

2015–2016 Budget

Chair's Remarks

It is my pleasure to present this **2015–2016 Budget** to the Board of Trustees for approval.

My thanks go out to all members of the budget team who helped to prepare this budget. I believe that it supports the goals of our faith-based Board for excellence in education while aligning with the Ministry of Education's focus on academic achievement and revenue reduction.

There are several highlights that I would like to mention. First, I am proud of how our schools across the Board are committed to social justice. As you know, the coming school year has been declared the Holy Year of Mercy by His Holiness, Pope Francis. Our Board will continue to support several school fundraising activities for the poor and disadvantaged within our local community and beyond, following in the path of Jesus. Our budget also includes investment in a new elementary religious education program produced by Pearson Canada in collaboration with Ontario's bishops, entitled Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ.

Our budget also continues our commitment to support special education as well as programs for at-risk students and aboriginal education, job-embedded student learning, physical education and outdoor education, as well as early childhood education. We continue to fund a full-time teacher for First Nation, Métis and Inuit studies, as well as supporting physical activity and the outdoor program at Shaw Woods Outdoor Education Centre.

I would like to mention that our Early Years Kindergarten program is fully operational across the Board.

There are several capital projects in our budget for building expansions or upgrades, such as new classrooms, two new daycare facilities, as well as implementing a Board-wide wireless internet and purchasing classroom technology. We want to ensure that we can provide the necessary tools for our students to keep abreast of the latest and best in 21st-century learning. Four new classrooms at St. Francis of Assisi will open this fall while we are reorganizing space at St. Andrew's in Killaloe to better serve students and staff.

I have touched on only some of the projects that we are supporting in our budget for 2015–2016.

But I want to add that we greatly appreciate the support from our school communities, particularly from our parents and the Parent Involvement Committee. As trustees, we are charged with ensuring that our students can learn and grow in a safe, respectful environment that encourages innovation, generosity of spirit and achievement.

With this budget, I believe that we can meet our responsibilities.

I therefore ask my fellow trustees to approve this budget as submitted.

Thank you.