



Paul Lacalamita
President

Leading Our Catholic Schools

Welcome back from the summer holidays. Hopefully the time away from your leadership responsibilities has afforded you the opportunity to rest and re-charge the energy required to engage in your crucial role of Catholic school vice-principal or principal this year.

In August the CPCO executive council met in Toronto for its annual summer meeting. It took place over three days and included discussion and planning regarding topics such as succession planning and governance, principal job security, communication strategies and political action. New to the executive council this year is Glenn Miller, secondary councillor from the Bruce-Grey CDSB. Also returning to the executive council is Clara Pitoscia from the Dufferin-Peel CDSB, who in September commenced her new role at CPCO as deputy director. Clara will be mentored by Dan Tighe, our current interim executive director. We can all be very proud of and confident in the breadth and depth of talent and experience that this year's executive team brings to the provincial table.

The executive meeting also focused on the appointment of members to the CPCO standing committees for the upcoming year. We had an overwhelming response from members across the province applying for the opportunity to take part on these committees. These applications are a testament to your belief in CPCO and are truly a sign of a healthy organization; one that embraces and sustains our diversity. Thank you to all those who volunteered for this important work on behalf of their colleagues. More information about the committees will be communicated to you in one of our online September issues of *Catholic Principals' Connection*.

As Catholics, our Church calls for the evangelization of the world through our modeling and living the Gospel truths. The papal encyclical *Lumen Gentium* calls us to be the light of the world. To this end, the role of the Catholic school is to teach students how to contribute to society's transformation, from a predominantly secular society to one that upholds the values and sanctity of life and embodies the love and respect of humanness taught to us by our Creator through Jesus Christ. CPCO will continue to work with our Catholic community, promoting the recognition and importance of the awesome responsibility that is entrusted to principals and vice-principals in this province, assuming the sacred privileges and duties of leadership in a faith community.

The recent Provincial Discussion Table (PDT) agreements struck with the province, in all likelihood will ensure labour peace this

year. However, CPCO is encouraging local associations to continue the discussion with superintendents and directors about the ever-evolving role of the principal and the benefits of nurturing an interdependent partnership that reflects a tri-level model of effective decision-making and school leadership. I would encourage all CPCO members to review CPCO's position paper on the *Role of the Principal* located on the CPCO web site.

Of particular interest this year will be the submission of plans from all school boards to the Ministry of Education detailing their leadership succession plans. Provincially, there remains concern about the decreasing number of teachers interested in assuming principal positions. It has become obvious that teachers with leadership potential are reluctant to take on the added responsibilities of school leadership given the investment of time and finances required, as well as the lack of job security involved in leaving the teachers' unions. CPCO will continue in its important role as a valuable partner with Ontario's Catholic community in providing mentoring and coaching workshops and the Principal's Qualification Program, which serve to promote and sustain Ontario's Catholic school leaders. These programs promote the formation of school principals to act as lead learners and engage in aspects of the Catholic educational community that include experiencing, displaying, modeling and celebrating our faith.

It is a great honour to serve as your CPCO president this year. This summer's experience of leaving my school in Waterloo, moving to Toronto from Cambridge and working with the CPCO staff has reaffirmed my sense of pride and conviction in our organization.

As you deal with the multitude of challenges in preparing Catholic school graduates who will make a difference in our Ontario society, know that CPCO will continue advocating on your behalf.

As Thomas Sergiovanni says,

The leadership that counts, in the end, is the kind that touches people differently. It taps their emotions, appeals to their values, and responds to their connections with other people.

I wish you a blessed and successful school year and look forward to visiting you in your local associations throughout this coming year.