



Excellence | Equity | New Evangelization

Together for Hope

2017 – 2020



DURHAM CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
Catholic Education: Learning and Living in Faith



Our Mission

We are called to celebrate and nurture the God-given talents of each student as we serve with excellence in the light of Christ.

Our Vision

Each student in our Catholic learning community embodies excellence and equity by embracing the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations — to be:

- a discerning believer;
- a collaborative contributor;
- a self-directed, responsible lifelong learner;
- a responsible citizen.
- a reflective, creative and holistic thinker;
- an effective communicator;
- a caring family member; and

Our Catholic Values

By living these values with an open mind and a faithful heart we bear witness to these words:

“You are the hope of the Church and of the world. You are my hope.” – Saint John Paul II

As a Catholic Learning Community, we value:

Faith, evangelizing ourselves and others through scripture, sacrament, prayer and action in service with the home, school and parish.

Hope, giving witness to the belief that we can become who we are called to be.

Love, being present to others with care, compassion, solidarity, community and joy.

Peace, creating opportunities for contemplation, spirituality, reconciliation and forgiveness.

Wisdom, listening and responding to the Holy Spirit.

Inclusion, ensuring a sense of belonging by promoting the dignity and worth of each human life.

Excellence, building on God’s grace to achieve our earthly and eternal vocations.

Creativity, celebrating diverse and innovative expressions of God’s gifts.

Service, seeking out and responding to local and global needs with prudence, fortitude, humility and charity.

Stewardship, shepherding God’s creation and resources for the common good.

Responsibility, demonstrating accountability and fidelity in our thoughts, words and deeds.

Justice, acting and serving with integrity in communion with the Gospel and teachings of Jesus.

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"Jesus taught his disciples to pray by asking the Heavenly Father not for "my" but for "our" daily bread. Thus, he desired every person to feel co-responsible for his brothers so that no one would want for what he needs in order to live. The earth's produce forms a gift which God has destined "for the entire human family." – Pope Benedict XVI



A message from the Director of Education

The Durham Catholic District School Board is committed to Achieving Excellence: A Renewed Vision for Education in Ontario that includes the goal of ensuring equity for all students. As part of our broader *Together for All Equity Action Plan, Together for Hope* was developed to support students and their families who may be impacted by poverty. Through this plan, we will engage with all students, their families and all of our stakeholders to ensure that each and every student has equitable access to rich learning experiences.

Our mission, vision and Catholic values speak directly to our philosophy of inclusion, where all students can succeed using their God-given gifts and talents. In alignment with our Board's *Discovery 2020 Strategic Plan* and our *Student Well-Being and Achievement Board Improvement Plan, Together for Hope* directly calls us to stand in solidarity with those most in need throughout our school communities. In these pages, I am pleased to share *Together for Hope*, our Poverty Action Plan that has been developed in partnership with our Catholic communities and partners with a clear focus on our strategic priorities and actions that will support students who are impacted by poverty.

Yours in Catholic Education,
Anne O'Brien
Director of Education

GOAL:

ENSURING EQUITY

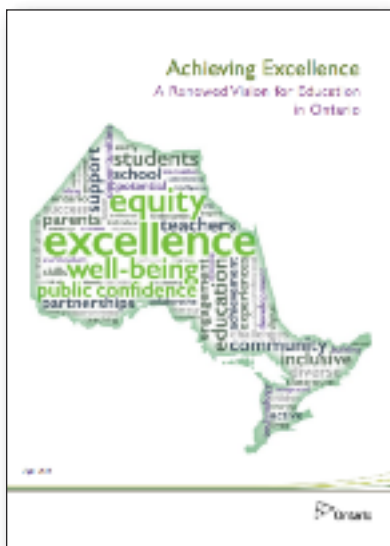
Ontario's diversity is one of the province's greatest assets. Embracing this diversity and moving beyond tolerance and celebration to inclusivity and respect will help us reach our goal of making Ontario's education system the most equitable in the world. Everyone in our publicly funded education system — regardless of background or personal circumstances — must feel engaged and included.

Ontario schools need to be places where everyone can succeed in a culture of high expectations. They need to be places where educators and students value diversity, respect each other, and see themselves reflected in their learning. It is particularly important to provide the best possible learning opportunities and supports for students who may be at risk of not succeeding. This often includes, but is not limited to, some of our Aboriginal students, children and youth in care, children and students with special education needs, recent immigrants and children from families experiencing poverty.

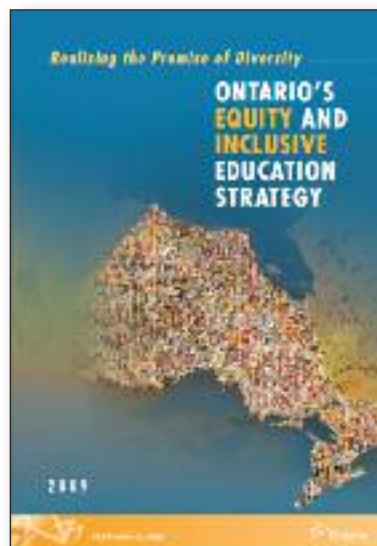
Ontario Ministry of Education. 2014. *Achieving Excellence: A Renewed Vision for Education in Ontario*, p. 8. <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/about/equity.html> (December 13, 2017)



"We want schools...where students will feel free to dream about their futures, where they are able to connect their passions with possible career options, and where the opportunities and resources needed to support these decisions are provided." – Minister's Student Advisory Council Representatives



www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/about/renewedVision.pdf



www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/equity.pdf



www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/about/education_equity_plan_en.pdf

"Hope is the belief that destiny will not be written for us, but by us, by the men and women who are not content to settle for the world as it is, who have the courage to remake the world as it should be." – Merrill Matthews

Making a commitment to accessible opportunities for family engagement and involvement in the school.

Strengthening relationships with students and their families.

KEY MESSAGES

Working together, we can create optimal conditions for learning by:

Challenging students with high expectations, by providing them with daily feedback to show them that their effort matters, and by having a growth mindset about academic achievement.

Knowing our students and their families and including their voices within the classroom to make learning relevant.

STRATEGIC GOALS

Strategic Priority 1: Honouring Voice

Goals

- To intentionally include the voices of those who have been impacted by poverty in the development and implementation of the Together for Hope Action Plan.
- To actively seek out and provide opportunities for students and families impacted by poverty to give input on how the school can best support them.
- To review board policies and procedures to ensure equitable opportunities for students impacted by poverty.

Strategic Priority 2: Building Capacity

Goals

- To raise awareness and understanding about the impacts of poverty on student well-being and achievement.
- To provide professional development opportunities centered on reframing behaviour and using evidence-based strategies to support student success.
- To promote and support a growth mindset and asset orientation in all staff so that students impacted by poverty benefit from equitable opportunities for learning and achievement.

Strategic Priority 3: Engaging Family and Community

Goals

- To nurture and enhance our partnerships with parents/guardians and families to support their children's well-being and achievement.
- To extend partnerships within our communities to provide diverse opportunities for community engagement.
- To increase parent engagement by providing differentiated opportunities for participation in school-related activities.





STRATEGIC ACTIONS (YEAR 1)

Strategic Priority 1: Honouring Voice

Actions

- Promote our calling as Catholics to live out the Gospel values and strive to model the Catholic Graduate Expectations through our daily actions of service.
- Develop surveys to seek input from our students, parents, guardians and staff.
- Encourage informal conversations with students and families to gather information.
- Create a Together for Hope sub-committee to review policies and procedures with an equity lens.

Strategic Priority 2: Building Capacity

Actions

- Provide professional learning on the Social Determinants of Health, Health Neighbourhoods and Neighbourhood Profiles.
- Provide training and professional development opportunities to all employees.
- Implement diverse opportunities for student and family engagement.
- Pilot program for trauma-informed teaching practices in selected schools.

Strategic Priority 3: Engaging Family and Community

Actions

- Review current partnerships across the system that provide after-school opportunities for students impacted by poverty.
- Determine gaps and areas where after-school opportunities for students impacted by poverty can be enhanced.
- Tailor school events, activities and supports offered to meet the needs of the community.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The *Together for Hope Action Plan 2017* was developed in consultation with a diverse Steering Committee, including representation from Durham Catholic District School Board staff (system leaders, school-based staff, and Student Services personnel), parents/guardians and community partners.

The Durham Catholic District School Board would like to thank our community partners for their voice and support of our *Together for Hope Action Plan*:

- Boys and Girls Club of Durham
- Carea
- Catholic Family Services Durham
- City of Oshawa
- Durham Public Health
- Ontario Elementary Catholic Teachers Association (OECTA)
- Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF)
- Settlement Workers in Schools
- Social Services Durham
- The Rose of Durham
- United Way
- YMCA





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"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has chosen me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind; to set free the oppressed and announce that the time has come when the Lord will save his people." (Luke 4:18-19)