



**MINUTES OF THE  
NIAGARA CATHOLIC PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING  
NOVEMBER 3, 2022**

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Minutes of the Meeting of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee, held on Thursday, November 3, 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.

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells stated that the meetings of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee are open to the public, 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 two Co-Chairs of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee.

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

**A. ROUTINE MATTERS**

**1. Opening Prayer**

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

**Welcome**

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells welcomed and introduced the Director of Education, Camillo Cipriano. Director Cipriano provided background information on the central bargaining at the provincial level which includes the Ministry of Education, Trustee Associations-OCSTA and Union Representation (CUPE). Niagara Catholic has approximately one thousand CUPE members ranging from custodial staff, secretarial staff, EAs, ECEs, Librarians and IT staff at the Board. CUPE was in central bargaining over the summer but the parties have come to an impasse. CUPE received a strike mandate and gave notice to the Board on Sunday that they would be striking on Friday, November 4. The Minister of Education presented “Back to Work” legislation which was passed this evening. This means that CUPE did not have the right to strike and must return to work. CUPE responded that all members would take part in a protest on Friday and would not be in the schools. As a result, Niagara Catholic made the decision to close schools to students as our schools cannot operate without CUPE staff in the buildings, as it would be unsafe and unsanitary for students and staff, so unless something changes overnight students will not be in schools on Monday. However, staff will report to the schools. Asynchronous learning will take place on Friday and if necessary Monday and Tuesday. If the strike continues students will begin synchronous learning until CUPE staff return. A question and answer period followed. Superintendent Forsyth-Sells thanked Director Cipriano for his report.

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells acknowledged and thanked the NCPIC members that would not be returning for the 2022-2023 school year, for their dedication, commitment, and support of Catholic education and parent engagement throughout the years in the Niagara Catholic District School Board. Parent members, Chris Kouroushis (past Co-Chair), Mary-Kate O’Hara Skubel, George Roussos, Todd Ulbinas, and Diana Zlomislic (past Niagara Catholic OAPCE Regional

Director), Community Representative, Shelley Gilbert, Elementary Teacher Representative, Jane Farah-Smith and Secondary Student Senate Representative: Allan Buri.  
Superintendent Forsyth-Sells welcomed the new and returning members to the NCPIC and invited all members to introduce themselves before proceeding with the meeting.

**2. Roll Call:**

Parent Members	Geographical Area	Present In-person	Present Electronically	Excused	Absent
Daniel Odoh	Fort Erie/Port Colborne/Wainfleet				√
Lindsey Spanik	Grimsby/Lincoln/West Lincoln				√
Alexandria Attree	Merritton/Thorold	√			
Ian Woods	Merritton/Thorold	√			
Julie Bateman	Niagara Falls				√
Marilyn Fabiano	Niagara Falls	√			
Olivia O'Reilly-Romanoff	Niagara Falls	√			
Luciano Robazza	Niagara Falls				√
Brenda Annen	St. Catharines/Niagara-on-the-Lake	√			
Rita Colling	St. Catharines/Niagara-on-the-Lake	√			
Jeremy Harb	St. Catharines/Niagara-on-the-Lake	√			
Stephanie Ireland	St. Catharines/Niagara-on-the-Lake	√		Excused at 7:45 p.m.	
Melanie Oakes-Flegg	Welland/Pelham			√	
Carrie Vernelli	Welland/Pelham	√			
Fr. Paul MacNeil	Bishop/Diocesan Representative	√			
Ava Venzon	Secondary Student Senate Representative	√			
<b>Trustees</b>					
Leanne Prince	Trustee	√			
Dan Moody	Vice-Chair of the Board				√

The following staff attended:

**Camillo Cipriano**, Director of Education, **Lee Ann Forsyth-Sells**, Superintendent of Education, **Joe Tornabuono**, Elementary Principal, **Josie Rocca**, Support Staff, and **Yvonne Anderson**, Recording Secretary/Administrative Assistant.

Regrets Received: Kevin Timmins and Melanie Oakes-Flegg

**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 3, 2022 as presented.

**CARRIED**

**5. NCPIC Membership 2022-2023 and Terms of Office**

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

<b>Terms of Office NCPIC Parent Members 2022-2023</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Geographical Area</b>	<b>Terms of Office</b>	
		<b>One year term</b>	<b>Two year term</b>
		TBD	
Daniel Odoh	Fort Erie/Port Colborne/Wainfleet	TBD	
Lindsey Spanik	Grimsby/Lincoln/West Lincoln	√	
Alexandria Attree	Merritton/Thorold	√	
Ian Woods	Merritton/Thorold		√
Julie Bateman	Niagara Falls		√
Marilyn Fabiano	Niagara Falls		√
Olivia O'Reilly-Romanoff	Niagara Falls	√	
Luciano Robazza	Niagara Falls	√	
Melanie Oakes-Flegg	Pelham/Welland	√	
Carrie Vernelli	Pelham/Welland		√
Brenda Annen	St. Catharines/Niagara-on-the-Lake		√
Rita Colling	St. Catharines/Niagara-on-the-Lake	√	
Jeremy Harb	St. Catharines/Niagara-on-the-Lake	√	
Stephanie Ireland	St. Catharines/Niagara-on-the-Lake		√

**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 also employees of the Board.

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

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells reviewed the election procedures 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 meetings for a term of two years. Before the election, Superintendent Forsyth-Sells appointed Trustee Prince and Principal Tornabuono as scrutineers if required.

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: Jeremy Harb

**THAT** Brenda Annen be nominated for the position of Co-Chair of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee.

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

Moved by: Alexandria Attree

**THAT** Carrie Vernelli be nominated for the position of Co-Chair of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee.

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

Moved by: Stephanie Ireland

Stephanie Ireland self-nominated for the position of Co-Chair of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee.

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells asked if there were any further nominations. After three consecutive requests for further nominations, no nominations were forthcoming.

Before the election took place, nominees provided a brief bio, including how they would support the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee.

Parent members voted by secret ballot and as result, Carrie Vernelli was elected as one of the Co-Chairs and there was a draw between the two remaining nominees. A second vote by secret ballot took place and as a result Brenda Annen was elected as the second Co-Chair.

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells, thanked the nominees, congratulated the elected Co-Chairs, and turned the chair-ship over to Carrie Vernelli and Brenda Annen.

**8. Election/Appointment of the Niagara Catholic Ontario Association for Parents in Catholic Education (OAPCE) Regional Director**

Co-Chair Vernelli reported that an election/appointment for the Niagara Catholic OAPCE Regional Director will take place to fill the (1 year) vacancy for the 2022-2023 school year.

- Parent members were provided with information on the role of the OAPCE Regional Director and the Application Form. Interested applicants were asked to complete and submit the nomination form to Yvonne Anderson, no later than 12:00 p.m. today, November 3, 2022.

Co-Chair Vernelli, called on Superintendent Forsyth-Sells to provide an update. Superintendent Forsyth-Sells reported that she was pleased to announce that Ian Woods submitted an application for the position of the Niagara Catholic Regional Director on OAPCE and asked for a consensus to support Ian's application. Ian was acclaimed as the Niagara Catholic OAPCE Regional Director.

**9. Approval of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee Meeting Minutes of May 11, 2022**

Moved by: Ian Woods

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

**CARRIED**

**B. PRESENTATION**

Jeremy Harb asked why the presentation on the Library Information Centres was postponed. Superintendent Forsyth-Sells reported that the Program and Innovation, Superintendent Kinney in collaboration with Danielle Black, Coordinator of Library Information Centres were still developing the vision of the Library Information Centres. The presentation will take place at NCPIC meeting of January 12, 2023.

**C. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

1. Faith Formation
2. Goals/Parent Engagement Events

Co-Chair Vernelli requested that all members send an email to the Co-Chairs with their intent to support the Faith Formation and/or Goals/Parent Engagement Events no later than November 11, 2022. Once the subcommittees have been formed, meetings will be scheduled.

**D. POLICY**

Co-Chair Vernelli stated that NCPIC members were provided with a feedback template for their use.

Co-Chair Vernelli reported that the following Board Governance policies are currently being vetted:

- Retirement and Service Recognition Celebration Policy (201.2), and
- Volunteer Recognition Policy (800.4)

1. 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, November 21, 2022.
2. Feedback being submitted as an individual, is to be sent directly to Anna Pisano no later than 12:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 23, 2022.

Trustee Prince stated that feedback received from the vetting process is valued and reviewed by Senior Administrative Council and the Trustees of the Board.

**E. 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 and/or questions on the By-Laws of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee. Seeing none, the By-Laws of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee were approved as presented.

2. Ontario Association for Parents in Catholic Education (OAPCE)  
Superintendent Forsyth-Sells reported that the OAPCE Year End Report for 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 was emailed to all members for information.
3. NCPIC Financial Report  
Superintendent Forsyth-Sells reported on the finances of the NCPIC.

#### **F. SEAC REPORT**

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells provided a report on behalf of SEAC.

- Ready, Willing & Able (RWA) was presented to SEAC. RWA is a national partnership of the Canadian Association for Community Living and Canadian Autism Spectrum Disorders Alliance and their member organizations. They support Canadian businesses to build an inclusive workplace that capitalizes on the skills and qualifications of people with an intellectual disability or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).
- New chairperson was elected – Monique Somma
- Committee membership now includes student support members as observers representing the different areas of Special Education – Speech Pathologist, Student Support Facilitator, Behaviour Analyst, Behaviour Resource Teacher and Teacher of the Blind/Low Vision. They will act as a liaison resource to the committee if required.
- Niagara Catholic is working with FACS Niagara updating the FACS protocol. Started a Liaison Committee comprised of Administrators from Niagara Catholic and Executive Staff from FACS to develop a final version of the protocol.
- Secondary Special Education classrooms are participating in Niagara Catholic Rocks with Mendelt sessions.
- Supporting Neurodiversity through Adaptive Programming (SNAP) is back in person again. Provides educational gymnastics, dance and movement education, games and other activities of daily living.
- Phase 2 of Empower Literacy Program implementation. School staff are currently screening and selecting student candidates for the program.

#### **G. BISHOP/DIOCESAN REPORT-Fr. Paul MacNeil**

Fr. Paul MacNeil reported that the diocesan report of the Synod has been published and made available. In the report, 10 themes that emerged from the listening sessions were identified:

1. Quelling fear and judgement
2. Pastor/Bishop as leader and shepherd
3. Improving Collaboration and Promoting the Laity (especially women) in Leadership
4. Improving Communication
5. Need for Healing
6. Creating Parish Cultures of Welcome and Belonging
7. Providing Opportunities for Evangelization, Catechesis and Discipleship
8. Strengthening School - Parish Partnerships
9. Outreach and Ministry to Youth, Young Adults and Families
10. Bridging Division

As a response to the listening sessions, the diocese is currently working on 3 priorities: Prayer, Communication and Leadership. Regarding leadership, the Bishop has now mandated that every parish have in place a Parish Pastoral Council. Bishop Bergie also mandated the creation of a diocesan Lay Pastoral Council to help involve the laity in leadership and diocesan decision making. The November clergy study days will concentrate on leadership in our parishes and Lay Pastoral Councils.

Fr. Paul reported that as a response to Strengthening School - Parish Partnerships, that he and Terri Pauco, Director of Family and Youth Ministry have met periodically with the school chaplaincy leaders to discuss the relationship with the diocese. Fr. Paul presented some of the results of the discussion including the pride flag, the model of elementary school chaplains and the schedule of chaplain visits at a recent Council of Priests meeting. Fr. Paul also communicated the common view that the chaplaincy leaders shared that the schools are wonderful opportunities for evangelization, to make Disciples of Christ. Finally, Fr. Paul along with Krista Olivieri, Board Chaplaincy Leader and Amanda Wagg-Boyer, Religious Education Consultant have started to publish a new periodic update called "Connections," which is distributed to the clergy and principals, senior staff and trustees. A copy of "Connections" will be sent to all members for information.

#### **H. STUDENT SENATE REPORT**-Ava Venzon

Ava Venzon presented a brief verbal update on the current activities of the Student Senate.

- The Niagara Catholic annual 'Lead Out Loud' event will be held on November 16, 2022 at Gethsemane Ministries in Wellandport. The secondary student senate along with the Development and Peace organization will be hosting the event for the elementary student senators. This year, our goal is to be the first school board in Ontario consisting of all 'Development and Peace schools', as we hope that every school will participate in the organization's interactive badge system. These activities will be taken back to elementary schools to complete throughout the school year. Social justice is very important to secondary students on the Niagara Catholic senate and we look forward to educating elementary senate members on the topic in partnership with this organization.
- New this year, Student Senate has designed the idea of a "Student Highlight". Each secondary school has been assigned a month in which the senators of that school will select a student that they believe deserves positive recognition. There must be a reason for this selection, whether the student has started their own club, has stood out academically in some way, or has made a positive impact on the school community. Blessed Trinity has been assigned to the month of November. Blessed Trinity senators will put together a presentation for the senate on their student of choice. The presentation will then be posted on senate's social media platforms, not only to give this student recognition for their achievements but as well as to inspire other students in the Board with their peer's accomplishments.
- The Student Senate is currently working on a Board-wide "Student Council Guidebook" that will be sent to all Niagara Catholic high schools. The plan is to write a book that will include leadership ideas that have worked in the past for student councils. It will be used when councils are in a crunch for fundraising or looking for event ideas or processes. This will be something to turn to for foolproof and trustworthy content, to gain inspiration or to follow. Each school's

student council, along with concerning staff, are currently putting together a list of ideas that will be added to the guidebook. The book will be a year-long project, and will be available for next year's and for future Niagara Catholic student councils.

**I. STAFF REPORTS-*Joe Tornabuono***

Elementary Principal, Tornabuono provided elementary school updates for information. A question and answer period followed.

**J. TRUSTEE REPORTS-*Leanne Prince***

Trustee Prince reported that:

- the Municipal Elections took place across Ontario on October 24, 2022 and as a result of the elections new trustees will be joining the Board.
- the Inaugural Meeting of the Board will take place on November 22, 2022 at Saint Michael Catholic High School. At this meeting the new Trustees will be sworn in for a term of four years.
- the Trustee representatives appointed to the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee will be introduced at the NCPIC Meeting of January 12, 2023.
- Trustee Prince also extended her gratitude to each and every member of the NCPIC, past and present, for their support and dedication to Niagara Catholic, Catholic education and student achievement and well-being of all students in the Niagara Catholic District School Board as well as, being the parent voice at the Board level.

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

**L. NEXT MEETING:** Thursday, January 12, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. at the Catholic Education Centre.

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

**N. ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by: Alexandria Attree

**THAT** the November 3, 2022 meeting of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee be adjourned.

**CARRIED**

This meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

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