



# InTouch

## Celebrating Advent



*Kyle LeCompte and Tanner Giffin*

To mark the first week of Advent, students from St. Pat's Life Skills class teamed up with Grade 10 Drama students to lead a special prayer service focused on the Jesse tree ~ "A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots." (Isaiah 11:1) The students paired up to trim the tree with ornaments that recalled biblical events and people, from Adam to Mary, leading up to the birth of Jesus. The students worked beautifully with each other to create a prayerful and moving service.

## Exploring Options for Technology

At the end of November, Paul Mackett, Chris Hanley and Rob Murphy travelled to Calgary to observe Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) in action. The team visited three schools where students and teachers were working successfully in a technology environment that allowed for all manner of cell phones, tablets and laptops. The visit was part of a board plan to investigate successful technology practices in other school systems. A board-level Technology Committee began meeting this week to consider the changing pedagogical practices and exciting innovations in technology that will be using to enhance student learning.



*Elaine Hine and Denis Maika*

## The Changing Role of the Principal and Teacher

December 6 brought our good friends and mentors Denis Maika and Elaine Hine back to the board to work with Principals, Vice-Principals and program staff. The dynamic pair challenged our group, asking if we were preparing our Kindergarten students for 1991 or for the knowledge-based and globally interconnected world of 2026. They led discussions on the role of technology and the effects of globalization on education. They talked about the innovations that teachers make each day in our board, and how this good work should be shared, celebrated and adapted to meet the needs of all our students.



Faith Ambassadors Patrick McWhirter, Rosanne Chlebovic and Teri Anderson

### Celebrating the Year of Faith

Faith Ambassadors from every school joined Principals, Vice-Principals, Senior Team and Trustees for a special Christmas celebration with Bishop Colli, who spoke on the Year of Faith. Pope Benedict XVI has declared a Year of Faith from October 2012 through November 2013. During the year, Catholics are asked to study and reflect on the catechism in order to deepen their knowledge of the faith. Bishop Colli presented the group a list of 10 simple but meaningful activities to pursue during this Year of Faith. Watch for the list on our board website.



### Promoting Healthy Communities

At the December CPIC meeting, special guests Margaret Good (from OPHEA ~ Ontario Physical & Health Education Association) and Jacquie Strachan (from People for Education) gave a lively and engaging presentation on Healthy School Communities. More than 40 parents, teachers and principals from our Catholic School Councils attended the session, which explored why schools are an ideal place for improving kids' health. Each school was challenged to take one new step toward a healthier school this year. Working together with parents, school staff and the broader community, healthy school communities can become a reality!



From left, Rob DeGagne Eleanor Ashe, Bob Hupka, Phil Pelletier, Tony Romeo, Kathy O'Brien and Don Cattani.

### Recent Election Results

Familiar names will head up the Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board again this year. Bob Hupka and Tony Romeo were acclaimed by their peers as Chair and Vice-Chair respectively. Chair Hupka is the longest serving Board member with more than 14 years as a trustee, six of these as Chair. Trustee Romeo begins his seventh year as Vice-Chair. Trustees Eleanor Ashe, Don Cattani, Rob DeGagne, Kathy O'Brien and Phil Pelletier will all serve on various board committees.



### Checking the Climate

During the month of November, students in grades 4-12, all staff, and many parents completed School Climate surveys. The surveys were designed to help schools assess perceptions of safety; identify the need for programs to prevent bullying; and sustain a positive school atmosphere. Notable trends were recently shared with Senior Team and with Trustees. Individual school results will be used to inform school-level Bullying Intervention and Prevention Plans and ensure a safe and caring atmosphere for every child.

### St. Pat's Grad President of SHIFT

Nathan Lawrence is a St. Patrick graduate who is continuing to give back to his community. With a business degree from Lakehead U, Nathan works as a Mortgage and Lease Agent for Dominion Lending Centres. He has served as a Director on the Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce and is now playing a leading role in the growth of SHIFT – Thunder Bay's Young Professionals Network (YPN). As the current president, Nathan serves as a leader and mentor, and he is committed to developing a voice for young professionals in Thunder Bay.



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## Merry Christmas from Your Senior Team

