



## Strategic Directions



Welcome to the third edition of Strategic Directions for the 2018-19 school year. Of all our board’s strategic directions, Governance is perhaps the most elusive or distant for most of us, focused as it is on reviewing policies, balancing budgets, aligning resources with priorities, and completing **capital projects**. That said, this year just might be the exception to the rule. Why is that?

**Trustee Elections** – Last October, we went to the polls to elect our Catholic school **board trustees** to a four-year term of office. Our board is blessed to have ten very dedicated trustees to guide it, two of whom are new to us. We warmly welcome Trustees Debbie Mayer and Joe Ruscio to our board, and we celebrate the return of Trustees John Caputo, Leslie Cassidy-Amadio, Tony D’Agostino, Lindsay Liske, Carol MacEachern, Kathleen Rosilius, Gary Trembinski, and Sandra Turco.

The role of school board trustee is both complex and often misunderstood. Imagine making key decisions about our board’s finances, policies, and strategic plan, and yet not being embroiled in its day-to-day operations. Imagine being responsible, not only for our board, but also for the future of Catholic education. Imagine facing a future of challenging uncertainties and yet knowing, as some of us learned recently from **Dr. Mark McGowan**, that Ontario’s Catholic school system is legally established, publicly funded, and constitutionally protected. Our trustees, the ones you supported in our last election, are expected to ensure the continuation of the system in which we all work. What an awesome privilege! What a formidable responsibility!

I encourage you all to make our trustees feel included and welcome in your school environments, particularly those new to their role and especially during special celebrations, such as liturgies, graduations, and Christmas concerts.

**Balancing Budgets and Aligning Resources with Priorities** – The mid-point of the school year often prompts us to reflect both on what has happened so far this year, and also on what might be coming in the future. Access the news with any kind of regularity, and you will hear stories focused on fiscal restraint and responsibility. If you have been working in education for just a little over a decade or less, then this kind of messaging may be new to you.

It can be unnerving to hear stories or rumours and wonder if or how they will apply to you. In the midst of this uncertainty, I urge you all to remember that our board’s **Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP)** has not one direction in it but five. Ultimately, we are called to collaborate to ensure that all of the directions – which include, yes, Governance, but also Catholicity, Supportive Environments and Well-Being, Relationships, and Student Achievement – are balanced and honoured to the best of our ability.

Every spring, our board receives information about funding amounts for the following year. While I remain hopeful that the news will be positive, if by chance it is not, we will need to remember that we have a choice about how we support and relate to one another through lean times. Some of the most poignant memories of my career were forged in times of significant fiscal restraint. While I wouldn’t necessarily want to repeat any of these experiences, I also wouldn’t trade what I learned from them, the faith I developed, or the solid friendships I made while working shoulder to shoulder with colleagues and families in those less than perfect situations.

Should we indeed find ourselves in times of fiscal restraint this spring or beyond, let us remember to keep our faith and walk with each other as best as we possibly can.

God bless,

Rose Burton Spohn  
Director of Education

### Quoi de neuf!



### What's New!



### Minwajimo!



Click on the coloured text in the Director's message or any image to see the story behind the link.