

Acceptance Speech – Chair of the Board, Carol Luciani

Good evening, colleagues, staff, families, and members of our Catholic community.

I am deeply honoured to accept the role of Chair of the Board. Thank you for the trust you have placed in me. Serving alongside each of you as pilgrims of hope on a journey supporting Catholic education is a privilege that I never take for granted.

I would also like to extend heartfelt congratulations to Trustee Bill Chopp on his election tonight. Bill, your commitment to Catholic education has long been evident, and I look forward to continuing our shared work in a spirit of unity and purpose.

As we gather during the Advent season; a time of preparation, hope, and joyful expectation, we are reminded that leadership in Catholic education is, at its core, a ministry of service.

As we begin this new chapter together, we do so with clarity of vision and a renewed commitment to the students we serve. Our focus remains steadfast: fostering belonging, advancing teaching and learning, and promoting wellness for every student and staff member in our care. These are not independent goals; they are interconnected pillars that uphold the success and flourishing of our school communities.

Over the past year, our Board has listened attentively. Catholic education is a partnership: “home, school, and parish” working together for the good of our students. Tonight, I want to thank our parents and guardians for their steadfast support, our educators and support staff for their daily faithfulness, and our students for their courage, curiosity, and leadership.

This past year we were privileged to be able to engage our Regional Catholic Parent Involvement Committee to ensure parent voice remains central in decision-making. Internally, we executed a district-wide, wellness-focused consultation process that gave staff an opportunity to share openly and honestly. Their insights helped shape a comprehensive plan that reflects what is meaningful to those who lead learning every day.

The Board has undergone a year of thoughtful reflection and a structured refocus on financial stewardship as it relates to students and classrooms. That work has strengthened us. We move forward reaffirming our commitment to transparency, good stewardship of resources, and, above all, to our students.

We commit to maintaining rigorous financial controls and transparency about how resource allocations directly support classroom instruction, special education, student

mental health, and safe learning environments. Our commitment is straightforward: “every dollar must serve students”. Accountability is how we honor the trust placed in us; transparency is how we keep that trust.

What an exciting year it has been for student success. We have invested significantly in enhanced system supports to accelerate achievement across all schools. We celebrated the opening of a brand-new Catholic elementary school, with three more, including a new Catholic secondary school, already in consultation or construction...but buildings alone do not define our success. We will continue strengthening curriculum supports and assessment practices; investing in inclusive classrooms and assistive technology; and ensuring that students with diverse learning needs experience high expectations and high support.

Our recent EQAO results show encouraging progress, and we have identified areas where continued improvement is both necessary and achievable. Our students are capable of incredible things, and we will continue to support them in realizing their God-given potential.

To our educators, school and board staff, parish partners, families, and especially our students: thank you. Your resilience, your collaboration, and your unwavering dedication inspire us to lead with purpose and faith. I would like to thank our Senior Leadership Team for ensuring that our commitment to students is evident across the district. Strong leadership is key to this success.

As we begin this year’s work, I look forward to strengthening our relationships, empowering student voice, and ensuring every decision we make continues to reflect who we are as a Catholic school district; rooted in faith, guided by compassion, and striving for excellence in learning while living in Christ.

Thank you once again for this honour. I am truly blessed to serve as your Chair, and I look forward to what we will accomplish together.

God bless.