



ST. CLAIR CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
Lighting the Way – Rejoicing in Our Journey

MEDIA RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, December 8, 2015

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BOARD OF TRUSTEES RATIFIES CUPE, OECTA AND EWAO TENTATIVE AGREEMENTS AT TONIGHT'S MEETING

Several tentative agreements negotiated in recent weeks with unions and associations representing St. Clair Catholic teachers and support staff, were ratified at tonight's meeting of the Board of Trustees. Education sector contracts with employee groups require a two-tier bargaining process, with provincial agreements followed by local agreements.

Trustees have voted to accept local tentative agreements with CUPE Local 4168; the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA) – Elementary; and OECTA – Secondary. In addition, Trustees ratified the provincial agreement with the Education Workers' Alliance of Ontario (EWAO), which represents St. Clair Catholic professional support workers.

"We are very pleased to be nearing the end of what has been a very lengthy process," says Dan Parr, Director of Education. "Because of our strong partnership with our union and association leaders, we have been able to successfully negotiate these local agreements."

"We greatly value the excellent working relationship we have with all of our employee groups in St. Clair Catholic," says Carol Bryden, Chair of the Board. "Congratulations to the union leadership and to our senior administration for bringing these negotiations to a successful conclusion."

Some contracts, which have now been ratified by the Board of Trustees, still require approval by the membership.

Local negotiations with the final two employee groups, EWAO and OECTA – Occasional are expected to get underway soon.



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JOHN VAN HECK ACCLAIMED CHAIR OF THE BOARD; MICHELLE PARKS ACCLAIMED VICE CHAIR

At tonight's Initial Meeting of the Board of Trustees, John Van Heck was acclaimed to the position of Chair of the St. Clair Catholic District School Board. Trustee Michelle Parks was acclaimed Vice Chair, a position she had previously held for the past year.

Mr. Van Heck is a former Vice Chair of the Board and has been a trustee since 2006. In accepting the office of Chair for the first time, he thanked his fellow trustees for the privilege of serving the Board in this new capacity. He also paid tribute to out-going Chair, Carol Bryden.

"Carol has served our Board with distinction. She has been a strong Catholic leader, not only within St. Clair, but across the province," said Mr. Van Heck.

In his address to the Board, Mr. Van Heck stressed the importance of maintaining a school system with a strong Catholic faith component.

"I want our faith, a real Catholic faith, to shine through all that we do. That is what makes our school system unique and it is why I am a Catholic trustee," he said.

Michelle Parks was first elected as a Catholic trustee ten years ago. In her remarks to the Board tonight, she pledged to continue to work with her fellow trustees and senior administration to always put the best interests of the students first.

"I know that student achievement and wellbeing will always be our first priority, as we meet our mission objectives of living our faith; promoting educational achievement and innovation; and fostering stewardship, leadership and social justice," said Mrs. Parks.

Elections for the positions of Chair and Vice Chair are held annually at the Board's December meeting. The term of office for both positions expires at the end of November 2016.

The evening began with Mass, which was celebrated in the chapel of the Ursuline Boardroom. Father Dan Vere was celebrant, assisted by Board Chaplain, Deacon Jerry Lozon. A blessing of the newly refurbished Catholic Education Centre followed Mass.



NEWSRelease

Tuesday, December 8, 2015

ST. CLAIR CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD AND BLUEWATER HEALTH WORK TO FINALIZE AGREEMENT ON SALE OF FORMER ST. PATRICK'S PROPERTY

The St. Clair Catholic District School Board and Bluewater Health are finalizing an agreement that would result in the sale of the former St. Patrick's Catholic High School property to the hospital. Discussions regarding the East Street property are on-going; however, officials from both the school board and the hospital are optimistic an announcement is not far off.

"We have a long-standing working relationship with members of the Bluewater Health senior administration," says Jim McKenzie, Associate Director and Treasurer of the St. Clair Catholic District School Board. "We believe the sale of the property to the hospital is in the best interests of the community; and will greatly assist their organization in its long-term planning, regarding future growth and development."

"We are pleased to be nearing completion of a sale agreement that will be a win-win for the Sarnia community," says Mike Lapaine, Vice President of Operations and Chief Operating Officer for Bluewater Health. "Our ownership of this property is vital to the future of Bluewater Health and will also secure the agreements we currently have in place with community organizations to preserve track for the next several years."

At tonight's Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees for St. Clair Catholic, a demolition contract was awarded to Schouten Excavating Inc. of Watford, at a cost of \$449,000. It is expected the work to demolish the vacant school building and remove the debris will begin as soon as possible and be completed by May 31, 2016.

The East Street site was closed on June 30, 2014. The Board approved the disposition of the property in January 2015, in accordance with Ontario Regulation 444/98; and on November 4, 2015, the Ministry of Education confirmed the Board had met the requirements of the regulation, which allowed it to enter into discussions with Bluewater Health, regarding the sale of the property.

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