

**APSSP  
Dufferin Peel Catholic Chapter  
Budget Input**

**May 2010**

APSSP appreciates the opportunity to provide information to the Trustees as they deliberate on Budget decisions for the up-coming academic year.

As you are aware APSSP represents over 200 of our colleagues in school psychology, child and youth work, speech and language pathology, and social work. Provincially our union represents the majority of unionized professional student service staff in Catholic Boards.

We are aware that this is an election year and understand that for any variety of reasons some of our Trustees may not longer be serving in the next budget year. Should you be taking your leave or continue to serve APSSP would like to thank you for the tireless hours you commit to serve our students and the cause of Catholic Education.

Our Board's commitment to professional student service staff represents a significant part of our goal of ensuring that every student who enters our Catholic schools will have an opportunity to succeed in their education program despite the challenges they may bring with them to the school door. The decisions you make at budget time do make a difference for our students. The increase in numbers for school psychology, child and youth work, speech and language, and social work staff this past year has meant that more students and their families have been able to access service and waiting lists have come down. While we know that we will always be challenged to respond to all the needs we face.... our on-going commitment to 'go the extra mile' to support our students who struggle with emotional challenges, learning disabilities, poverty, and speech difficulties helps define Catholic Education.

APSSP was pleased to hear that the Ministry of Education will fulfill its commitment to fund the third year of the Urban High School Grant. Both St Thomas Aquinas and St Edmund Campion have made use of this grant to provide a number of additional programs to support their students. A portion of these funds were used to add some psychology, child and youth work, and social work staffing. No doubt you will be receiving some feedback on the creative and positive work that is occurring in those two schools as a result of the additional funding. APSSP would encourage the Board to ensure that the additional professional student service staff will continue from the grant money available in the up-coming year.

In earlier years Dufferin Peel Catholic Board had a well deserved reputation as a leader in the provision of Special Education Services. The trustees and senior managers made early investments in putting supports in place (including provision of professional student service staff) to assist our students. A focus in more recent years is the concern that students are being impacted by the failure to deal with mental health issues. In the past

few years the Ministry of Education has been working to encourage schools to have the appropriate supports in place to address student mental health and to work more closely with our community based partners. Just like the early leadership in special education the focus on student mental health may be a place where our present trustees and senior managers can take a lead in the Province. APSSP understands that two of our own staff, the Chief Psychologist, Debra Lean, and one of our social workers, Vince Colucci have completed a soon to be released publication that may provide a road map for schools in the province who would like to take the lead in this area. In the preface to this publication 'Barriers to Learning: The Case for Integrated Mental Health Services in Schools' Michael Fullan states that the book is, "...a critical, powerful, and timely contribution to making school systems effective for all children". APSSP would encourage the Board to pay attention to this upcoming publication and consider allocating appropriate resources to move forward in this area.

Thank you for taking the time to read this report.

Dan Milne  
President  
Dufferin Peel Catholic Chapter  
APSSP