

Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board's 2019-20 Director's Annual Report

MESSAGE FROM DIRECTOR MIKE MCDONALD

It is with great pleasure that I share this annual report which demonstrates the successes and accomplishments of the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board in the 2019-20 school year.

This unprecedented school year presented the students, staff and families of our district with obstacles that even the best plan could not have foreseen. I am proud to have witnessed great resilience, perseverance, and kindness across the system throughout this pandemic. It is the strength of this Catholic community, guided by our faith, that enabled us to move forward while supporting those around us.

The beginning of 2020 saw the launch of our new District Strategic Plan that will lead our system over the next three years. It is fitting that the underlying theme 'For All' roots the major priorities of the plan; Belonging, Teaching and Learning, and Wellness. Even while the schools were closed to in-person learning at the end of the 2019-20 school year, we saw evidence of the strength of our new plan as it guided the work of our students, staff, and community.

Thank you to all of you who have dedicated yourself to Catholic education. Together, we will continue to lift each other up and be champions for all.

God bless.

OUR VISION

Our faith-based communities inspire life-long learning and service to others.

OUR MOTTO

Excellence in Learning ~ Living in Christ

OUR VALUES

Celebrating Our Catholic Identity

We celebrate our faith, giving witness to God's hope of promoting the dignity of every person, by

- developing a distinctive Catholic worldview
- nurturing a personal relationship with Jesus
- advocating for equity, inclusion and justice

Inspiring a Love of Learning

We inspire everyone to reach their God-given potential in a changing world, by

- developing learners as local and global citizens
- fostering collaborative learning environments in which all voices are valued
- recognizing the possibility within all learners and responding with personalization and precision

Cultivating a Connected Community

We cultivate relationships for the benefit of all members in the community, by

- engaging active partnerships with all families, parishes and communities
- recognizing the importance of our integrated experience in the promotion of prioritizing wellbeing
- working in partnership with others to build strong, resilient communities

Nurturing Professional Learning

We nurture staff to realize their potential as life-long learners, by

- enriching vocation through ongoing faith formation
- building a collaborative culture
- recognizing leadership qualities within ourselves and each other

Fostering Innovation and Continuous Improvement

We foster innovation and drive continuous improvement for a thriving future, by

- pursuing innovative and high-quality practices
- encouraging reflective and responsive practice
- focusing on sustainable resource

OUR 2019-20 SPIRITUAL THEME

Journey, **ENCOUNTER**, Transform - Hearts on Fire (Luke 24:32)

STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITY REPORT CARD

The release of the Board's Strategic Plan in 2020 saw the development of many new initiatives that would support the district's focus for the next three years. Although many activities commenced, the unexpected declaration of a pandemic that followed in March caused many of the items to pause. We are pleased to share that the innovation and creativity of our staff enabled some of the initiatives to continue while we navigated the end of the school year during a Provincial lockdown and remote learning.

BELONGING

“Our halls are filled with messages of kindness, love and hope! We are ‘people of encounter’ and a ‘community of hope’.” #bhnencounter

-Twitter Post

Students

Provide faith formation and leadership opportunities.

Capture and respond to student voice.

- Liturgies were held virtually for students at the Elementary and Secondary levels.
- The 'Give the Best of Yourself' planning committee was formed, and 2020-21 meeting dates established.
- Our schools participated in Advent and Lent social just outreach campaigns including collecting food, clothing, and funds in order to help support our neighbours in need.
- Videos were created to celebrate secondary graduations, in the absence of in-person events, were wonderful examples of student voice, thought and reflection in respect to faith and leadership.
- The Board provided an opportunity for student input into the budget development process, through a stakeholder survey.
- Board research staff completed surveys with various student populations that will identify need and inform future initiatives.

Staff

Enhance positive relationships and support a vibrant Catholic community.

Continue to provide opportunities to support social justice and outreach.

- Professional development and faith formation was provided to launch year-2 of our Board's spiritual theme, Encounter.
- Professional development opportunities for faith formation were shared via the weekly Student Achievement Team's communications as well as on social media.
- A system-level Equity and Inclusive Education Committee was established.
- All schools and sites visibly and prominently display artefacts reflective of our Board's spiritual theme.
- Senior Administration Team members regularly visited prior to the Provincial lockdown to foster strong relationships with staff and students.
- Business Services provided Senior Administration and Principal representatives with an update of the exciting projects and initiatives being undertaken or planned.

Community

Enhance communication and communication systems.

Work collaboratively with our Catholic Education partners.

- As part of the School Improvement Plan process, school Pastoral plans were discussed including what the goals were, evidence of attaining these goals, monitoring the goals and next steps.
- The Board continued in partnerships with Haldimand, Norfolk, and Brant County as well as with the City of Brantford including the planning of two child care centre builds.
- The Board joined many local organization efforts in respect to collaborative and supportive COVID-19 plans and supports for the community.
- The Board provided essential supplies including PPE to community partners who required the safety supplies for first responders and front-line staff.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

“Leveraging digital, gaming language, freeing up opportunities for 1-1 conferencing, giving immediate feedback and creating a child centred classroom with a focus on the essential practices and learning.”

-Twitter Post

Students

Provide opportunities to demonstrate learning in a variety of ways.

Promote the meaningful and responsible use of technology.

Support the development of perseverance and advocacy skills.

- Enhancements were made to a variety of technological education shops and labs with new and updated equipment. This capital renewal will help to ensure that the board continues to offer value-added pathway programs focused on skilled trades and apprenticeship training.
- Approximately 50 experiential learning projects involving over 750 students and all BHCNDSB schools were launched. Elementary and secondary students had the opportunity to learn more about robotics, agriculture, financial literacy, skilled trades and the environment in a more hands-on approach.
- We saw the launch of a land-based learning project. Land-based education focuses on an environmental approach to learning that recognizes the deep connection and relationship of Indigenous peoples to the Land.
- Over 1,100 students enrolled in summer school programming and a credit accumulation rate of 97% was achieved.
- Staff expanded their use of Brightspace D2L to facilitate remote learning.

Staff

Further develop effective instructional and assessment strategies.

Support inclusive and responsive learning environments.

Promote the efficient use of technology to enhance collaboration and learning.

- The Information Technology Governance Committee (ITGC) was formed.
- ITGC and the Curriculum Working Group investigated various APPS used through the Board and their risk profile.
- Information Technology Services began to develop their Operational Plan based on the Board’s new Strategic Plan and the Business Services Operational Plan.
- Professional learning opportunities were provided around culturally responsive pedagogy related to curriculum areas. Specifically, virtual PLC (Professional Learning Community) opportunities were offered at each secondary school to improve cultural competency and culturally responsive pedagogical approaches.
- Special Education Resource Teachers performed Individual Education Plan and Identification Placement and Review Committee processes electronically.
- Ongoing Self-Regulation training and a number of other opportunities were offered virtually through Community of Practice meetings.
- Resources have been shared and are being used in schools for religion programming purposes. We continued to communicate the use of these tools via email and Twitter.

Community

Collaborate with partners to inspire life-long learning.

- Began the review of our Student Information System needs and requirements, including the implementation of parent portal.
- Completed the planning for two self-regulation professional development learning opportunity sessions for staff and community partners (childcare workers and managers of childcare centres).

WELLNESS

“Students brought home a special bracelet to help remember the importance of kindness each day. We hope they will wear their bracelets and always choose kindness!!” #ChooseKindness #WorldKindnessDay
-Twitter Post

Students

Provide developmentally appropriate mental health learning.

Foster an environment where responsible digital citizenship is a priority.

Equip students with the resources and skills to access support for themselves and others.

- Mind Up Kindergarten- Tier One, Good for All, Social Emotional Learning Program Pilot Project: The broad goals of the MindUP™ program align with several educational initiatives that have been implemented in the Board, and for Ontario Early Learning; including the Ontario Ministry of Education Directives and Full Day Kindergarten Four Frames of Learning. In October 2019, 10 schools participated in Phase One of the MindUP™ Kindergarten Focus roll out.
- Co-operative Education Classes in all three secondary schools received Mental Health 101- Balancing school and work, from the social work team at the beginning of each semester. Students received psycho educational information regarding mental health, mental illness, sign of stress, coping strategies, and pathways to access care.
- Paul Davis - The Cyber Guy was hosted at elementary schools, first sharing information with students, following by an information session shared with parents.
- Jack Chapters continue to function in all 3 secondary schools. During the spring of 2020, the Assumption College Jack Chapter was instrumental in promoting student well being via their Instagram and Twitter campaign not only to their fellow Lions, but district wide.
- Catholic Education Week/Mental Health Week, students were encouraged to participate activities that promoted mental health and well being. Information regarding internal and community support services was shared with students and families district wide on a daily basis through a variety of means including tweets, and board website.
- BHNCDSB Summer Support Line was available to students and families who required assistance in seeking mental health supports.
- Numerous support documents were created and shared with parents and students in order to assist families in supporting their children during the initial months of remote learning due to COVID 19.

Staff

Strengthen our safe and mentally healthy work environments.

Promote positive health and well-being for all staff.

- Enhanced training in Trauma Informed Practices with Dr. Kirsten McLeod was to occur with the Mind Up Kindergarten Pilot group, Educational Assistant's, Administrators and the Student Support Services team.
- Dr. McLeod provided enhanced psychoeducation sessions and clinical consultation with the Student Support Services team prior to March 2020.
- Over 50 staff members engaged in Self Regulation certification and training.
- Student Support Services personnel have engaged in numerous professional learning opportunities related to pandemic management and virtual support as organized by School Mental Health Ontario, The Centre for Excellence in Children's Mental Health, McMaster Children's Hospital, etc.
- VTRA level 1 training continued.
- We shared opportunities for faith formation as shared for Advent and Lent. Many webinars have also been shared out district wide for wellbeing supports and mental health.
- Daily Mental Health and Well-being placemats were shared during CEW/Mental Health Week and encouraged participation in activities that promoted student, staff and family mental health.
- Camp Blast psycho educational session provided to educators by Student Support Services Staff - promoting wellness during a pandemic.

Community

Enhance relationships with our partners and families to provide coordinated support for those in need.

- Joint training in Trauma Informed Practices training occurred in the fall of 2019 with support staff from BHNCD SB, Grand Erie District School Board, Woodview Mental Health and Autism Services, and Haldimand Norfolk REACH to ensure alignment in approach and support for our shared communities.
- BHNCD SB Membership continued on numerous community committee's to address gaps and barriers to service including HN Child and Youth Planning Network, HN Child and Youth Mental Health Planning Network, HN Suicide Prevention Network, HN Crisis Response Table, Brant Strategic Leadership Table, Brant Suicide Prevention Network, Brant Crisis Response Table, and Brant Mental Health Week Planning Committee.
- RCPIC workshop facilitated in June 2020 by BHNCD SB Student Support Services. 'Student and Parent Mental Health – Promoting Well-Being Over the Summer COVID-19 Style' included members from local Children's Mental Health agencies (REACH and Woodview); explaining available services.
- Parenting psycho educational sessions provided to parents of children attending Camp Blast.

SCHOOLS AND CLASSROOMS THAT SUPPORT ALL STUDENTS

First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) Education

Territory Acknowledgement

- The Board completed our Territory Acknowledgement which is a way that we include our awareness of Indigenous presence and land rights in everyday life. Members of the Indigenous Education Advisory Committee, with the support of Communication Services, crafted a land acknowledgement text that has been put into use throughout our school district.

Supporting Students

- Educating students through land-based learning was a focus for our work.
- Revitalizing outdoor learning spaces and using the space to link work in Indigenous studies occurred at Assumption College.
- Transition to secondary school continued to be a focus of our action plan.
- Indigenous Education was infused into “Ready Set Go” Grade 8 - Grade 9 transition program.
- There was focus on increased student participation in OYAP, experiential learning experiences, skills competition, and other post-secondary and career planning events.
- Resources were purchased to support building teacher and student knowledge and understanding of Indigenous culture and traditions while developing literacy skills in both elementary and secondary schools (Circle of Life Series, Literature Circle Texts, Library Acquisitions).

Supporting Educators

- Post COVID 19, there will be elementary and secondary professional learning opportunities focused on culturally responsive pedagogy in multiple curriculum areas. These learning opportunities will be in alignment with Ministry of Education priorities and supported by BHNCD SB Student Achievement Team.

2019-20 BUDGET

Income

Provincial Grants	\$ 109,322,305
Taxes	\$ 18,445,218
Other	\$ 3,375,496
Total	\$ 131,143,019

Expenditures

Classroom	\$ 91,208,452
Transportation	\$ 5,439,178
School Support	\$ 10,735,049
Accommodations	\$ 19,360,885
Administration	\$ 4,399,455
Total	\$131,143,019

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

When the 2020 pandemic was declared staff, students and families of the district were faced with new challenges. Not only was teaching and learning forced to pivot to a remote environment, but services of the Board, required to keep the district running, needed to navigate the uncharted landscape.

- **Communication Services** joined local Emergency Operation Committees and fostered community organization partnerships, including Boards of Health, to ensure that the district was represented and contributed to localized pandemic issues and solutions. Signage, physical distancing supports, and communications and videos for staff and families were created to provide information and a 'look inside our schools' prior to the September school start.
- **Facilities Services** worked to secure the district's schools and administration buildings, ensuring that essential services were maintained and that our sites continued to be safe, clean, and accessible. Enhanced cleaning protocols were reviewed and implemented. The team ensured, through work with Procurement Services, that appropriate cleaning products and tools were available, and that staff were trained in their use to support the safe return of staff and students in September 2020.
- **Financial Services** ensured essential services continued to run, such as payables and payroll, and processed an increased level of documentation for new employees hired to support the District's increased staffing levels.
- **Human Resource Services** worked to ensure proper staffing levels for both remote and in-person learning through continuous recruitment activity and created and facilitated an effective process for managing the many instances of COVID-19 related absences. Health and Safety worked to identify measures and controls for the protection of staff ensuring adherence to legislative requirements.
- **Information Technology Services** worked with district staff to provide devices and technical support for remote learning. ITS supported families by configuring and distributing over 1000 mobile devices for students to use for virtual learning, extending support hours until 8:00 p.m. daily, and provided mobile hotspots to those with no/limited internet access.
- **Procurement Services** assisted in the identification and supply of needs in all BHN locations to ensure a safe return for staff and students in respect to Personal Protective Equipment and passive screening. Provincially approved items were identified, and the supply chain secured to ensure that district staff were properly protected.