects/Renovations including:
 - Denis Morris Catholic High School - **\$3.0 million**
 - Notre Dame College School - **\$3.8 million**
 - Notre Dame College School - New Artificial Turf Field - **\$4.0 million**
 - Blessed Trinity Catholic Secondary School - New Artificial Turf Field - **\$4.0 million**
 - Lakeshore Catholic High School - **\$550,000**
 - Father Hennepin Catholic Elementary School - **\$800,000**
 - Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Catholic Elementary School (formerly Mons. Clancy) - **\$1.5 million**

Minor Projects/Renovations including:

- St. Patrick Catholic Elementary School, Niagara Falls - **\$50,000**
- St. Mary Catholic Elementary School, Niagara Falls - **\$185,000** (including LED conversion)
- Saint Francis Catholic Secondary School - **\$100,000**
- Canadian Martyrs Catholic Elementary School - **\$125,000** (LED conversion)
- Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Elementary School - **\$350,000** (electrical upgrade)
- Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Elementary School, St. Catharines - **\$430,000** (window replacements)

With the completion of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary, Facilities Services has turned its attention to two new capital projects – a joint-use school with the DSBN at the site of St. Elizabeth Catholic Elementary School in Wainfleet, and a new elementary school starting design in January in Beamsville to alleviate overcrowding at St. Mark Catholic Elementary School. Both new schools are scheduled to open in September 2024.

Niagara Catholic also implemented its *Period Poverty* initiative in 2022. Approved by the Board the previous year, the initiative was first brought forward by student trustees concerned that students were missing school due to the stigma of menstruating or because they could not afford menstrual products.

The Ministry of Education provided 13 napkin dispensers and napkins, and the Board has provided another 57 units dispensing napkins and tampons – as well as committed to an ongoing provision of supplies – to ensure that students have equitable access to menstrual products at school. This is an outstanding partnership between Facilities Services and Purchasing Services to make this request a reality.



Challenges

This year was not without challenges. COVID continued – and continues – to impact our schools and communities, particularly as we head into the winter weather. But we welcomed a return to a cautious new normal across our system this year and continue to remain vigilant about the spread of COVID, influenza, RSV and other airborne illnesses at school and work.

As students across Niagara Catholic prepared to return to in-person learning after the March Break, students at Holy Cross Catholic Secondary School remained online until mid-May due to a flood at the school in early March. And senior students at Lakeshore Catholic had a late return to in-person learning in September after a fire in the summer.

I am very grateful to the Facilities Services team and all those who made it possible for students and staff at Holy Cross to be back in the building before the school year ended, and to those who worked to ensure that students at Lakeshore Catholic were also back in class as close to the start of the school year as possible.

Celebrations, Events, and Milestones

It was wonderful to be able to begin bringing people together again in 2022, and this began with our *Niagara Catholic Skills Competition* at Seaway Mall in March. Members of the public were able to watch students show their skills in a variety of different technologies, from automotive repairs, cosmetology, and construction to landscaping, photography, and video design.

Our students went on to compete at Skills Ontario, with competitors bringing home silver medals in baking, plumbing, and Vex robotics, and bronze medals in 2D animation, coding, and the four-person homebuilding category.

Sticking with technology and careers, Niagara Catholic hosted a *Job Fair and Career Expo* at Club Roma on May 11 for students in the Specialist High Skills Major program. The event allowed 43 employers to share with students the requirements they need to join their workforce and offered students summer employment opportunities. In addition to meet-and-greet with a diverse range of employers, students participated in learning sessions led by industry experts. Approximately 300 students attended the event, and many students accepted summer jobs while they were there.

In-person graduations returned to Niagara Catholic in 2022, and students, staff, and families were thrilled to be able to come together to celebrate the Class of 2022 at our elementary and secondary schools. Many of our graduates earned athletic and other scholarships in 2022, including Thomas Mete (Lakeshore Catholic) and Ciara Krsul (Notre Dame College), who are two of only a very small percentage of international students accepted to Harvard for September 2022.

It was the end of an era in Thorold in June and the start of a new one in September, as St. Charles and Monsignor Clancy Catholic Elementary Schools officially closed their doors. After two years of construction, students consolidated in the Monsignor Clancy site at a renamed Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Catholic Elementary School. The name pays homage to a previous school in Thorold and aligns with the local parish.





Niagara Catholic's Kindergarten team from Notre Dame Catholic Elementary School was recognized by the Early Childhood Community Development Centre with its *Kindergarten Team Excellence Award* in November. Congratulations to Becky Bartel, Alison Witcomb, Donna Iconomopoulos, Krista Smith, Sarah Cukierski, Roxane Manners, and Melissa Taddeo, who were honoured at the ECCDC's annual *Early Learning and Child Care Awards of Excellence* celebration.

I am also very proud to acknowledge the students and staff at St. Alfred Catholic Elementary School in St. Catharines. The school received the 2022 *Michel Monk Award* from the *Catholic Foundation of Ontario* this autumn. They were recognized for their project, *Students Serving Others*, which supports people through *Out of the Cold* at St. Alfred Parish. The \$4,000 cash prize will be used to buy ingredients to continue to make sandwiches for *Out of the Cold* throughout the winter.

This year, we welcomed new staff to Niagara Catholic, and said farewell to many retirees on to their new journeys. Those retirees – and ones from 2020 and 2021 – were celebrated at the *Board's Retirement and Service Recognition Dinner* in June.

In October, we lost a trailblazer in Catholic education, with the death of Father Jim Mulligan. Father Mulligan spent his career as a teacher at Notre Dame College School and was known as one of the foremost experts on Catholic education in Ontario, and throughout Canada.

Father Mulligan brought the concept of the Annual Pilgrimage to Notre Dame College School nearly 50 years ago and it has since spread to all eight Catholic high schools within our system, raising funds for people in need locally and around the world.



Four trustees chose not to stand for re-election in 2022. We said goodbye to long-time trustees Kathy Burtnik (28 years), Frank Fera (22 years) and Dino Sicoli (12 years) as well as Dan Moody, who served one four-year term. We also said goodbye to Leanne Prince, who was not re-elected after her one term as trustee.

Goodbyes mean hellos, and we welcomed new trustees Natalia Benoit, Joe Bruzzese, Danny Di Lorenzo, Doug Joyner, and Jim Marino at our Inaugural Meeting at Saint Michael Catholic High School on November 22. We also welcomed back trustees Rhianon Burkholder, Larry Huibers, and Paul Turner. During the Inaugural Meeting, Trustee Di Lorenzo was elected Chair of the Board for 2023, and Trustee Burkholder was elected Vice-Chair for 2023.



L to R: Trustee Larry Huibers, Trustee Doug Joyner, Trustee Jim Marino, Trustee Paul Turner, 2023 Chair Danny Di Lorenzo, 2023 Vice-Chair Rhianon Burkholder, Student Trustee Steffen Zylstra, Student Trustee Charlotte Johnstone, Trustee Joe Bruzzese, and Trustee Natalia Benoit.

