Conscious of our responsibility as pastoral leaders of the Roman Catholic Church..., we want to share with our people in choosing those directions which will preserve and promote truly Catholic education. In working out these choices together, we can at the same time make a significant contribution towards the building up of the life of this province and this country. (p.3)

Over the years, with the increasing number of Catholic schools, the laity has been called upon to take more responsibility for Catholic education. Members of our Church elect Catholic men and women to act as trustees who will direct Catholic schools. Our teachers, supervisory officers and other education officials are mostly laymen and women. (6-7)

Schools are a particular expression of the life of the Church community and it is here that lay people have a crucial part to play in teaching and pastoral ministry. (p.7)

Together we face the task of developing schools into communities of faith in which the requirements of good citizenship will be learned in a vital way from the perspective of the message of the Gospel and the teachings of the Church. (p. 7-8)

Thus, although Catholic education must prepare students to live in this culture and to embrace all that is good in it, this effort should not be reduced simply to learning how to adapt to the world. While we are called to be constructive and creative in our contribution to society, we must also be critical of those aspects of our culture which are contrary to the values of our faith tradition. (p.10)

Our students cannot do this alone. We cannot do this alone. We all need to be members of a community which encourages each person in the difficult task of living according to faith values which are often at odds with the prevailing values of our society. (p.12)

In this situation, those involved in Catholic education have an awesome privilege and responsibility. They are called not only to create an authentic faith community in the school but also to bring that community into communion with the parish and the wider Church community....Students deserve to discover their vocation in the universal Church and their roots in the long tradition of the Church. (p.12)
As pastors called to serve all, as guides providing spiritual, moral and doctrinal direction, as links to the universal Church, we...bishops... are committed to playing our appropriate part in this co-operative effort. As Pope John Paul II reminded us...we have a special responsibility to be authentic teachers and instructors in the faith. (p.17)

Students

We invite you to become active participants in the process of Catholic education. We urge you to bring your energy, enthusiasm and generosity to the task of building a Catholic community within your school and shaping the vision of Catholic education. (p.17)

Parents

You are the primary educators of your children. Catholic schools can only extend and compliment the educational process which you have begun and are continuing with your children. We encourage you to take your own faith development as seriously as you take that of your children....Catholic schools do not expect to deal with perfect students or perfect parents. They are there for parents who care enough to want their children to grow in a sense of values and faith. (p.19)

Teachers

Parents entrust their sons and daughters to you for a large part of the day. Society confides its future citizens to you. The Church entrusts members of the Body of Christ to your care. Perhaps that is why we expect so much of you – not only professional competence and care but also the integrity of a Christian life. It is also why we have such a debt of gratitude to you.

There is no doubt that it is you who bear the heat of the day in Catholic education...It is not necessary to be free of faults and failures to be faithful to the integrity of Catholic education. Otherwise, none of us would dare to be involved. However, your example is the one that will have the greatest direct impact on students.

...it is only through ongoing faith development that teachers can hope to meet the challenges of this moment – the challenge of forming educational communities of faith. (p.20)
Principals and Vice-Principals

The life, values, and the feeling of each school derive in large part from your commitment to your staff, to your students, and to the gospel. (p.21)

Supervisory officers

The example you give of justice, charity, compassion, and consistency will set the overall tone and ethos of your systems. (p.21)

Support Personnel

The spirit with which you carry out your service should be a Christian witness to all those who are in contact with you. What you do and how you do it may speak as much to the students about living the gospel as anything they will hear in the classroom. There is no such thing as ‘just a job’ in a Catholic school. There are only various forms of Christian service, each calling for extraordinary dedication. (p.21)

Trustees

In the long run, your service as trustees will be as effective as the extent you are willing to be educated in the faith.

...you are all fundamentally co-workers for the sake of the kingdom. (p.22)

...we ask you to make decisions about future leadership with a view to what will ultimately further the process of Catholic education.

We ask that you make these decisions prayerfully and with a profound grasp of the vision of Catholic education and of justice which it demands. (p.22-23)

Conclusion

In the end, the promise of this moment for Catholic education...will be realized in the degree to which we recall to each other the promise of our Baptism. In some mysterious way, we have been promised to God and to one another. Our young Catholics are promises of God and we and they are called to share this promise with our world. (p.25)

Reference:

‘This Moment of Promise’ Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1989; 2000