



MINUTES OF THE NIAGARA CATHOLIC PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING JANUARY 13, 2022

Minutes of the Meeting of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee, held virtually on Thursday, January 13, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.

Co-Chair Vernelli called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

A. ROUTINE MATTERS

1. Opening Prayer

Fr. Paul MacNeil led the Land Acknowledgement and the opening prayer.

2. Roll Call:

Parent Members	Geographical Area	Present In-person	Present Electronically	Excused	Absent
Chris Kouroushis	Fort Erie/Port Colborne/Wainfleet		√		
Diana Zlomislic	Fort Erie/Port Colborne/Wainfleet		√		
Lindsey Spanik	Grimsby/Lincoln/West Lincoln/Pelham		√		
Todd Ulbinas	Grimsby/Lincoln/West Lincoln/Pelham		√		
Alexandria Attree	Merritton/Thorold		√		
Mary-Kate O'Hara Skubel	Merritton/Thorold		√		
Rita Colling	Niagara Falls/Niagara-on-the-Lake		√		
Marilyn Fabiano	Niagara Falls/Niagara-on-the-Lake		√		
Olivia O'Reilly-Romanoff	Niagara Falls/Niagara-on-the-Lake		√		
Luciano Robazza	Niagara Falls/Niagara-on-the-Lake		√		
Jeremy Harb	St. Catharines		√		
George Roussos	St. Catharines		√		
Melanie Oakes-Flegg	Welland		√		
Carrie Vernelli	Welland		√		
Shelley Gilbert	Society of St. Vincent de Paul		√		
Fr. Paul MacNeil	Bishop/Diocesan Representative		√		
Allan Buri	Secondary Student Senate Representative		√		
Trustees					
Leanne Prince	Trustee		√		
Dino Sicoli	Trustee			√	

The following staff attended:

Camillo Cipriano, Director of Education, **Lee Ann Forsyth-Sells**, Superintendent of Education, **Joe Tornabuono**, Elementary Principal, **Kevin Timmins**, Secondary Vice-

Principal, **Jane Farah-Smith**, Teacher Representative, **Josie Rocca**, Support Staff, and **Yvonne Anderson**, Recording Secretary/Administrative Assistant.

Staff Guests in attendance: **Gino Pizzoferrato**, Superintendent of Education, Student Support Services, and Behaviour Resource Teachers: **Anthony Di Toro**, **Maria Kish**, **Vincent Mancuso** and **Alfonso Monachino**

Regrets: Dino Sicoli

3. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by: Co-Chair Kouroushis

THAT the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee approve the agenda of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee Meeting of January 13, 2022 as amended.

CARRIED

4. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

No disclosures of conflict of interest were declared with any items on the agenda.

5. Approval of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee Meeting Minutes of November 4, 2021

Moved by: Rita Colling

THAT the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee approve the minutes of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee Meeting of November 4, 2021 as presented.

CARRIED

B. PRESENTATION

1. Student Support Services-Special Education:

- Tier One Behaviour Resource Guide: “Who do you say I am?”

Behaviour Resource Teachers, Anthony Di Toro, Maria Kish, Vincent Mancuso and Alfonso Monachino presented “Who do you say I am”. The presentation was well received and the presenters were congratulated on their commitment to Niagara Catholic students, their evangelization, and sharing what it means to be Catholic and Christian. A request was made by the members to have the presentation shared with Catholic School Councils, and to be posted on the school websites as the message was informative and inspiring. Superintendent Pizzoferrato thanked the parents for their kind words and request, and will meet with Student Support Services to further discuss this request.

C. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Faith Formation

A subcommittee meeting will be held on January 27, 2022 to 7:00p.m. to further discuss a proposal of presenting Synod sessions for Catholic School Councils and parents/guardians.

2. Goals/Parent Engagement Events

A subcommittee meeting will be held on January 27, 2022 to 6:00p.m. to further discuss parent engagement events and the proposed Math sessions for parents/guardians.

D. POLICY FEEDBACK

Co-Chair Vernelli reported that the Accessibility Standards Policy (800.8) is current being vetted.

- Feedback to be submitted on behalf of the NCPIC is to be sent to Yvonne Anderson, no later than 12:00 p.m. on Monday, February 21, 2022.
- Feedback submitted as an individual is to be sent directly to Jennifer Pellegrini at jennifer.pellegrini@ncdsb.com no later than 12:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 22, 2022.

E. CO-CHAIR REPORTS

- Nil Report

F. REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESIGNATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

1. Niagara Catholic Mission, Vision and Values, Strategic Plan 2021-2026 and System Priorities
Superintendent Forsyth-Sells invited Director Cipriano to make a report on the Mission, Vision and Values of the Niagara Catholic District School Board and the System Priorities 2021-2026.

Director Cipriano provided background information on the process and development of the the Niagara Catholic Strategic Plan 2021-2026 and System Priorities. NCPIC members and the Multi-Year Strategic Plan committee were thanked for their hard work and commitment to this important process over the past year, and to the many stakeholders who provided their feedback during the creation of the Multi-Year Strategic Plan. Director Cipriano was pleased to report that Niagara Catholic has a new Mission Statement focusing on our Catholic identity: *"We are a Christ-centered Catholic faith community that celebrates diversity and fosters spiritual growth, inspiring all to reach their full potential in mind, body and spirit" and the new Vision Statement, "Encountering souls and opening minds so that all students succeed,"* clearly defines what we do as Catholic educators to support all students.

2. Communication to Parents/Guardians-Return to School
Superintendent Forsyth-Sells reported that parents/guardians received letters from the Director's Office regarding the process for returning to in-person learning, safety measures and protocols, HEPA filters, daily screening, anti-rapid testing kits, isolation requirement and reporting practices, vaccination clinics and the mandatory wearing of masks for Kindergarten students. Superintendent Forsyth-Sells reported that Niagara Catholic has received masks from the Ministry Education and that the masks will be provided to teachers and students as required. Superintendent Forsyth-Sells also reported that parents/guardians will have the option to continue remote learning for a limited time and this learning will be asynchronous. All students attending in-person learning are expected to return to school no later than January 31, 2022.
3. PRO Life Guest Speaker Update
Superintendent Forsyth-Sells reported that in consultation with Krista Olivieri, Board Chaplaincy Lead that Fr. Thomas Lynch, National President of Priests For Life Canada has been booked for a virtual presentation and Q&A at the NCPIC Meeting of May 5, 2022. Members were encouraged to prepare and submit questions prior to the meeting.

4. Catholic School Councils Contact Information Update

As a follow-up to the request to provide NCPIC members with Catholic School Council contact information, Superintendent Forsyth-Sells reported that a consent form indicating the purpose of sharing their information would have to be obtained from each Catholic School Council Chair and/or Co-Chair. Superintendent Forsyth-Sells proposed that with consent, the contact information for NCPIC parent members could be added to the NCPIC membership listed on the Board website for Catholic School Councils and parents/guardians. Further discussion will take place at the subcommittee meetings.

5. Catholic School Councils and the NCPIC Annual Reports 2020-2021

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells reported that in compliance with the *Education Act and Regulations*, every Catholic School Council and the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee of the Board shall annually submit a written report on its activities, including fundraising activities to the Board. The NCPIC annual report was prepared by Chair, Vernelli and Co-Chair, Kouroushis on behalf of the NCPIC and was provided to all members for review.

The Annual Reports for Catholic School Councils and the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee 2020-2021 were presented for information at the November 9, 2021 Committee of the Whole Meeting. The full report is available for public review on the Board website, under Board, Meetings-Committee of the Whole, November 9, 2021.

6. PRO Grant Funds 2021-2022

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells reported that NCPIC members were provided with the PRO Grant: Quick Facts, FAQ and the Final Reporting Template for information. In alignment with the PRO Grant guidelines, and to utilize the 2021-2022 PRO Grant funding to support parent engagement, Superintendent Forsyth-Sells proposed Mathematics sessions for parents with Dr. Marian Small and the Program and Innovation Team. Further discussion will take place at the subcommittee meeting.

7. School Year Calendar 2022-2023

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells reported that the 2022-2023 School Year Calendar Consultation Process and feedback template were provided to NCPIC members. Members were encouraged to submit their feedback/comments on the proposed draft elementary and secondary calendars no later than 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 1, 2022 to Yvonne Anderson. All feedback received will be submitted to Jennifer Pellegrini on Wednesday, February 2, 2022 on behalf of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee for consideration by members of the Niagara Catholic School Year Calendar Committee.

8. NCPIC Financial Report

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells reported on the finances of the NCPIC.

G. COMMUNITY REPORTS

Society of St. Vincent de Paul-Shelley Gilbert

Shelley reported that:

- Many elementary and secondary schools implemented Christmas food drives in support of the St. Vincent de Paul Christmas Hampers Campaign. With their support, St. Vincent de Paul had a successful Christmas, handing out many Christmas hampers, toys, socks and hygiene items to ensure that everyone had a good Christmas.
- A Niagara Catholic elementary student has a successful comfortable clothing (tie dying sweatshirts) and accessories (toques, baseball hats) company called Home Body. Before Christmas the student sold items at a couple of vendor/ craft sales and \$2.00 from every item she sold would go to a charity. Donations were given to the Ozanam Centre in St. Catharines). The student collected \$200.00 to donate to the Ozanam Center but took it one-step further and challenged the realtors in the city to match her donation. To date the student has collected \$2,100.00 in donations and wants her brand to make a difference in the community.
- St. Vincent de Paul has seen an increase in the number of people needing food and a new manager was hired to oversee the soup kitchen.

H. SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

- At the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting of January 12, 2022 elections were held for the Chair and Co-Chair. Madeline Cipriano was acclaimed as the Chair. The election for a Co-Chair was deferred as no nominations were forthcoming.
- On behalf of the SEAC, the Student Support Coordinators made arrangements for a guest speaker, David Pierce, Niagara FASD Coalition, to discuss Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) at the SEAC Meeting of Wednesday, February 2, 2022. This will be a virtual presentation and all Niagara Catholic families and staff are invited to attend. Further details to follow.
- Next month, SEAC members will commence reviewing the Special Education Plan in consultation with, and the guidance and assistance from the Student Support Coordinators.
- SEAC members were asked for input and feedback on the proposed 2022-2023 elementary and secondary school year calendars. Jennifer Lanese will submit the feedback received on behalf of the SEAC to the School Year Calendar Committee for consideration.

I. BISHOP/DIOCESAN REPORT-Fr. Paul MacNeil

Fr. Paul MacNeil reported:

- Synod on Synodality: At the last meeting Fr. Paul spoke about the upcoming 2023 “Synod on Synodality.” A “SYNOD” is a gathering of Bishops in Rome to discuss a particular contemporary theme of the church, so that Rome has a clear sense of where the Holy Spirit is calling the universal church. The Synod of Bishops in 2023 is about the idea of synodality itself and is entitled “For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, and Mission.”
- In preparation for the 2023 synod of Bishops, the Vatican has asked each diocese to conduct a kind of synod of its own, where we break each parish into a few smaller groups to discuss and report on a series of questions about our own sense of synodality and community. As Pope Francis writes, “It is precisely this path of synodality which God expects of the Church of the third millennium.” According to the preparatory document on Synod 2023,

“This journey, which follows in the wake of the Church’s “renewal” proposed by the Second Vatican Council, is both a gift and a task: by journeying together and reflecting together on the journey that has been made, the Church will be able to learn through Her experience which processes can help Her to live communion, to achieve participation, to open Herself to mission.”

- There are tight timelines involved in the synodal process, which have been hampered severely by covid-19 and the coronavirus. The original plan was to train facilitators in January and discuss parish listening sessions in February and March. The plan is to go ahead with the facilitator training and access in February. As a supplement, there is planning to release a written survey if necessary, however, the preference is to continue with small groups.
- Parish attendance has not been affected by the current Coronavirus restrictions. We are still able to operate as before, with 50% occupancy. Funerals, weddings, baptisms, Masses and other liturgies can still take place as long as physical distancing and the mask mandate are followed. Proof of vaccination is not required.

J. STUDENT SENATE REPORT-Allan Buri

Allan Buri reported that:

- The Niagara Catholic Lead Out Loud Conference for elementary school senators was held on November 25, 2021 and featured a keynote presentation by *unlearn*, followed by interactive breakout sessions among the families of schools. The elementary students were highly engaged even over Google Meet!
- The Student Senate is planning for a Mental Health Week in the spring, which will include activities and presentations surrounding coping mechanisms, healthy work habits, important resources, and how to help those struggling.

K. STAFF REPORTS-Joe Tornabuono and Kevin Timmins

Elementary Principal, Tornabuono and Secondary Vice-Principal, Kevin Timmins provided elementary and secondary school updates for information.

L. TRUSTEE REPORTS

Trustee Prince reported:

- On behalf of Chair Huibers, Vice-Chair Moody and the Board of Trustees Happy 2022!
- At the December Organizational Meeting of the Board, Trustee Larry Huibers of St. Catharines was re-elected as Chair and Trustee Dan Moody of Niagara Falls/Niagara-on-the-Lake was re-elected as Vice-Chair of the Board for the coming year.
- Pending Board approval at our January 25 2022 meeting, at the next NCPIC meeting in March, I am excited to be joined by Vice-Chair Moody as the Trustee Representatives.
- Thank you to Trustee Sicoli for his dedication to NCPIC.
- The Strategic Plan was approved at the December 2022 Board Meeting. The Board is grateful for the voices and opinions shared by our parents and students in developing the plan.
- On December 15, I was joined by Chair Huibers, Director Cipriano, Superintendent

Pizzoferrato and Controller Euale to announce a new school in Beamsville. The school will be located on Greenlane and will be a huge benefit for the existing and growing community of Lincoln.

- As announced at the end of December by the government, the start of school was delayed until January 5 and then further announcements on January 3 delayed the return to in person learning until January 17. This announcement really only affected Niagara Catholic for one week as we were scheduled to return January 10. Thank you to our principals, staff and our senior team for their hard work and attention to detail as they worked out the details big and small for families.
- Niagara Catholic received the first shipment of fitted N95 masks that under the leadership of Director Cipriano was placed the week before Christmas. We are also awaiting an additional shipment of HEPA filters.

M. NEW BUSINESS/AGENDA ITEMS-DISCUSSION FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

N. NEXT MEETING: Thursday, March 3, 2022

O. CLOSING PRAYER: Fr. Paul MacNeil led the closing prayer.

P. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by: Co-Chair Kouroushis

THAT the January 13, 2021 meeting of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee be adjourned.

CARRIED

This meeting was adjourned at 9:02 p.m.
