



**MINUTES OF THE
NIAGARA CATHOLIC PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
NOVEMBER 2, 2023**

Minutes of the Meeting of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee, held on Thursday, November 2, 2023 at 6:30 p.m., in the Father Kenneth Burns c.s.c. Board Room, at the Catholic Education Centre, 427 Rice Road, Welland, ON.

The Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee extended an invitation to all Niagara Catholic School Council Chairs and Co-Chairs to attend the November 2, 2023 meeting. A meet and greet was held at 6:00 p.m. Co-Chair Vernelli shared that the meetings of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee are open to the public, livestreamed and recorded.

Co-Chair Vernelli called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m.

A. ROUTINE MATTERS

1. Land Acknowledgement and Opening Prayer

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells led the Land Acknowledgement and Opening Prayer.

Welcome

Co-Chair Vernelli welcomed Niagara Catholic School Council Chairs and Co-Chairs, and the new and returning members of the NCPIC to the meeting. Co-Chair Vernelli requested that the members of the NCPIC introduce themselves before proceeding with the meeting.

Co-Chair Vernelli acknowledged and thanked the NCPIC members that would not be returning for the 2023-2024 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, Rita Colling, Jeremy A. Harb, Olivia O'Reilly-Romanoff, Melanie Oakes-Flegg, Luciano Robazza, Ian Woods and Secondary Student Senate Representative: Ava Venzon.

2. Roll Call:

Parent Members	Present In-person	Present Electronically	Excused	Absent
Brenda Annen, Co-Chair	√			
Carrie Vernelli, Co-Chair	√			
Alexandria Attree	√			
Julie Bateman	√			
Chris Campbell	√			
Marilyn Fabiano	√			
Kate Hingston	√			
Maria Imbriano			√	
Stephanie Ireland			√	
Leanne Prince	√			

Bishop/Diocesan Representative				
Fr. Paul MacNeil			√	
Secondary Student Senate Representative				
Myla Novak	√			
Trustees				
Danny Di Lorenzo, Chair of the Board	√			
Joe Bruzzese			√	

The following staff attended:

Camillo Cipriano, Director of Education, **Lee Ann Forsyth-Sells**, Superintendent of Education, **Joe Tornabuono**, Elementary Principal, **Kevin Timmins**, Secondary Principal, and **Yvonne Anderson**, Recording Secretary/Administrative Assistant.

Regrets Received: Fr. Paul MacNeil, Joe Bruzzese, Maria Imbriano, Stephanie Ireland and Josie Rocca

Co-Chair Vernelli invited the Catholic School Council Chairs and Co-Chairs in attendance to introduce themselves before proceeding with the meeting.

3. Commissioning of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee

In the absence of Fr. Paul MacNeil, Superintendent Forsyth-Sells 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: Leanne Prince

THAT the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee approve the agenda of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee Meeting of November 2, 2023 as presented.

CARRIED

5. NCPIC Membership 2023-2024 and Terms of Office

Co-Chair Vernelli reviewed the parent/guardian membership. The terms of office were determined prior to the meeting.

Terms of Office NCPIC Parent Members 2023-2024		
Parent Members	Terms of Office	
	One-year term	Two-year term
Brenda Annen, Co-Chair	√	
Carrie Vernelli, Co-Chair	√	
Alexandria Attree	√	
Julie Bateman	√	
Chris Campbell	√	
Marilyn Fabiano	√	
Kate Hingston		√
Maria Imbriano	√	
Stephanie Ireland	√	
Leanne Prince	√	

6. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

No conflict of interest was declared with any item on the agenda.

7. Approval of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee Meeting Minutes of May 11, 2023

Moved by: Alexandria Attree

THAT the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee approve the minutes of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee Meeting of May 11, 2023 as presented.

CARRIED

B. PRESENTATIONS

1. Niagara Catholic Math Achievement Action Plan

Kim Kinney, Superintendent of Education presented the Niagara Catholic Math Achievement Action Plan to support student achievement. A brief Q&A followed the presentation.

2. Catholic School Councils

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells reviewed the role of Catholic School Councils and the responsibilities of the Chair and/or Co-Chairs. A brief Q&A followed the presentation. The PowerPoint Presentation and the links to the Governance Policies and Administrative Operational Procedures that support the operation of Catholic School Councils will be emailed to the Chairs and Co-Chairs to share with their committee members.

C. CO-CHAIR REPORTS

1. NCPIC Meetings and Composition 2024-2025

Meetings: Co-Chair Vernelli proposed that the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee (NCPIC) meetings align with Catholic School Councils meetings from September to June during the school calendar year, commencing September 2024. The NCPIC meetings will continue to take place on a bi-monthly basis.

Membership on the NCPIC will be promoted through the school principal and Catholic School Councils in March/April of each school calendar year. NCPIC nomination forms will be made available to parents/guardians at the school and on the Board website. NCPIC nomination forms must be received no later than 4:00 p.m. on the date determined. Late or incomplete submissions will not be eligible for consideration.

Co-Chair Vernelli asked for approval of the proposal by consensus.

CARRIED

Composition: Co-Chair Vernelli, proposed that the NCPIC parent members would support all Niagara Catholic parents/guardians regardless of geographical area/school boundaries they represent.

Co-Chair Vernelli asked for approval of the proposal by consensus.

CARRIED

2. Review of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee By-Laws

Co-Chair Vernelli reviewed the NCPIC By-Laws and asked if there any questions or concerns. None were forthcoming.

Co-Chair Vernelli asked for the approval of the NCPIC By-Laws as presented by a show of hands.

CARRIED

3. Accessibility Planning Committee

Co-Chair Vernelli reported that she is the NCPIC parent representative on the Board Accessibility Planning Committee. All areas of the Board are represented on this committee. A meeting was held on October 25, 2023 at the Catholic Education Centre to review accessibility requirements for school boards. The Board Accessibility Policy and Multi-Year Strategic Plan are posted on the Board website under Accessibility. For this school year, funding has been received for projects to increase accessibility awareness with Niagara Catholic students.

D. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Faith Formation
2. Parent Engagement Events

Co-Chair Vernelli requested that all members send an email to both Co-Chairs with their intent to support the Faith Formation and/or Parent Engagement Events no later than Friday, November 17, 2023. Once the subcommittees have been formed, subcommittee meetings will be scheduled to further discuss Faith Formation and Parent Engagement Events.

E. POLICY

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

1. Safe and Accepting Schools Policy (302.6)
2. Dress Code – Secondary Uniform Policy (302.6.6)
3. Corporate Cards, Purchasing Cards, and Petty Cash Policy (600.4)

- Feedback to be submitted on behalf of the NCPIC, is to be sent to Yvonne Anderson no later than 12:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 12, 2023.
- Feedback being submitted as an individual, is to be sent directly to Anna Pisano no later than 12:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 13, 2023.

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

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells thanked Camillo Cipriano, Director of Education for his attendance and support at the meeting of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee and invited him to share a few words.

Director Cipriano, welcomed and thanked all members of the NCPIC and the Catholic School Council Chairs and Co-Chairs for their support and volunteering in our Catholic schools and school communities.

Director Cipriano reported that the Board Communications Department created the *Niagara Catholic Chronicle* as an additional resource to communicate with parents/guardians. The *Chronicle* will be provided to all parents/guardians on a monthly basis through *SchoolMessenger* to keep them updated and informed of the happenings throughout Niagara Catholic schools and school communities.

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells shared her reports.

1. Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee Annual Report

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells reviewed the NCPIC Annual Report and shared that the Catholic School Councils and the NCPIC Annual Reports were presented at the Committee of the Whole Meeting of October 10, 2023 for information.

2. Parent Study: *Mentalization, Identity and Well-Being in Adolescents: Role of Kindness*

Sandra Bosacki, Professor, Educational Studies, Brock University

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells reported that the Niagara Catholic Research and Ethics Committee approved the research project: Parent Study: *Mentalization, Identity and Well-Being in Adolescents: Role of Kindness* proposed by Sandra Bosacki, Professor, Educational Studies, Brock University. The study examines the development of child and adolescent social-cognitive skills, identity, and well-being. Parents of 11 to 18-year-olds, are invited to participate in an online interactive study that involves questionnaires and responding to short stories and videos. Compensation is provided to participants. More information about the Parent Study will be included in the November Edition of the *Niagara Catholic Chronicle*.

3. Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education (OAPCE)

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells provided background information about OAPCE and their support of Catholic education. Niagara Catholic is seeking a parent member to represent Niagara Catholic, as the Niagara Catholic OAPCE Regional Director for the 2023-2024 school year. Interested parties are to complete and submit the OAPCE application form no later than 4:00 p.m. on Friday, November 17, 2023.

4. NCPIC Financial Report

Superintendent Forsyth-Sells reported that the Ministry of Education has provided funds to all Parent Involvement Committees to support parent engagement. The Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee received \$8,557.00 and each elementary and secondary school received \$500.00 for the 2023-2024 school year.

The Ministry of Education has also provided funds to school boards through the GSN to support parent engagement. Niagara Catholic has received \$30,500 to support parent engagement projects for the 2023-2024 school year. Catholic School Councils may apply for additional funds up to \$1000.00 to support parent engagement activities at the school level through an application process. Applications and funding allocations will be approved in alignment with Ministry criteria, and on a first come, first served basis.

G. SEAC REPORT

Alexandria Attree reported that:

- the Niagara Catholic District School Board embraces diversity in Niagara Catholic schools and supports the educational needs of all students. Special education students are eligible and welcome to attend school until they reach 21 years of age.
 - Director Cipriano shared that students from K-12 are supported throughout their educational journey so that they may live a more independent life.
- SEAC meetings take place on a monthly basis on the first Tuesday of the month at the Catholic Education Centre from 6:30p.m. to 8:30p.m. and are open to the public and are livestreamed.
- Niagara Catholic is fortunate to have a variety of committee members that sit on SEAC (Autism Ontario Niagara Region, Bethesda, Community Living, Down Syndrome Niagara, Learning Disabilities Association Niagara Region, Mainstream, Niagara Children's Centre, and Pathstone) as well as Trustees of the Board and Board staff members.
- Niagara Catholic is supporting and bringing awareness to Niagara College's Community Integration through Cooperative Education (CICE) Program for students with intellectual disabilities and other significant learning challenges. Students who meet the admission requirements and complete the program will obtain a college level certificate and develop the skills necessary to transition into paid employment.

H. BISHOP/DIOCESAN REPORT

Nil report-regrets sent.

I. STUDENT SENATE REPORT

Myla Novak reported that:

- the Secondary Student Senate is comprised of two students from each secondary school and they meet on a monthly basis to discuss various student lead initiatives.
- the Lead Out Loud Conference will take place on November 15, 2023 with the elementary student senate members. This year, Secondary Student Senate has partnered with the organization *unlearn*. *unlearn* will be a keynote speaker and will provide interactive seminars for workshops for all participants.

- Secondary Student Senate attended the When Faith Meets Pedagogy Conference held in Toronto and Fr. Tony Ricard was the guest speaker.

J. STAFF REPORTS

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

Highlights included:

- Monthly Masses and the partnerships between schools and parishes
- Meet the Teacher Curriculum Night
- Co-curricular Activities and Educational Field Trips
- Emergency Response Drills (Fire Drill, Shelter in Place, Lockdown)
- Social Justice Activities (Food Drives, Terry Fox Walk, Pilgrimage, Gift Baskets, Toy Drives)
- National Truth and Reconciliation Day/Treaties Recognition Week
- Professional Development for Staff to advance student achievement and well-being
- Progress Reports and Parent Teacher Conferences
- Grade 8 Transitions, Take Your Kids to Work Day, Skilled Trades and Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM)
- Advent preparations and the anticipation of the birth of Jesus

MOTION:

Moved by: Leanne Prince

THAT the meeting of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee be extended by 15 minutes to complete the agenda items.

CARRIED

K. TRUSTEE REPORT

Trustee Di Lorenzo shared that all stakeholders in Catholic education are encouraged and welcome to attend the meetings of the Board as they are open to the public and livestreamed. Information and the link to join the livestream are available on the Board website.

- The next Board Meeting will take place on November 28, 2023 at 6:30p.m. at the Catholic Education Centre.
- The Annual Organizational Meeting of the Board will take place on December 5, 2023 at 6:00p.m. The elections of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board for the upcoming year will take place at this meeting.

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

Co-Chair Annen would like to initiate a Prom Project subcommittee to support Niagara Catholic students. Leanne Prince added that we should also include the faith component and include First Eucharist and Confirmation. Interested parties are to send an email to both Co-Chairs with their intent no later than Friday, November 17, 2023.

M. NEXT MEETING: Thursday, January 11, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. at the Catholic Education Centre.

N. CLOSING PRAYER: Superintendent Forsyth-Sells led the closing prayer.

O. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by: Brenda Annen

THAT the November 2, 2023 meeting of the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee be adjourned.

CARRIED

This meeting was adjourned at 8:45p.m.
