

**TO: NIAGARA CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
BOARD MEETING
MARCH 24, 2026**

PUBLIC SESSION

**TOPIC: UNAPPROVED MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE
WHOLE MEETING OF MARCH 10, 2026**

The following recommendations are being presented for the Board's consideration from the Committee of the Whole Meeting of March 10, 2026:

7.1.1 Accessibility Customer Service Policy (800.8.1)

THAT the Niagara Catholic District School Board approve the Accessibility Customer Service Policy (800.8.1), as amended.

7.1.2 Supporting Children and Students with Prevalent Medical Conditions Policy (302.1)

THAT the Niagara Catholic District School Board approve the Supporting Children and Students with Prevalent Medical Conditions Policy (302.1), as presented.



MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING TUESDAY, MARCH 10, 2026

Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee of the Whole of the Niagara Catholic District School Board, held on Tuesday, March 10, 2026 in the Father Kenneth Burns c.s.c. Board Room, at the Catholic Education Centre, 427 Rice Road, Welland.

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chair Di Lorenzo.

A. ROUTINE MATTERS

1. Opening Prayer

Opening Prayer was led by Trustee Huibers

2. Roll Call

Chair Di Lorenzo noted that Trustee Benoit, and Trustee Burkholder were asked to be excused and that Trustee Bruzzese joined electronically.

Trustee	Present	Present Electronically	Absent	Excused
Natalia Benoit				✓
Joseph Bruzzese		✓		
Rhianon Burkholder				✓
Danny Di Lorenzo	✓			
Larry Huibers	✓			
Doug Joyner	✓			
Jim Marino	✓			
Paul Turner	✓			
Student Trustees				
Taylor Sexton	✓			
Mason Pasma	✓			

The following staff were in attendance:

Camillo Cipriano, Director of Education; **Lee Ann Forsyth-Sells, Kim Kinney, Gino Pizzoferrato, Pat Rocca, Domenic Massi, Joseph Zaroda**, Superintendents of Education; **Giancarlo Vetrone**, Associate Director, Corporate Services; **Julia Tiessen**, Executive Officer of Human Resources; **Anna Lisa Conidi**, Recording Secretary/Administrative Assistant, Corporate Services

3. **Approval of the Agenda**

Moved by Trustee Marino

THAT the Committee of the Whole approve the Agenda of the Committee of the Whole Meeting of March 10, 2026, as presented.

CARRIED

4. **Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

No Declaration of Conflict of Interest was declared with any items on the Agenda.

5. **Approval of Minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting of February 10, 2026**

Moved by Trustee Joyner

THAT the Committee of the Whole approve the Minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting of February 10, 2026, as presented.

CARRIED

6. **Consent Agenda Items**

6.1 **Staff Development Department Professional Development Opportunities**

Presented for information.

6.2 **Niagara Student Transportation Services 2025-2026 Annual Plan**

Presented for information.

6.3 **In Camera Items G1**

Moved by Trustee Turner

THAT the Committee of the Whole adopt consent agenda items.

CARRIED

B. PRESENTATIONS

C. COMMITTEE AND STAFF REPORTS

1. **Trustee Determination and Distribution**

Director Cipriano provided background information and introduced Associate Director Vetrone to present the Trustee Determination and Distribution Report.

Associate Director Vetrone presented the Trustee Determination and Distribution Report for information. Director Cipriano and Associate Director Vetrone answered question of the Trustees.

2. Monthly Updates

2.1 Student Trustees' Update

Taylor Sexton and Mason Pasma, Student Trustees, presented a brief verbal update on the current activities of the Student Senate.

2.2 Senior Staff Good News Update

Senior Staff highlights included:

Superintendent Kinney

- Thirty Niagara Catholic staff participated in a Lenten faith formation retreat at the Niagara Catholic Launch Center, reflecting on Jesus's self-giving love through the Way of the Cross. Participants built their own wooden crosses, symbolically entrusting their burdens to Christ, guided by Acting Board Chaplain James Carnegie and Religion & Family Life Consultant Amanda Wagg Boyer. The evening included prayer, reflection, and a shared meal.

Superintendent Zaroda

- Niagara Catholic Secondary Schools celebrated major achievements, winning three Southern Ontario Secondary School Association Athletics championships and advancing multiple teams to Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations (OFSAA). Holy Cross Catholic Secondary School Girls Hockey, Denis Morris Catholic High School Boys Hockey and St Michael Catholic High School Boys Hockey are advancing to OFSSA.
- Saint Paul Catholic Highschool, teacher Sheila De Luca's civics class raised over \$1,900 for the South Niagara Hospital campaign, demonstrating strong student leadership and community engagement. Her second-semester students also organized a team of 67 student participants for the Coldest Night of the Year walk, raising an additional \$1,035 for Project Share. These accomplishments highlight the dedication of students, staff, and coaches across the system.

Julia Tiessen Executive Officer of Human Resources

- The Niagara Catholic District School Boards has been selected as the recipient of the 2025 Experiential Education Community Partner of the Year Award for the Education Faculty. The award recognizes the Board's exceptional support of experiential learning and its meaningful impact on Brock students and the broader community. Special acknowledgment was given to the Human Resources team and to associate teachers and principals for their ongoing mentorship, dedication and placement support. The Board looks forward to continuing its strong partnership with Brock University.

D. GOVERNANCE POLICIES

1. Governance Policies for Recommendation to the Board

1.1. Accessibility Customer Service Policy (800.8.1)

Superintendent Pizzoferrato presented feedback received from the vetting process and highlighted recommended amendments to the Accessibility Customer Service Policy (800.8.1) following the vetting process.

Following discussion, the Committee of the Whole recommended the following additional amendments:

- Second line add back “the Board” after (AODA)

Moved by Trustee Bruzzese

THAT the Committee of the Whole recommend that the Niagara Catholic District School Board approve the Accessibility Customer Service Policy (800.8.1), as amended.

APPROVED

1.2. Supporting Children and Students with Prevalent Medical Conditions Policy (302.1)

Superintendent Pizzoferrato presented feedback received from the vetting process and highlighted recommended amendments to the Supporting Children and Students with Medical Conditions Policy (302.1) following the vetting process.

- No amendment

Moved by Trustee Joyner

THAT the Committee of the Whole recommend that the Niagara Catholic District School Board approve the Supporting Children and Students with Medical Conditions Policy (302.1), as presented.

APPROVED

2. Governance Policies Prior to Vetting

Nil

3. Governance Policy Review Schedule

Director Cipriano presented the Governance Policy Review Schedule.

E. INFORMATION

1. Trustee Information

1.1 Letter – Avon Maitland District School Board

Chair Di Lorenzo presented the letter from the Avon Maitland District School Board for information.

Trustees discussed and highlighted the information that was presented in the letter.

Trustee Marino made a recommendation that the Board motions to create a letter to endorse and support Avon Maitland District School Board's position.

Moved by Trustee Marino

THAT the Committee of the Whole recommend that the Niagara Catholic District School Board bring forward a letter of endorsement and support of the Avon Maitland District School Board's position for approval at the March 2026 Board Meeting.

APPROVED

Trustee Joyner made a recommendation that the Chair write a formal letter to the Minister of Education and the Premier outlining the role and importance of Catholic School Board Trustees. The Chair will work with the Board's communications officer to draft the letter, which will be brought back to the next board meeting for approval. To avoid concerns about advocacy using board or school resources, the letter will not be posted on the Board or school websites. Once approved, trustees will individually share the letter through their own social media and with media outlets.

Moved by Trustee Joyner

THAT the Committee of the Whole recommend that the Chair of the Niagara Catholic District School Board bring forward a formal letter to the Premier and Minister of Education outlining the role and importance of Catholic School Board Trustees which each Trustee will individually share on their own social media and with media outlet for approval at the March Board Meeting.

APPROVED

1.2 Julia's Hope Cup

Trustee Turner thanked Senior Administration, all administration staff, and all Elementary and Secondary Schools across the Board for the fantastic turnout and support for Julia's Hope Cup. The event raised \$107, 000.

1.3 Multi-Year Strategic Planning Workshop – April 14, 2026

Director Cipriano highlight the Multi- Year Strategic Planning Workshop date scheduled for April 14, 2026 at 4:00 p.m. asking all Trustees to save the date.

F. OTHER BUSINESS

1. General Discussion to Plan for Future Action

Nil

G. BUSINESS IN CAMERA

Moved by Trustee Marino

THAT the Committee of the Whole move into the In Camera Session.

CARRIED

The Committee of the Whole moved into the In Camera Session of the Committee of the Whole Meeting at 7:44 p.m. and reconvened at 7:55 p.m.

H. REPORT ON THE IN-CAMERA SESSION

Moved by Trustee Marino

THAT the Committee of the Whole report the motions from the In Camera Session of the Committee of the Whole Meeting of March 10, 2026.

CARRIED

SECTION B: STUDENT TRUSTEES EXCLUDED

Moved by Trustee Turner

THAT the Committee of the Whole approve the Minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting - In Camera Session (Section B: Student Trustees Excluded) held on February 10, 2026, as presented.

CARRIED (Item G1)

The Board received information on the Secondary Principal and Elementary Principal Pool Assignments.

I. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Trustee Joyner

THAT the March 10, 2026 Committee of the Whole Meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

This meeting was adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting of the Niagara Catholic District School Board held on **March 10, 2026.**

Approved on **April 14, 2026.**

Danny Di Lorenzo
Chair of the Board

Camillo Cipriano
Director of Education/Secretary -Treasurer

**TO: NIAGARA CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
BOARD MEETING
MARCH 24, 2026**

PUBLIC SESSION

TITLE: ACCESSIBILITY CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY (800.8.1)

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Niagara Catholic District School Board approve the Accessibility Customer Service Policy (800.8.1), as amended.

Prepared by: Gino Pizzoferrato, Superintendent of Education

Presented by: Gino Pizzoferrato, Superintendent of Education

Recommended by: Committee of the Whole

Date: March 24, 2026



Niagara Catholic District School Board
ACCESSIBILITY CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY
STATEMENT OF GOVERNANCE POLICY

800.8.1 – Schools and Community Councils

Policy No. 800.8.1

Adopted Date: December 15, 2009

Latest Reviewed/Revised Date: February 23, 2021

In keeping with the Mission, Vision and Values of the Niagara Catholic District School Board, and in alignment with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), the Board is committed to providing barrier free educational programs, services and facilities. The Board strives to ensure equal access for all while promoting independence, dignity, and respect for students, parents/guardians, staff and members of the community.

The provision of educational programs and services involves the positive implementation of attitudes, actions, structures, and systems that support the continual improvement of accessibility and customer service in the Niagara Catholic District School Board. The Board is committed to providing equal opportunity of access to programs, and services offered by the Board in publicly accessible locations.

The Board defines a customer as any individual who uses the services of the Board, other than a student or Board staff, as they are covered by the Education Act and Regulations, various Employment and Labour Acts, and Board Governance Policies and Administrative and Operational Procedures.

The Director of Education will issue [*Administrative Operational Procedures*](#) for the implementation of this Policy.

References

- [*Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 \(AODA\)*](#)
- [*Ontario Regulation 191/11, Integrated Accessibility Standards*](#)
- [*Ontario Education Services Corporation*](#)
- [*Ontario Human Rights Code*](#)
- [*Niagara Catholic District School Board Policies/Procedures/Documents*](#)
 - [*Accessibility Standards Policy \(800.8\)*](#)
 - [*Access to Board Premises \(302.6.3\) Administrative Operational Procedures*](#)
 - [*Complaint Resolution Policy \(800.3\)*](#)
 - [*Niagara Catholic Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2022-2027*](#)

Adopted Date:	December 15, 2009
Revision History:	February 24, 2015 December 20, 2016 February 23, 2021

**TO: NIAGARA CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
BOARD MEETING
MARCH 24, 2026**

PUBLIC SESSION

**TITLE: SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND STUDENTS WITH
PREVALENT MEDICAL CONDITIONS POLICY (302.1)**

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Niagara Catholic District School Board approve the Supporting Children and Students with Prevalent Medical Conditions Policy (302.1), as presented.

Prepared by: Gino Pizzoferrato, Superintendent of Education

Presented by: Gino Pizzoferrato, Superintendent of Education

Recommended by: Committee of the Whole

Date: March 24, 2026



Niagara Catholic District School Board

**SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND STUDENTS WITH PREVALENT
MEDICAL CONDITIONS POLICY**

STATEMENT OF GOVERNANCE POLICY

300 – School/Students

Policy No 302.1

Adopted Date: February 26, 2019

Latest Reviewed/Revised Date: January 25, 2022

In keeping with the Mission, Vision, and Values of the Niagara Catholic District School Board, and in alignment with PPM 161-Supporting Children and Students with Prevalent Medical Conditions, prevalent medical conditions are recognized as potentially life-threatening due to the complexity and severity of the condition(s). These prevalent medical conditions include anaphylaxis, asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and other prevalent medical conditions, including chronic illness, requiring an Individual Student Plan of Care.

The Board recognizes that a whole-school approach is essential for creating and sustaining healthy and safe school environments in which students can learn and thrive. Students with prevalent medical conditions are empowered to become confident and capable learners as they reach their full potential of self-management to the best of their ability.

The Director of Education will issue [*Administrative Operational Procedures*](#) for the implementation of this policy.

References

- [*Allergy Asthma Information Association*](#)
- [*Asthma Canada*](#)
- [*Anaphylaxis Canada*](#)
- [*Anaphylaxis in Schools & Other Settings, 3rd Edition, Canadian Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology*](#)
- [*Canadian Pediatric Society*](#)
- [*Sabrina's Law, 2005, S.O. 2005, c.7*](#)
- [*Ryan's Law, Ensuring Asthma Friendly Schools-2015*](#)
- [*Diabetes Canada*](#)
- [*Diabetes at School*](#)
- [*Epilepsy Ontario*](#)
- [*Epilepsy Niagara*](#)
- [*Ontario Lung Association*](#)
- [*Lung Health Foundation-Ontario*](#)
- [*Ophea*](#)
- [*Ontario Education Services Corporation*](#)
- [*The Good Samaritan Act*](#)
- [*Education Act Section 265-Duties of Principal*](#)
- [*Regulation 298 s20-Duties of Teachers*](#)
- [*Ministry of Education Policy Program Memorandum No, 161 – Supporting Children and Students with Prevalent Medical Conditions*](#)
- [*Ministry of Education Policy Program Memorandum No, 81 – Provision of Health Support Services in School Settings*](#)
- [*Ministry of Education Policy Program Memorandum No. 149*](#)
- [*Niagara Catholic District School Board Policies/Procedures*](#)
 - [*Administration of Medication \(302.2\) AOP*](#)

- [*Educational Field Trip \(400.2\) AOP*](#)
- [*Safe and Accepting Schools Policy \(302.6\)*](#)

Adopted Date:	February 26, 2019
Revision History:	January 25, 2022

**TO: NIAGARA CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
BOARD MEETING
MARCH 24, 2026**

PUBLIC SESSION

**TOPIC: APPROVED MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION
ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SEAC) MEETING OF
FEBRUARY 4, 2026**

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Niagara Catholic District School Board receive the Approved Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of February 4, 2026, as presented for information.



NIAGARA CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

**MINUTES OF THE
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

February 4, 2026

Minutes of the Meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee, held on Wednesday, February 4, 2026 at 6:30 p.m., at the Catholic Education Centre, 427 Rice Road, Welland, ON L3C 7C1

Chair Monique Somma called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

A. ROUTINE MATTERS

1. **Land Acknowledgement**
Susy Walsh led the Land Acknowledgment
2. **Opening Prayer**
Chair Somma led the opening prayer.
3. **Roll Call**

Members	Affiliations	Present In-person	Present Electronically	Excused	Absent
Jessica Thomas	Autism Ontario Niagara Region				X
Alyson Wilson	Bethesda Services			X	
Monique Somma (CHAIR)	Community Living (Pelham/Welland)	X			
Sara Wencel & DJ Holmes	Community Living (Port Colborne/Wainfleet)	X			
Andrea Pede	Down Syndrome Niagara		X		
Aishah Sonekan	Learning Disabilities Association of Niagara		X		
Erica Simmanivong-Elizarraras	Mainstream				X
Chris Tawil (Kylee Daley)	Niagara Children’s Centre	X			
Michelle Toy	Pathstone	X			
Patricia Ferrie	Inclusion West Niagara	X			
Community Representative					
Krystine Donato					X
Indigenous Representative					
Cindi Lee Ecker-Flagg					X
Secondary Student Senate Representative					
Lucas Bishop			X		
Trustees					
Trustee, Natalia Benoit				X	
Trustee, Jim Marino		X			

Regrets: Alyson Wilson, Bethesda

The following staff were in attendance:

Gino Pizzoferrato, Superintendent of Education, Jenna Young, Roxanne Rees, Nicole Royer, Grace Brochu, Lisa Clark, Susy Walsh, Danny Giancola, Kelly Keighan, Ashley Prohaszka, Jessica Mastroianni

4. **Approval of the Agenda**

Moved by: Andrea Pede

Seconded by: Chris Tawil

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the agenda of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of February 4, 2026 as presented.

CARRIED

5. **Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

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

6. **Approval of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of January 7, 2026**

Moved by: DJ Holmes

Seconded by: Patricia Ferrie

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of January 7, 2026 as presented.

CARRIED

B. PRESENTATIONS – Dr. Poling Bork

Dr. Bork presented:

Information and resources on Selective Mutism from her perspective as a parent and researcher.

The link below is a video she shared on her self-modeling technique for use inside the school:

[Video Self-Modelling Technique Video](#)

C. POLICY REVIEW – Monique Somma

- The current changes to the two policies out for vetting were reviewed:
 - Accessibility Customer Service Policy 800.8.1
 - Supporting Students with Prevalent Medical Conditions Policy 302.1
- Any feedback on the policies can be sent to Jenna Young: jenna.young@ncdsb.com

D. CHAIR'S REPORT-*Chair Somma*

No report.

E. AGENCY REPORTS

1. Learning Disabilities Association of Niagara Region – *Aishah Sonekan*

Aishah Sonekan reported:

- High School Social Program is cancelled for the winter season due to low enrollment; aiming for a spring relaunch
- Jump Math is cancelled for the winter 2026 season due to staffing limitations; expected to return in September 2026
- Applications for spring/summer programs like Reading Rocks open Monday, March 2, 2026 at 12:00 p.m.
- LDNR is hosting a trivia night on March 6, 2026 at the Armenian Community Center
 - Registration is now open for both full tables (8 people) and single tickets

2. Niagara Children's Centre – *Chris Tawil*

Chris Tawil reported:

- Functional Checklist meeting begin next month. Clinicians are meeting with school board reps to coordinate support for children entering school in September 2026.
- A major priority is currently problem-solving ways to better serve and decrease the number of children on waitlists.
- The Centre is preparing for a formal accreditation process scheduled for the spring
- The Centre has a wide variety of active groups listed on their website, categorized by:
 - Age groups: Specific programs for toddlers and school-aged children.
 - Seasonal: A high volume of groups scheduled for March Break.
 - Support & Behavior: Programs focused on caregiver support and behavioral sessions for both children and parents.

3. Pathstone Mental Health – *Michelle Toy*

Michelle Toy reported:

- Pathstone Mental Health has introduced a new collaborative service model called the Choice and Partnership Approach (CAPA). This replaces previous terminology like “brief” or family intervention.
 - The process still begins with a standard intake interview.

- Families meet with a therapist to collaboratively set specific goals. Depending on their needs, this results in one of three paths:
 - Direct Strategies: Families receive immediate advice/strategies and finish after the appointment
 - Partnership Program: Referrals for families requiring longer-term treatment
 - Specialty Programs: Referrals to existing intensive services like day treatment or outreach.
- The main change is the language and structure of how families enter the system. The focus is now on “Choice” (initial goal setting) and “Partnership” (ongoing treatment).

4. Community Living (Port Colborne/Wainfleet) – DJ Holmes

No report.

5. Inclusion West Niagara – Patricia Ferrie

No report.

6. Down Syndrome Niagara - Andrea Pedde

Andrea Pedde reported:

- DSN is pushing for evidence-based “structured literacy” and explicit instruction rather than “sight word only” methods. They are encouraging families to review IEPs this February to ensure high expectation and proven practices are being met.
- There is a significant concern regarding inconsistent EA support due to national shortages. For students with Down syndrome, consistent staffing and specific training are viewed as a necessity for stability, not just a preference.
- World Down Syndrome Day is March 21 and the theme is “Together Against Loneliness”
 - The campaign highlights those social barriers and low expectations- rather than a lack of desire for connection- cause intense loneliness in the community.
 - DSN will host a bowling outing on Saturday, March 21, to celebrate.
- Annual Trivia Night is scheduled for Saturday, April 18, at the Merritton Community Centre.
 - Details for both the bowling and trivia events will be posted on DSN’s social media and their website.

7. Mainstream - Erica Simmanivong-Elizarraras

No report.

8. Bethesda Services – Alyson Wilson

No report.

9. Autism Ontario Niagara Region – Jessica Thomas

No report.

10. Community Living (Welland/Pelham) – Monique Somma

No report.

F. COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE REPORT - Krystine Donato

No report.

G. INDIGENOUS REPRESENTATIVE REPORT - Cindi Lee Ecker-Flagg

No report.

H. SECONDARY STUDENT SENATE REPRESENTATIVE REPORT- Lucas Bishop

Lucas Bishop reported:

- Secondary students have finished exams, and the transition from Semester 1 to Semester 2 is officially underway following “turn-around day” last Friday.
- Schools are honoring Black History Month throughout February with activities like featuring a different Black artist each morning on the announcements, sharing their background and playing their music to raise awareness.
- Following a successful pilot at Mount Carmel last year, the Special Olympics program is expanding to all high schools.
 - Saint Paul is hosting the event on Thursday, February 12.

I. STAFF REPORTS

1. Elementary Principal – Susy Walsh

Susy Walsh reported:

- Elementary schools are currently hosting open house events for incoming students.
- Parents who missed the open house are encouraged to call their local school directly to register as soon as possible. Early registration is vital for the board to plan for student success.

- Kids Helping Kids campaign is taking place next week across all elementary schools. The campaign supports the Niagara Children's Centre and Niagara Foundation for Catholic Education.
 - Schools will host a variety of themed spirit days in support of the campaign.

2. Secondary Principal – Nicole Royer and Roxanne Rees

Nicole Royer and Roxanne Rees reported:

- Exam turnaround day involves students visiting all eight classes in a single day to close out grades and start new programs.
- For Resource and Special Education teachers, February feels like “starting over” as they must re-establish strategies, strengths, and communication lines with a completely new set of classroom teachers.
- Student Success Teams (Admin, Guidance and Resource Teachers) are meeting with students who did not achieve credits in Semester 1 to adjust their academic pathways and ensure future success.
- High schools are seeing a significant influx of new families moving to the Niagara region. For example, Notre Dame registered nearly 40 new students for this semester alone.
- Schools are actively “de-streaming” or moving students between classes to better bit their needs. To minimize disruption, some schools try to run different levels of the same course concurrently.
- A new round of peer tutors is starting, which helps build social relationships and provides extra support within special education classrooms.
- The second semester is typically a high-activity period for Special Education students participating in the Co-op program.

3. Student Support – Danny Giancola

Danny Giancola reported:

- Student Support Learning Sessions for Educational Resource Teachers and Special Education Classroom Teachers:
 - Secondary ERTs and Special Education Class teachers gathered at the end of January in a “Family of Schools” format at each of the secondary school site to allow time for elementary ERTs and secondary ERTs to meet and begin planning for September transitions. The session began with a virtual presentation from Student Support staff followed by in-person presentations and discussion led by Secondary staff regarding the Gr. 8 to Gr. 9 transitions.
- Kids Helping Kids:
 - The 28th Annual Kids Helping Kids fundraiser will run from Monday, February 9th – Tuesday, February 17th. Schools can participate in a variety of fun events such as Creative Hair Day, Jersey Day and/or Hat Day and the funds that are raised will jointly support the Niagara Children's Centre, and the Niagara Foundation for Catholic Education. This information has been outlined in a system memo.

- **Term II IEPs:**
 - Elementary and Secondary IEPs are currently being developed by teachers, support staff, and families. They are scheduled for completion and distribution starting the beginning of next week.
- **Kindergarten Transition to School:**
 - This month, Student Support Coordinators will meet with IQC (Inclusion – Quality Coordinator) agency staff to begin discussions concerning students entering Kindergarten who may need some individualized transition support.
- **Brock University – Ability Empowerment Day**
 - Through a secondary memo, we have shared information concerning Brock University’s Ability Empowerment Day. Students have been invited to discover accommodation opportunities in post-secondary education. This event has been designed to help students learn about academic opportunities, services and support to help them succeed and imagine an inclusive world where all people are treated equitably in education. This event is taking place on Thursday, February 19 from 10 a.m. - 2:45 p.m. The goal of the event is to create a space where students can come together to participate in a forum to learn about different departments and services, exchange ideas, gain perspectives, and learn advocacy skills centered around post-secondary education.
- **Upcoming Feb. 13 PD Day**
 - As part of the upcoming Feb. 13 PA day, Student Support staff will be joining a school staff to participate in the activities for the day. The Student Support Coordinators have been asked to present to the Child and Youth Workers and Early Childhood Educators concerning our Student Support Model and Services. We will be providing a short presentation on the support and services available through our staff.

4. Superintendent Pizzoferrato – Gino Pizzoferrato

Superintendent Pizzoferrato reported:

- A new working committee named the Student Aggression Prevention and Staff Support Committee:
 - A partnership created by Human Resources involving Senior Administration, Health and Safety, CUPE leadership, and frontline staff (specifically EAs).
 - A staff survey was conducted to identify specific gaps and challenges in the current school environment.
- The committee is reviewing how new and casual EAs are integrated into schools. Goals include:
 - Standardizing the “onboarding experience” across all schools.
 - Ensuring immediate access to critical documents (Safety Packages, Behavior Support Plans).
 - Establishing formal mentoring by connecting new hires and experienced EAs, Resource Teachers, or Principals.
- Audits of secondary special education classrooms are being used to help align elementary support pathways, providing families with a more consistent experience as students transition through the system.
- An internal podcast has been created to discuss the committee’s work and will be shared if possible.

J. TRUSTEE REPORTS - *Trustee Marino*

Trustee Marino reported:

- The Annual Benefit Fundraising Gala for the Niagara Foundation of Catholic Education is being held on Thursday, March 5, at Club Roma.

K. NIAGARA CATHOLIC PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

No report.

L. NEW BUSINESS/AGENDA ITEMS

- Future presentation by Susy Walsh on the Resource Centres
- Future off-site meeting locations
- Budget report from Superintendent Vetrone
- Student and Family Support Offices

M. NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, March 4, 2026 at 6:30 p.m., at The Catholic Education Centre.

N. CLOSING PRAYER/MOMENT OF SILENCE: Chair Somma led a moment of silence.

O. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by: Chair Somma

Seconded by: Andrea Pedé

That the February 4, 2026, meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee be adjourned.

CARRIED

This meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

**TO: NIAGARA CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
BOARD MEETING
MARCH 24, 2026**

PUBLIC SESSION

**TOPIC: APPROVED MINUTES OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE
MEETING OF NOVEMBER 19, 2025**

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Niagara Catholic District School Board receive the Approved Minutes of the Audit Committee Meeting of November 19, 2025, as presented for information.



MINUTES OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING PUBLIC SESSION

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2025

Minutes of the Audit Committee Meeting (public session) of the Niagara Catholic District School Board, held on Wednesday, November 19, 2025, in the Father Kenneth Burns c.s.c. Board Room at the Catholic Education Centre, 427 Rice Road, Welland.

The meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m. by Chair Trustee Huibers.

A. ROUTINE MATTERS

1. Opening Prayer

Opening Prayer was led by Giancarlo Vetrone.

2. Roll Call

<u>Trustee Committee Members</u>	Present	Present Electronically	Absent	Excused
Trustee Natalia Benoit			✓	
Trustee Joe Bruzzese		✓		
Trustee Larry Huibers	✓			
<u>External Committee Members</u>	Present	Present Electronically	Absent	Excused
Nicole Liew		✓		
Charles Skelton		✓		

Resources to the Audit Committee were in attendance:

- Giancarlo Vetrone**, Associate Director of Education-Corporate Services
- Rosa Rocca**, Finance Officer
- Andrea Eltherington**, Regional Internal Audit Manager
- Melanie Dugard**, Doane Grant Thornton LLP
- Chris Guglielmi**, Doane Grant Thornton LLP

Staff in attendance:

Grant Frost, Chief Information Officer
William Mancini, IT Engineer
John Forte, Privacy and Risk-Advisor
Shari Bush, Recording Secretary/Administrative Assistant, Business and Financial Services

3. Approval of the Public Agenda of November 19, 2025

Moved by Trustee Bruzzese.

THAT the Niagara Catholic Audit Committee approve the Agenda of the Audit Committee Meeting (Public Session) of Wednesday, November 19, 2025.

CARRIED

4. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

4.1 Declaration of Conflict of Interest re: Agenda (verbal)

No Declarations of Conflicts of Interest were declared with any items on the agenda.

5. Approval of Minutes of the Audit Committee Meeting (Public Session)

5.1 Wednesday, September 18, 2025

Moved by Trustee Bruzzese.

THAT the Niagara Catholic Audit Committee approve the Minutes of the Audit Committee Meeting (Public Session) of September 18, 2025.

CARRIED

B. REPORTS

1. Regional Internal Audit Status Report

Andrea Eltherington presented the Regional Internal Audit Status Report to the committee members.

C. BUSINESS IN CAMERA

Moved by Trustee Bruzzese.

THAT the Niagara Catholic Audit Committee move into the In Camera Session

CARRIED

The Niagara Catholic Audit Committee moved into the In Camera Session of the Committee Meeting at 10:11 a.m. and reconvened at 10:18 a.m.

D. REPORTS ON THE IN-CAMERA SESSION

Andrea Eltherington, Regional Internal Audit Manager presented the Niagara Catholic District School Board Regional Internal Audit Status Report-Audits In-Process to the committee members for information.

Andrea Eltherington, Regional Internal Audit Manager presented the Niagara Catholic District School Board Regional Internal Audit Status Report-Open Audit Recommendations to the committee members for information.

Melanie Dugard and Chris Guglielmi from Doane Grant Thornton LLP, presented the Draft Reports to the Audit Committee for the year ended August 31, 2025 for recommendation.

Moved by Member Skelton.

THAT the Niagara Catholic Audit Committee recommended the Draft Reports for the year ended August 31, 2025.

CARRIED

E. OTHER BUSINESS

Rosa Rocca, Finance Officer presented the Draft Consolidated Financial Statements for approval to the committee.

Moved by Member Skelton

THAT the Niagara Catholic Audit Committee approve the Draft Consolidated Financial Statements as presented.

CARRIED

F. FUTURE MEETINGS

Next Audit Committee Meeting is Wednesday, March 11, 2026 at 10:00 a.m.

G. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Member Liew.

THAT the November 19, 2025 meeting of the Niagara Catholic Audit Committee be adjourned.

CARRIED

Meeting was adjourned at 10:41 a.m.