



**MINUTES OF THE  
NIAGARA CATHOLIC PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING**

**MAY 11, 2022**

Minutes of the Meeting of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee, held on Wednesday, May 11, 2022 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

Co-Chair Vernelli called the meeting to order at 6:35p.m.

**A. ROUTINE MATTERS**

**1. Opening Prayer**

Fr. Paul MacNeil led the Land Acknowledgment 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	Joined the meeting at 7:49 p.m.			
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			√	
<b>Trustees</b>					
Leanne Prince	Trustee	√			
Dan Moody	Trustee/Vice-Chair of the Board				√

The following staff attended:

**Lee Ann Forsyth-Sells**, Superintendent of Education, **Giancarlo Vetrone**, Superintendent of Business and Financial Services, **Krista Olivieri**, Board Chaplaincy Leader, **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.

Regrets: Director Cipriano, Alexandria Attree, Allan Buri, Rita Colling, Marilyn Fabiano and Shelley Gilbert.

**3. Approval of the Agenda**

Moved by: Olivia O'Reilly-Romanoff

**THAT** the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee approve the agenda of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee Meeting of May 11, 2022 as presented.

**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 March 3, 2022**

Moved by: Melanie Oakes-Flegg

**THAT** the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee approve the minutes of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee Meeting of March 3, 2022 as presented.

**CARRIED**

**B. PRESENTATIONS**

1. Virtual Presentation by Fr. Thomas Lynch, National President of Priests for Life Canada  
Krista Olivieri, Board Chaplaincy Leader provided a brief bio and welcomed Fr. Thomas Lynch to the meeting of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee.

Fr. Thomas spoke on the importance of pro-life and living each day to the fullest, that every life matters and human dignity is the right of all. These teachings begin at home and are supported by the school and church. Fr. Thomas also stated that we have great building materials to build a new civilization of life and love by standing together and celebrating every part of life. March for Life is not just political, but it is a festival of life, and by our presences we can make a difference. Fr. Thomas shared that the "Gospel of Life" by Pope John Paul II is worth the read. A brief question and answer session followed.

2. Virtual Presentation by Superintendent of Business and Financial Services, Giancarlo Vetrone-  
Niagara Catholic Budget 2022-2023

Superintendent of Business and Financial Services, Giancarlo Vetrone presented the Niagara Catholic Budget for 2022-2023 for information. A brief question and answer session followed.

## C. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

### 1. Faith Formation

Josie Rocca, Chair of the Faith Formation Subcommittee shared that the Virtual Parent Synod Listening Session held on April 25, 2022 was promoted through various platforms to encourage parent participation including:

- A personal invitation was sent directly to Catholic School Council Chairs/Co-Chairs to participate and to promote throughout the school community.
- Principals/Vice-Principals were provided with the poster to add to their newsletters and calendars to promote the session with the school community.
- Catholic School Councils were sent a reminder email.
- A banner was added to the main Board website to promote the session.
- The poster was posted on the NCPIC website.

Josie reported that, although a small number parents participated, the session was informative and that there were some strong voices and wonderful conversations. The feedback collected during this session will be included as part of the Diocese of St. Catharines Synod responses being forwarded to Pope Francis. Special thanks to Fr. Paul MacNeil, Terri Pauco and all facilitators and note takers.

### 2. Goals/Parent Engagement Events

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells reported that the Family Math Nights Virtual Series were also promoted using the same platforms as the Virtual Parent Synod Listening Session to encourage parent /family participation.

- On March 29, 2022, sixty-five individuals participated in the parent/guardian webinar with Dr. Marian Small. The PowerPoint Presentation was sent to all participants for further review. A feedback survey was provided at the end of the session and positive feedback was received. Additional parent webinars with Dr. Marian Small will be held virtually on May 12, and June 1, 2022.
- On Wednesday, April 27, 2022 the Niagara Catholic District School Board in partnership with the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee held a Virtual Family Games Night with a focus on Mathematics.

Prior to the evening Math kits were sent to all participants that included various grade level games that would be introduced to engage families during the Family Games Night. Over 400 families registered for the Family Games Night and 200 participated. Positive feedback was received including how parents/guardians enjoyed engaging in Math games with their children. Families had the opportunity to participate in two sessions that were organized by grade level math concepts including:

- Go Fish! (Make 10): Combinations that make ten, early addition and subtraction
- Order, Order: Sequencing numbers

- Let's Go on a Bear Adventure! (K-Gr. 2): Math and Coding-coding language, patterning, positional language and directionally, and shape identification
- Greater Than: Place value, comparing/ordering numbers
- Closest to Ten: Addition, subtraction, multiplication and division
- Three in a Row: Multiplication and Division
- 5 Moves to 100 and Net Zero: Place Value and addition, subtraction, multiplication and division

Special thanks and appreciation to Niagara Catholic staff for their support of the NCPIC PRO Grant project.

Teachers: Rosamaria Alonzi, Tony Basilone, Gillian Berard, Marylee Kelly, Kate Lucas, Johanna Miller, Jeffery O'Neil and Kelly Sim

Consultants/Coaches: Christine Battagli, Laura Cronshaw, Alison Couturier, Ivana Galante, Jeffery Martin, Rose Perri-Gentilcore, Nicole Pigeau, Heidi-Ann Poltl, and Mary Vetere

Principals, Chris Moscato and Dan Trainor and Vice-Principal Dwane Smolders

#### **D. POLICY FEEDBACK**

Co-Chair Vernelli reported that the Board By-Laws Policy (100.1) is currently out for vetting.

- Feedback to be submitted on behalf of the NCPIC is to be sent to Yvonne Anderson at [yvonne.anderson@ncdsb.com](mailto:yvonne.anderson@ncdsb.com) by 12:00 p.m. on Monday, May 30, 2022.
- As an individual, feedback is to be sent directly to Anna Pisano at [anna.pisano@ncdsb.com](mailto:anna.pisano@ncdsb.com) by 12 p.m. on Tuesday, May 31, 2022.

#### **E. CO-CHAIR REPORTS**

- Nil Report

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

##### **1. Celebrating Excellence Award Ceremony 2022**

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells reported that on Thursday, May 5, 2022, Niagara Catholic held the Celebrating Excellence Award Ceremony at the Niagara Falls Convention Centre. The evening celebrated, acknowledged and honoured the recipients of the:

**Catch the Spirit Award:** This award is presented annually to a student from each elementary and secondary school and Continuing Education who demonstrates outstanding qualities in the following areas: Catholic Leadership; Catholic Faith and Catholic School Philosophy; Family Commitment; School Community Relations (rapport with teachers and other students); Involvement in School Affairs and Activities; Involvement in Community Activities; Commitment to a Difficult Situation or Task; and High Degree of Academic Excellence.

**Distinguished Alumni:** This award is presented to a graduate of more than ten years from a Niagara Catholic secondary school who reflects the characteristic of the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations and has achieved success in their adult life.

The recipients for 2022 are:

- Dr. Sabrina DiLonardo-Burr, Saint Paul Catholic High School, Class of 2006
- Dan Giancola, Denis Morris Catholic High School, Class of 1988
- April Mullen, Saint Paul Catholic High School, Class of 2000
- Menaka Swampillai-Evans, Notre Dame College School, Class of 1991

**Inspiration Award:** This award is presented annually to exemplary Niagara Catholic employees who embody the Mission, Vision and Values of our system, our vocation and our call to serve students, colleagues and our Catholic community. The award is presented in recognition of faithful, passionate, innovative and exemplary contributions to Niagara Catholic. The recipients for 2022 are:

- Leonora Amorim, St. Alfred Catholic Elementary School
- Glenn Gifford, Saint Michael Catholic High School
- John Giroux, Holy Cross Catholic Secondary School
- Joan Kelly, St. Anthony/St. Augustine Catholic Elementary Schools
- Jason Naphin, Denis Morris Catholic High School
- Anna Pascuzzi, Our Lady of Victory Catholic Elementary School
- Rosanne Sandel, St. George Catholic Elementary School
- Matthew Smith, Saint Paul Catholic High School

## 2. NCPIC Membership and Meeting Dates 2022-2023

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells reported that a memo was sent to all principals/vice-principals on Tuesday, April 19, 2022 to promote the nomination process for parent/guardian and community representatives on the NCPIC for the 2022-2023 school year. Nomination forms have been posted on the Board website.

- Community representatives are to complete and submit their application no later than Wednesday, September 14, 2022.
- Parents/Guardians are to complete and submit the parent/guardian nomination form no later than Friday, October 7, 2022.

All NCPIC members have been sent the nomination forms. Members coming to an end of their term were encouraged to complete a nomination form for the 2022-2023 school year. For the 2022-2023 the following parent/guardian positions are available.

Fort Erie/Port Colborne/Wainfleet		1 position
Grimsby/Lincoln/West Lincoln/Pelham		1 position
Niagara Falls/Niagara-on-the-Lake		2 positions
St. Catharines		3 positions
Thorold/Merritton		1 position
Welland		1 position

**2022-2023 Meeting Dates:**

- September 8, 2022 (last meeting of the 2021-2022 school year)
- November 3, 2022 (first meeting of the 2022-2023 membership)
- January 12, 2023
- March 2, 2023
- May 4, 2023
- September 2023 (TBD)

**3. NCPIC Financial Report**

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells reported on the finances of the NCPIC and proposed that a \$250.00 honourarium be provided to Fr. Thomas Lynch to support Priests for Life Canada as a thank you, for his time and presentation. The honourarium was approved by consensus.

On behalf of the Director of Education and the Senior Administrative Team, Superintendent Forsyth-Sells thanked all members for their continued support of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee, Catholic School Councils, parents/guardians and students in the Niagara Catholic District School Board.

**G. COMMUNITY REPORTS**

**Society of St. Vincent de Paul**

Co-Chair Kouroushis provided the Society of St. Vincent de Paul report on behalf of Shelley Gilbert.

- St. Vincent de Paul will be sending boys and girls to the St. Vincent de Paul Camp in Chatham this summer.
- One sea container will be sent again to Nunavut over the summer.
- St. Vincent de Paul food banks are busy and seeing more single people in need.
- Some Niagara Catholic elementary and high schools supported the Easter Food Drive.
- The St. Vincent de Paul soup kitchen in St. Catharines is seeing an average of 100 people a day for lunch.

**H. ONTARIO ASSOCIATION FOR PARENTS IN CATHOLIC EDUCATION (OAPCE)**

- Nil Report.

## **I. SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SEAC) REPORT**

Co-Chair Kouroushis provided a report on behalf of the Special Education Advisory Committee:

- **SOAR SECONDARY and POST-SECONDARY TRANSITION PROGRAMS**

The Student Support Department and the Learning Disabilities Association of Niagara Region (LDANR) have collaborated to offer SOAR virtual sessions to assist students in Grades 7 and 8 transitioning to secondary school and students in Grades 11 and 12 transitioning to post-secondary. The sessions will begin in May.

- **SECONDARY TUTORING**

The Student Support Department has partnered with LEARNstyle educational training company to offer individualized and small group sessions for select secondary students who would benefit from an online tutoring experience offered outside of school hours. Programs are being offered as individual tutoring sessions (five sessions per student) or small-group literacy and numeracy sessions (eight sessions per group).

## **J. BISHOP/DIOCESAN REPORT**

Fr. Paul MacNeil reported:

- The local listening phase of the Synod 2023 is essentially complete. The Diocesan committee will be spending the next several weeks collating and organizing the information into a 10 page diocesan report that will be sent to the Ontario Bishops, then to the Canadian Bishops and then to Rome. Rome will then use this information to inform their upcoming Synod of Bishops in 2023. This synod will result in a document outlining a response to the synod that the people of God can use to better equip their churches to respond to the needs of humanity and to evangelize our world.
- Thank you for those who participated in our synod listening sessions for parents of our school children. There were more facilitators than participants, which in itself also sends a message about the relevance of our churches in today's culture.
- As a local follow up, the Bishop is planning a diocesan summit to review the input locally and create a vision and plan for the diocese moving forward.

## **K. STUDENT SENATE REPORT**

Co-Chair Kouroushis provided the Student Senate report on behalf of Allan Buri.

- On April 28, the Niagara Catholic Student Leadership Symposium was held at Club Roma. Student leaders from every elementary and secondary school in the Board took part in Family of Schools elections led by Student Senators, and our new elementary and secondary Co-Chairs were selected for the 2022-2023 school year.
- Mental Health Week partnered with Catholic Education Week during the week of May 1-6 with the theme "Rebuild, Restore, Renew Together". The Student Senate provided several opportunities for students to increase their awareness of how to prevent and address mental health issues, including brochures, social media posts, announcements, videos and a quiz. Overall impression from students was positive.

- The Student Senate Scholarship Application has closed. There are two scholarships valued at \$500 available to any graduating Niagara Catholic student who exemplifies exceptional commitment to their school, community and faith. The Senate will be choosing the two winners in May.

**L. STAFF REPORTS-***Joe Tornabuono and Kevin Timmins*

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

**M. TRUSTEE REPORT**

Trustee Prince reported:

- At the April Board Meeting, Controller of Facilities Clark Euale provided an update to the motion passed in the fall to install, and supply menstrual product dispensers in all of our Board sites. Each of the secondary schools will have 2 dispensers installed that will contain both tampons and pads. Our elementary schools will have 1 installed and be supplied with either a combination of tampons and pads or just pads. The ministry has given Niagara Catholic 13 units and pads which are being installed in our larger elementary schools.
- At our Committee of the Whole meeting on May 10, Clark Euale shared the distribution plan of HEPA filters and costs moving forward to maintain and replace filters as required. For information as what has been installed in individual schools, you can see on niagaracatholic.ca and click on the Covid19 Public Information Link.
- April 21-23, Trustees from across Ontario gathered for our AGM. We took part in sessions focusing on equity, Indigenous issues and heard from keynote speaker Dr. Mark McGowan. Trustee Burtnik was recognized for her 25 + 2 years of service to Catholic Education. She was also honoured with the OCSTA Trustee Award of Merit.
- On behalf of Chair Huibers, Vice-Chair Moody and all the Trustees, we wish you, your families and all families of Niagara Catholic a safe, warm and wonderful summer.

**N. NEW BUSINESS/AGENDA ITEMS-DISCUSSION FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

George Roussos requested a review of the Student Transportation Policy (500.2) and Administrative Operational Procedures, specifically requirements for transportation eligibility.

**O. NEXT MEETING:** Thursday, September 8, 2022 (last meeting of the 2021-2022 school year).

**P. CLOSING PRAYER:** Fr. Paul MacNeil led the closing prayer.

**Q. ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by: Chris Kouroushis

**THAT** the May 11, 2022 meeting of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee be adjourned.

**CARRIED**

This meeting was adjourned at 8:19 p.m.

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