

**Chair Valentinis  
Inaugural Remarks  
December 4, 2018**

Good Evening Everyone

To those Trustees re-elected, congratulations and welcome back. To the newly elected Trustees, Kim Bouchard, Mary Heath and Tony Polifroni congratulations and welcome to the Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board.

Each school day we welcome over 13,000 students to our 35 elementary schools and almost 7000 students to our 9 secondary schools.

Parents entrust, into our care, their most treasured possessions; their children, over 20,000 each and every school day.

Our Mission Statement states:

*In keeping with the virtues of our Catholic faith we are called to know every student. To inspire them to follow the example of Jesus and to empower them with the knowledge and skills they need to live purposeful, meaningful lives.*

This is what we do and why we are here. And we do this by creating an inclusive, accepting, faith filled environment where each student has the opportunity to shine.

But we do not do this alone...

Our school board family includes 1200 teaching staff, 300+ educational assistants and 569 support staff, a total of 2070 staff members. This is our family.

The province through the Ministry of Education sets out the mandate of school boards:

1. Promote student achievement and well being  
Our student achievement results on provincial testing placed us in the upper tier of academic performance among school boards in the province.
2. Deliver effective and appropriate education programs for students  
Our innovative programs such as our STEM academies, together with our International Baccalaureate Programs are all examples of our commitment to offer appropriate educational choices for our students.
3. Provide effective stewardship of board resources.  
As a board we oversee an operating budget of \$260M and a capital budget of \$16M. Through the employment of good discipline over the last few years the Board's financial house is in order and we now have an accumulated surplus.

This is an exciting time for our board. Increasing enrolment, increasing innovative and diverse programming, and a high level of academic achievement.

As a board, it is important that we are disciplined, that we are focused and that we are united in our goals.

There is work to be done:

- A new high school to be built as a replacement for Catholic Central;
- Upgrading some of our older existing schools;
- Expanding our programming to meet ever changing needs of society; and
- Ensuring the growth of our faith based education.

I want to thank you for your support and the trust you have placed in me by electing me as your Chair. I am committed to working collaboratively with you as we move forward to meet the challenges ahead. If we, as a board succeed, our students succeed. If we as a board succeed, our 2000 employees and their families succeed, with your help we will succeed.

***"Learning together in faith and service"***