OUR
CATHOLIC
SCHOOLS
WHAT WE VALUE ABOUT CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

- our faith is a common framework from which we can act/make decisions
- freedom to practise our faith
- our gift and our challenge to be Church for our students
- bringing Gospel values and social justice issues into the curriculum, infuse values/faith
- interconnectedness of home, school, parish
- we are able to educate the whole person (care and concern)
- a freedom to discuss all faiths
- our faith supports us in times of crisis/need – we benefit from this common perspective
- community
- care/concern for the whole child
- celebration (liturgically and otherwise)
- Catholic Graduate Expectations
- the challenge to articulate who we are
- supportive, e.g. prayer
- freedom to keep kids connected to religion/spirituality

HOPES FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN THE FUTURE

- truly value/recognize the gift we have as Catholic educators and articulate our identity
- make it stronger through dialogue and effective, respectful partnerships – the home, school, parish connection
- our Catholic graduates truly will be the discerning, responsible citizens and will become our Catholic parents who live and embrace the Gospel values of our faith
- our Catholic priests and teachers can continue to work in partnership by supporting parents and students to live their faith and articulate their beliefs
- every day, every week must be Catholic Education Day and Catholic Education Week
- caring for the marginalized – being an example to others as Jesus would
- that it still exists!
- to continue to provide a sacred culture and a scared space
- that we can go on doing what we do, carrying on our mission
- that we can become more vocal about sharing our Good News, that we can get our message out there – Spread the Good News!
- that we can have policies that support our mission in building faith communities; i.e., policy not to register non-Catholic students in elementary panels.
MAJOR ISSUES FACING CATHOLIC EDUCATION

- the strength/balance of triad
- declining enrolment – admission of non-Catholics to elementary schools
  – open access in secondary schools creating schools with large non-Catholic population
  – Catholic students asking for religious exemptions
- accountability
- 7 partner groups – consistent message
- uncertainty in political arena
- loss of our Catholic story
- decline in numbers of those entering religious life
- closing/clustering of parishes and how this affects school communities – weakening the triad
- losing our Catholic identity from within due to apathy amongst staff; priorities within system (literacy, numeracy, etc.)
- stronger faith foundation for staff is essential to our future
- UN ruling regarding faith-based schools

HOW TO PRESERVE CATHOLIC EDUCATION FOR THE FUTURE

- the need to evangelize throughout our schools, especially in secondary schools
- use the media to evangelize
- need to strengthen ties between home, church and schools (more work on the triad)
- need to extend the role of “leader of the church” not only by the priests, but to lay persons, youth ministry, deacons, etc.
- need to educate parents and teachers of the importance of their role in Catholic education
- need to see strong evidence of catholicity in all we do (engrained in school)
- need another “Resurgence of Fear of Loss of Catholic Education” (crisis)
- continued open dialogue
- ICE to meet more often than every four years
- examine non-Catholic entry into elementary school policies
- continue education of catholicity to administration/teachers – not to forget Scott Act, Bill 30-BNA
- teachers and practise of faith, teachers who do “practise” but don’t witness/teacher/relate
- one school system.ca – become familiar with those advocating – *Enduring Gift*
  CD from Engaging Parents
- consistency of the associations that have a vested interest – locally, regionally, provincially
- continuous – social justice media, clearly establish difference in our minds between humanitarianism and catholicity
- presence of laity in schools/community
- ensure integrity of catholicity in our curriculum
WHAT TO TELL THE INSTITUTE FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION

- concern about Catholics in the system who have children outside the system and are complacent
- everyone in Ontario has a different level of understanding, we need a *Reader’s Digest* version of issues – united voice at the table
- some partners truly believe our rights are entrenched by BNA
- more staff in parishes to liaison with schools
- thank you for all the hard work ICE is doing for Catholic education
- Bishops have to take the lead and be our loudest voice of support
- bring the partners together to make a unified statement regarding faith-based support
- actively engage in the promotion of Catholic education (media, etc.)
- respond to the negative statements we see in the media regarding Catholic education
- support parents in promoting Catholic education