



InTouch

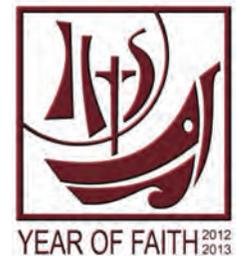
Closing the Gap for Aboriginal Students

With a focus on improving the academic achievement of our Aboriginal students, Superintendent Omer Belisle recently told Trustees about the various strategies we have in place. “We’ve developed a number of partnerships with the Aboriginal community and we’re working with staff to reduce gaps in performance,” he said. Aboriginal Resource Teacher Tesa Fiddler is currently working with Dr. Lisa Korteweg from Lakehead University to deliver teacher training related to Aboriginal student learning. “We start with a historical context to give teachers a better understanding of where our Aboriginal students come from,” said Mrs. Fiddler.



Celebrating Our Year of Faith

The Board of Trustees has agreed to establish an ad hoc committee to develop and implement a Year of Faith activity that will involve our parent community. The committee will begin its work in April and will conclude with a report to the Board in November. The committee will include parents, Father Ciaran Donnelly and our two Catholic Student Trustees as well as a Faith Ambassador, Chaplain and Principal. Trustee Ashe will chair the committee and Board Chair Hupka will serve as an ex-officio member.



Unique Approach to A Math Problem

Responding to recent achievement data pointing to some inconsistencies in the teaching of mathematics in Grades 6 through 9, a team of teachers from the four grades has been established.



“We think a cross-panel group will get to the heart of things,” Superintendent Pino Tassone told Trustees. The team’s purpose is to establish a consistent approach to teaching mathematics from elementary to secondary school. The group has looked at two key areas: proportional reasoning and algebraic thought, with students in all four grades tackling the same two questions. Secondary math teachers recently visited Grade 6 classes and were impressed with the determination of the younger learners and the strategies the teachers were using.

Here's a Grad Who's Cooking!

Hayden Johnston remembers first thinking about culinary studies when he attended St. Ignatius. After graduating in 2007, he studied at PEI's Culinary Institute of Canada. His cooking skills have helped him see the world, including placements as an intern in Tuscany, Italy. He spent three months sailing around the South Atlantic and Antarctica on an expedition yacht, prepping, cutting, and cooking on uneasy waters. His next move was to the Niagara area where he worked at Treadwell Farm to Table Cuisine, one of Ontario's leading farm-to-table restaurants. After helping open 5 Forks here in Thunder Bay, he spent a month cooking in Melbourne, Australia. Hayden is currently working with *Top Chef Canada* winner, Carl Heinrich, at a very popular Toronto restaurant called *Richmond Station*. As noted in a glowing *Globe and Mail* review, "Mr. Heinrich is an excellent chef, and he's brought on an excellent crew". The crew includes Hayden Johnston as its saucier.



Making Our Schools Safer

In our ongoing efforts to promote safety at all sites, our custodians participated in specialized training sessions earlier this month. Secondary school custodians received "raised platform" training inside the new auditorium at St. Ignatius High School. Following that, all custodians were trained on "lock-out" procedures and Fire Safety Plans.



A Well-Deserved Surprise

The staff at Bishop Gallagher were surprised and touched to win a complimentary lunch with local celebrity DJs Danny and Laura from the CKPR morning radio show. The school was chosen following a letter from teacher candidate Kristen Lento. She wrote, "I recently completed a placement at Bishop Gallagher with Mrs. Diana Perrier, a wonderful grade 8 teacher with remarkable professionalism, unwavering dedication, and the patience of a saint. The lessons I learned while at Bishop Gallagher reach far beyond the realm of the classroom. Among them were the importance of compassion, tolerance, acceptance and hard work. The people responsible for the education of our children are undoubtedly the most committed individuals deserving all of our respect and gratitude. Please consider this devoted team for your weekly luncheon." Congratulations to Mrs. Perrier, the BG staff, and to every teacher who lives up to this description!

