



MINUTES OF THE NIAGARA CATHOLIC PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING NOVEMBER 4, 2021

Minutes of the Meeting of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee, held on Thursday, November 4, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. held virtually and in-person in the Father Kenneth Burns csc Board Room, at the Catholic Education Centre, 427 Rice Road, Welland, ON.

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells reported that to accommodate all members, the NCPIC meetings will follow a hybrid model and will be held both in-person and virtually. Commencing November 4, 2021, the meetings of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee will also be livestreamed and recorded.

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells informed the members that she would be presiding over the meeting until the election of the Chair and/or Co-Chairs of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee.

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

A. ROUTINE MATTERS

1. Opening Prayer

Fr. Paul MacNeil led the Land Acknowledgement and the opening prayer with special intentions for the passing of Bishop Bergie's father.

Welcome

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells acknowledged that it is Treaty Recognition Week and on the Niagara Catholic website, we recognize that Ontario is home to over 130 First Nations and Métis communities.

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells welcomed the new and returning members of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee and thanked them for their support and commitment to Catholic education and parent engagement in the Niagara Catholic District School Board through their participation on the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee.

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, **Josie Rocca**, Support Staff, and **Yvonne Anderson**, Recording Secretary/Administrative Assistant.

Regrets Received: Melanie Oakes-Flegg and Dino Sicoli

Absent: Jane Farah-Smith, Elementary Teacher Representative

3. Commissioning of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee

Fr. Paul MacNeil presided over the commissioning ceremony of the members of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee as they publicly proclaimed their commitment to promote the Mission of Catholic education and the Mission, Vision and Values of the Niagara Catholic District School Board.

4. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by: Jeremy Harb

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

CARRIED

5. NCPIC Membership 2021-2022 and Terms of Office

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells reviewed the parent/guardian membership, and the terms of office were determined by consensus.

Terms of Office NCPIC Parent Members 2021-2022			
Name	Geographical Area	Terms of Office	
		One year term	Two year term
Chris Kouroushis	Fort Erie/Port Colborne/Wainfleet	√	
Diana Zlomislac	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	√	

6. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Rita Colling and Superintendent Forsyth-Sells on behalf of Melanie Oakes-Flegg informed the members of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee that they are employees of the Board.

7. Election of Chair and/or Two Co-Chairs

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells reviewed the procedures for the election of the Chair and/or two Co-Chairs in accordance with the *Education Act* and By-Laws of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee.

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells asked the parent members if they wished to elect a Chair or two Co-Chairs to chair the meetings of the NCPIC for a term of two years. By consensus, the parent members chose to elect two Co-Chairs to chair the NCPIC meeting for a term of two years. Before the election, Superintendent Forsyth-Sells appointed Trustee Prince and Trustee Sicoli as scrutineers if required, and asked if there were any questions of the procedures before proceeding. Clarification on the role and responsibilities of the Co-Chairs was requested. Superintendent Forsyth-Sell reviewed the roles and responsibilities of the Co-Chairs as per the NCPIC By-Laws.

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells asked for nominations for the position of two Co-Chairs of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee to hold office for a two-year term.

Moved by: Chris Kouroushis

THAT Jeremy Harb be nominated for the position of Co-Chair of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee to hold office for a two-year term.

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells asked Jeremy if he wished to stand for the position of Co-Chair of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee. Jeremy Harb thanked Chris for the nomination but declined the nomination.

Moved by: Jeremy Harb

THAT Fr. Paul MacNeil be nominated for the position of Co-Chair of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee to hold office for a two-year term.

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells stated that as per the *Education Act*, the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee Policy and Administrative Operational Procedures and NCPIC By-Laws, only parent members are eligible to hold office of the Chair and/or Co-Chair of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee. Therefore, Fr. Paul MacNeil was not eligible.

Moved by: Chris Kouroushis

THAT Alexandria Attree be nominated for the position of Co-Chair of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee to hold office for a two-year term.

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells asked Alexandria if she wished to stand for the position of Co-Chair of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee. Alexandria declined the nomination.

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells asked if there were any further nominations. There were no further nominations forthcoming.

Moved by: Alexandria Attree

THAT Carrie Vernelli be nominated for the position of Co-Chair of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee. Carrie Vernelli did not hold a two year term and was eligible for the nomination.

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells stated seeing none, this is a situation that we have not been in before that she appreciated the nominations and the positions of the nominees. We are following NCPIC By-Laws and we should have a parent member to chair the meetings.

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells invited Carrie Vernelli to say some words. Carrie Vernelli stated that due to the unprecedented year of COVID, she would like to continue as the Chair for a term of one year. Superintendent Forsyth-Sells stated that Carrie Vernelli would be self-nominating herself to continue as the Chair and the parent members would have to approve by consensus. Alexandria Attree was in support of the self-nomination. Chris Kouroushis also self-nominated to continue as the Co-Chair for a term of one year.

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells invited Director Cipriano to speak to the possibility of going outside the NCPIC policy and By-Laws. Director Cipriano, thanked the parent members for their ongoing support and respecting the position of Chair/Co-Chair. Director Cipriano stated that the NCPIC By-Laws act as a guide to support the operations of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee. However, when the committee, in itself as a whole sees value in steering from the words of the by-laws would benefit the committee and by extension benefit Niagara Catholic students should be allowable. As the consensus was to elect two Co-Chairs, it would be in alignment with the two parent members who offered to continue for a term of one year but it would have to be put to a vote.

MOTION by: Jeremy Harb

Seconded by: Alexandria Attree

THAT Carrie Vernelli and Chris Kouroushis continue as the two Co-Chairs for a term of one year, effective November 4, 2021 to September 2022.

CARRIED

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells turned the Chairship over to Carrie Vernelli and Chris Kouroushis.

8. Approval of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee Meeting Minutes of September 9, 2021

Moved by: Marilyn Fabiano

THAT the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee approve the minutes of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee Meeting of September 9, 2021 as presented.

CARRIED

B. PRESENTATION

1. Mental Health and Well-Being-Andrea Bozza, Mental Health Lead

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells stated that the mental health and well-being of all Niagara Catholic students is a priority. We are grateful to the Board of Trustees, our administrators, and staff for their support of mental health programs, services and supports in Niagara Catholic schools.

Andrea Bozza presented a PowerPoint presentation on the Mental Health and Well-Being Strategy 2021-2024 highlighting the priorities and goals of the strategy:

1. COVID-19 Recovery: Creating safe and accepting environments to return to, and to address the anxiety, isolation, potential trauma and impact of COVID-19
2. Equity, Inclusivity and Diversity: Anti-Black racism, anti-Indigenous racism, anti-discrimination, 2SLGBTQ+ supporting specific populations in our community who may require more or unique mental health and well-being support and services
3. The Link Between Our Faith and Mental Health: Being intentional in our messaging to staff and students, that our faith and mental well-being are inter-connected
4. Social-Emotional Learning: Embedding SEL into our curriculum and learning
5. Pathways to Care: Ensuring students receive timely and responsive, evidence-based prevention and early intervention services at school and in community

Andrea also shared information on:

- the mental health referral process to support students i.e. anxiety, suicidal thoughts, self-harming
- the Niagara Catholic Compassionate Care Guide to support student and staff when there is a death in the school community i.e. student, parent or staff member
- Mental Health and Well-Being workshops that were provided to all staff in September to support staff and student mental health and well-being.
- Mental Health Resources are available on the website [School Mental Health Ontario](#) (SMHO)
- Community partners to support students i.e. abuse, alcohol, drugs, addictions
- Pathstone Wellness Walls displayed in all Niagara Catholic schools to support students

- Ontario's focus this year on anti-sex trafficking; all school boards across Ontario are to create a policy and protocols to be in place by January 2022. This is an area of concern in Niagara and the Mental Health Team will work collaboratively with Senior Administration in the development and implementation of this policy.

A question and answer period followed the presentation. The PowerPoint presentation will be sent to all members for information. A request to add a parent representative to the Niagara Catholic Mental Health Leadership Team was made. The request will be shared with the team for consideration.

C. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Faith Formation

- Members were asked to email Josie Rocca with their intent to join the Faith Formation Subcommittee.

2. Goals/Parent Engagement Events

- Members were asked to email Carrie Vernelli with their intent to join the Goals/Parent Engagement Events Subcommittee.

D. POLICY FEEDBACK

Co-Chair Vernelli reported that no policies were currently being vetted.

E. CO-CHAIRS REPORT

Ministry of Education's Conversation with PIC Chairs and School Board Leads held on October 26, 2021.

Co-Chair, Carrie Vernelli reported that in preparation for her participation on the Ministry of Education's Conversation with PIC Chairs and School Board Leads, NCPIC parent members were asked to provide feedback on the Ministry question, "How are parents and families feeling about the new school year? This included what parents are confident about, and what concerns parents may have?" Co-Chair, Vernelli thanked the parent members for their responses and shared them during the meeting. Discussions also occurred about defining the roles of PIC members.

During the breakout sessions, there were discussions on defining the roles of the PIC members and PICs shared best practices for parent engagement such as:

- Virtual Fun Fairs
- Hosting Guest Speakers
- Scavenger Hunts
- Coffee Chats for Catholic School Councils hosted by PICs
- Outdoor Parent Engagement Events-High Schools
- Paint Nights

The Ministry will send a summary report of the session that will be shared with all NCPIC members.

A question and answer period followed including clarification on volunteers and spectators in the schools at the elementary and secondary levels.

A request was made for contact information of Catholic School Council Chairs/Co-Chairs to be shared with NCPIC members. Superintendent Forsyth-Sells reported that this is a privacy issue and that we would have to request consent from all Catholic School Council Chairs/Co-Chairs. Superintendent Forsyth-Sells will follow up on this request.

Director Cipriano added that when you collect information from a privacy perspective, one of the requirements is that you must inform the individual that you are collection information from with the purpose of the collection of information, so if we have not informed our CSC Chairs/Co-Chairs that one of the purposes was to share their contact information with the NCPIC we would not be able to share their information. However, we may going forward make a secondary request but it will be on approval on a individual level basis to share contact information.

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

1. Review of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee By-Laws
Superintendent Forsyth-Sells asked for feedback or questions on the By-Laws of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee. The By-Laws of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee were approved as presented by consensus.
2. Ontario Association for Parents in Catholic Education (OAPCE)
Superintendent Forsyth-Sells reported that Niagara Catholic has reactivated its membership in the Ontario Association for Parents in Catholic Education and is pleased to announce that Diana Zlomislac has submitted her application. Diana was acclaimed as the Niagara Catholic OAPCE Regional Director by consensus.
3. NCPIC Financial Report
Superintendent Forsyth-Sells reported on the finances of the NCPIC for 2021-2022.

G. COMMUNITY REPORTS

Society of St. Vincent de Paul-Shelley Gilbert

Shelley reported that:

- The sea container to support Fr. Daniel's after school program arrived in Nunavut just after Thanksgiving.
- Various elementary and secondary schools participated in Thanksgiving Food Drives to support St. Vincent de Paul food banks.
- St. Vincent de Paul is getting ready to prepare Christmas Hampers and looking for volunteers.
- St. Vincent de Paul conferences are starting to reach out for client's participation following COVID protocols.

H. SEAC REPORT

- Nil Report

I. BISHOP/DIOCESAN REPORT-Fr. Paul MacNeil

Fr. Paul MacNeil reported:

Synod on Synodality:

- The theme of the next universal synod of Bishops is "Synodality: "The Church of God is convoked in Synod. With this convocation, Pope Francis invites the whole Church to question itself on synodality: a decisive theme for the life and mission of the Church. This will be a two-year journey (2021-2023) of reflection and sharing of the whole Church, with a special invitation to parishes and dioceses to become involved in this process through small group sharing and reflection. More information will be available through the parish." The pastoral letter from the Bishop was sent to all members for information.

Anniversary of the Diocese:

- Tuesday, November 9, the feast in honour of the Dedication of St. John Lateran in Rome, marks the 63rd Anniversary of the foundation of the Diocese of St. Catharines. This feast illustrates the unity of each diocese with the Universal Church, the See of Rome, and the Holy Father. We try to live that unity within our diocese through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. This date also marks the 11th Anniversary of the installation of Bishop Bergie as Bishop of the Diocese of St. Catharines.

Announcement:

- Bishop Bergie is pleased to announce that the Holy Father has accepted the invitation of the Bishops of Canada to visit the Church in Canada on the context of a pilgrimage of healing and reconciliation with our Indigenous Peoples.

J. STUDENT SENATE REPORT-Allan Buri

Allan Buri reported that:

- The elementary Lead Out Loud Summit will be held virtually on November 25, 2021, featuring a keynote speaker, with a theme of "Compassion, Equity and Inclusion". Senators will lead breakout sessions with their respective families of schools' to promote discussion how these values can be translated into initiatives at their home schools.
- Student Senate will be holding another virtual Mental Health Summit in February 2022. It will involve educational materials, helpful resources, and trivia. Community service hours will be awarded to students who participate. The event was an immense success last year and the Senate hopes to replicate this reception.
- Student Senate is also hoping to boost its social media presence on Instagram this year.
- Open discussions have also revealed that secondary students are feeling increasingly comfortable with the current school model, and thoroughly enjoy the return of extracurriculars and multiple classes as well as the abandonment of cohorts.

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. A question and answer period followed.

L. TRUSTEE REPORTS-*Leanne Prince*

Trustee Prince reported that at the May 2021 Board Meeting a motion was made by trustees requesting that the Director be authorized to explore a partnership with an appropriate organization(s) to secure access to quality menstrual products and education materials at no cost or minimal cost to the Board, and that a report be provided to the Board no later than September 21, 2021 with a timeline to implement in all 8 secondary schools, Pope Francis Centre and Adult Education Centres initially followed by all elementary schools.

As a result of the presentation at the Board Meeting of September 21, 2021, the trustees unanimously voted in-favour of implementing the Period Poverty project in Niagara Catholic. On October 8, Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education, announced that the Ontario Government will distribute six million free menstrual products per year to school boards under a new and innovative partnership with Shoppers Drug Mart designed to improve access to menstrual products. Schools will be able to distribute the products to students by late fall this 2021-22 school year.

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

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells reported that two presentations have been arranged for the upcoming NCPIC meetings:

- January 13, 2022-Student Support Services will present on special education services
- March 3, 2022-The “unlearn” organization will present about bias, stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination, in order to support safe, caring and inclusive learning environments.

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells welcomed members to make a recommendation for future presentations.

- Jeremy Harb recommended a PRO Life guest speaker.

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells will consult with Krista Wood, Board Chaplaincy Leader on booking a PRO Life speaker for the NCPIC meeting of May 5, 2022.

N. NEXT MEETING: Thursday, January 13, 2022

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

P. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by: Alexandria Attree

THAT the November 4, 2021 meeting of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee be adjourned.

CARRIED

This meeting was adjourned at 8:38 p.m.
