

Next Steps

Catholic school councils are an important part of this discussion process as parents, students, teachers, principals, school staff, parish and community members who make up our Catholic schools councils represent groups most personally and closely involved in the enterprise of Catholic education.

Other interested groups within the Catholic community, such as parish councils, youth groups and Catholic organizations such as the Catholic Women's League or the Knights of Columbus, will also be invited to participate in discussions as part of the forum.

The input from discussions held between November 2006 to March 2007 will be collected and collated through the local Catholic school board for each community. That information will then be summarized into a local board overview that can be sent to the Institute for Catholic Education (ICE).

ICE will use the information from school boards to prepare a provincial report for the province that will form the basis for clear messages about Catholic education and its future. Increasing knowledge and understanding about Catholic education and its distinctiveness will help to strengthen support for our schools.

Articulating our Hopes

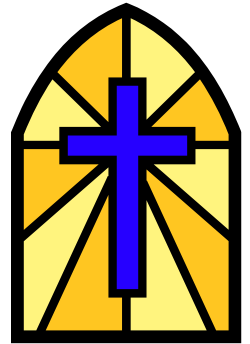
Our Catholic schools belong to all of us who value and support an education for our young people which teaches them about life and its meaning from within the context of our Catholic faith.

Although many of us have been involved in Catholic schools for a long time, we may not have had the opportunity to examine and articulate exactly what it is that we hope for their future. ***Our Catholic Schools 2006-07 : A Discussion on Ontario's Catholic Schools and Their Future***—provides such and opportunity.

To be a part of this important initiative, please call your local Catholic school board or the Institute for Catholic Education (see below). If you need contact information for your local school board please call the Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association at (416) 932-9460 or visit the Association's website to view contact information for all of Ontario's English Catholic school boards—www.ocsta.on.ca.

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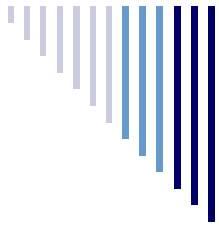
Our Catholic Schools 2006-07



A Discussion on Ontario's Catholic Schools & Their Future

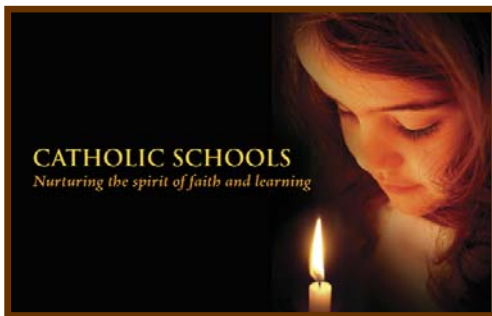


Institute for Catholic Education



You are Invited to Join a Discussion About Ontario's Catholic Schools

For more than 150 years Catholic schools have enriched communities through the education of students rooted in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Under the auspices of the Institute for Catholic Education, Ontario's Catholic education partners—**Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops, Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association, Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association, The Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario, Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers' Association, Ontario Catholic School Business Officials' Association, and the Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education**—have come together to sponsor an initiative that will ask the Catholic community to think about and to discuss the meaning and value of Catholic education and important considerations for the future of Catholic education in this province.



Increasing Understanding about Our Catholic Schools

Ontario has four distinct and equal education systems—*English Catholic, English public, French Catholic and French public*. Each of these systems has a unique mandate.

Within this framework it becomes increasingly important for Ontario's Catholic schools to offer a truly distinctive form of education, one rooted in the person of Jesus Christ, the message of his Gospel and the traditions of the Catholic Church.

It is important for Catholic schools not only to be different in fact but to be seen and known to be different.

We must speak to and educate others about what Catholic education is, and what it contributes in our communities.

Our Catholic Schools 2006-07: A Discussion on Ontario's Catholic Schools & Their Future is a forum for discussion about the distinctiveness, the value and the future of Catholic education. Over the next several months, many different groups from Ontario's Catholic community will use the ***Our Catholic Schools*** discussion kit to facilitate dialogue about Catholic Schools.

Increasing Support through Discussion and Awareness

This initiative is part of an awareness and engagement strategy undertaken by the Institute for Catholic Education to deepen and broaden the level of support for our Catholic schools. Increasing awareness of what Catholic schools are really all about, and what they contribute to our society is the first step in achieving that broader support.

The Discussion itself has two purposes. First, it provides a structured opportunity for conversation about the essence and value of Ontario's Catholic schools, the challenges they face, and our hopes for their future. Second, the dialogue sparked by the Discussion will generate messages about Catholic education which can later be shared with the broader community.

