



NIAGARA CATHOLIC  
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

## MINUTES OF THE INAUGURAL MEETING OF THE BOARD

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2018  
7:00 P.M.

*DENIS MORRIS CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL  
40 GLEN MORRIS DR., ST. CATHARINES*

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Minutes of the Inaugural Meeting of the Niagara Catholic District School Board, held on Tuesday, December 4, 2018, at Denis Morris Catholic High School, 40 Glen Morris Dr., St. Catharines.

### A. ROUTINE MATTERS

1. *Meeting Call to Order – John Crocco, Director of Education/Secretary-Treasurer*

The meeting was called to order at 7:20 p.m. by Chief Executive Officer and Director of Education/Secretary-Treasurer John Crocco, in accordance with section 208-4 of the Education Act.

Director Crocco, on behalf of all in attendance, thanked Bishop Gerard Bergie for celebrating the Commissioning Mass of Trustees and for participating in the Inaugural Meeting of the Board.

Appreciation and gratitude was expressed to Principal Di Lorenzo, the students, Choir, Prefects, Student Council and staff of Denis Morris Catholic High School for hosting and participating in the Inaugural Meeting.

Director Crocco welcomed the Honourable Madame Justice Jane Milanetti; Board Solicitor, Marc DiGirolamo, Principals, Vice-Principals, Administrators, staff, family friends, partners and guests to the Mass and Inaugural Meeting of the Board.

The Singing of our National Anthem was led by Denis Morris students Ester Choi and Emily Driscoll.

Director Crocco read a Land Acknowledgement.

2. *Opening Prayer*

The Director welcomed Bishop Gerard Bergie, Bishop of the Diocese of St. Catharines. Bishop Bergie opened the 2018 Inaugural Meeting of the Board with a prayer.

Bishop Bergie offered brief comments on the importance and impact of Catholic education.

Director Crocco, on behalf of the new Board of Trustees, students and staff, presented Bishop Bergie with a gift of appreciation.

3. **Roll Call**

Director Crocco indicated that all Trustees-Elect and Student Trustees were in attendance.

<b>Trustee</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Present Electronically</b>	<b>Absent</b>	<b>Excused</b>
Rhianon Burkholder	✓			
Kathy Burtnik	✓			
Frank Fera	✓			
Larry Huibers	✓			
Daniel Moody	✓			
Leanne Prince	✓			
Dino Sicoli	✓			
Paul Turner	✓			
<b>Student Trustees</b>				
Jade Bilodeau	✓			
Madison McKinney	✓			

The following staff were in attendance:

**John Crocco**, Director of Education; **Yolanda Baldasaro**, **Ted Farrell**, **Lee Ann Forsyth-Sells**, **Frank Iannantuono**, **Pat Rocca**, Superintendents of Education; **Giancarlo Vetrone**, Superintendent of Business & Financial Services; **Scott Whitwell**, Controller of Facilities Services; **Anna Pisano**, Recording Secretary/Administrative Assistant, Corporate Services & Communications

Special Guests: **Bishop Gerard Bergie**, Bishop of St. Catharines Diocese; **Honourable Madame Justice Jane Milanetti**; **Marc DiGirolamo**, Board Solicitor

4. **Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

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

5. **Returns of Election**

In accordance with Board By-Laws section 7, subsection 4 and the Education Act, Director Crocco presented the Returns of Election as certified by municipal clerks.

6. **Declaration of Office and Oath of Allegiance**

Honourable Madame Justice Milanetti offered words of congratulations to all Trustees-Elect. Justice Milanetti with Bishop Bergie, and assisted by Director of Education Crocco, administered the Declaration of Office and Oath of Allegiance to all Elected-Trustees.

Director Crocco, on behalf of the new Board of Trustees, students and staff, presented Judge Milanetti with a gift of appreciation.

**7. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair**

Director Crocco reviewed the procedures for the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair, and appointed Marc DiGirolamo, Board Solicitor and Pat Rocca, Superintendent of Education, as scrutineers if a vote was required.

**Election of Chair**

Moved by Trustee Burkholder

**THAT** Trustee Burtnik be nominated for the position of Chair of the Niagara Catholic District School Board to hold office from December 4, 2018 until the 2019 Annual Organizational Meeting of the Board.

Director Crocco asked Trustee Burtnik if she wished to stand for the position of Chair of the Niagara Catholic District School Board. Trustee Burtnik declined the nomination.

Moved by Trustee Moody

**THAT** Trustee Fera be nominated for the position of Chair of the Niagara Catholic District School Board to hold office from December 4, 2018 until the 2019 Annual Organizational Meeting of the Board.

Director Crocco asked Trustee Fera if he wished to stand for the position of Chair of the Niagara Catholic District School Board. Trustee Fera accepted the nomination.

There were no further nominations forthcoming.

Moved by Trustee Burtnik

Seconded by Trustee Turner

**THAT** the nominations for the position of Chair of the Niagara Catholic District School Board be closed.

**CARRIED**

Director Crocco declared that Trustee Fera was acclaimed to the position of Chair of the Niagara Catholic District School Board until the 2019 Annual Organizational Meeting of the Board.

Director Crocco turned over the Chairship of the Inaugural Meeting of the Board to Chair Fera.

**Election of Vice-Chair**

Moved by Trustee Huibers

**THAT** Trustee Sicoli be nominated for the position of Vice-Chair of the Niagara Catholic District School Board from December 4, 2018 until the 2019 Annual Organizational Meeting of the Board.

Chair Fera asked Trustee Sicoli if he wished to stand for the position of Vice-Chair of the Niagara Catholic District School Board. Trustee Sicoli accepted the nomination.

Moved by Trustee Burkholder

**THAT** Trustee Burtnik be nominated for the position of Vice-Chair of the Niagara Catholic District School Board from December 4, 2018 until the 2019 Annual Organizational Meeting of the Board.

Chair Fera asked Trustee Burtnik if she wished to stand for the position of Vice-Chair of the Niagara Catholic District School Board. Trustee Burtnik accepted the nomination.

Moved by Trustee Moody

Seconded by Trustee Prince

**THAT** the nominations for the position of Vice-Chair of the Niagara Catholic District School Board be closed.

**CARRIED**

Following the counting of the ballots Trustee Sicoli was elected to the position of Vice-Chair of the Niagara Catholic District School Board until the Annual Organizational Meeting of the Board in 2019.

Moved by Trustee Moody

Seconded by Trustee Burtnik

**THAT** the ballots for the election of the Vice-Chair of the Niagara Catholic District School Board, be destroyed.

**CARRIED**

## **8. Chair's Remarks**

A copy of Chair Fera's remarks is attached to the minutes for information and placed on the Board website.  
(Appendix A)

## **9. Vice-Chair's Remarks**

A copy of Vice-Chair Sicoli's remarks is attached to the minutes for information and placed on the Board website.  
(Appendix B)

## **10. Board Committees**

Director Crocco presented the report on Board Committees, and stated that the report is in compliance with Board Bylaw section 19 v (a) which calls for Trustee membership on Board Ad Hoc, Statutory, Standing and Liaison Committees until the December 2019 Annual Organizational Meeting of the Board.

Director Crocco stated that membership to the committees are appointed by the Chair of the Board in consultation with the Vice-Chair of the Board, and asked that Trustees submit their completed form to the Office of the Director by the December 18, 2018 Board Meeting.

Moved by Trustee Turner

Seconded by Trustee Burtnik

**THAT** the Niagara Catholic District School Board approve the continuation of the following Ad Hoc Committees for the year 2019:

- Blessed Trinity Catholic Elementary and Secondary Family of Schools Attendance Area Ad Hoc Committee

- Building On Today Ad Hoc Committee
- Denis Morris, Holy Cross, and Saint Francis Catholic Elementary and Secondary Family of Schools Attendance Area Ad Hoc Committee
- Lakeshore Catholic Elementary and Secondary Family of Schools Attendance Area Ad Hoc Committee
- Notre Dame College Catholic Elementary and Secondary Family of Schools Attendance Area Ad Hoc Committee
- Saint Michael and Saint Paul Catholic Elementary and Secondary Family of Schools Attendance Area Ad Hoc Committee

**CARRIED**

**B. MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION FOR LIFE**

**C. ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by Trustee Moody

Seconded by Trustee Prince

**THAT** the December 4, 2018 Inaugural Meeting of the Niagara Catholic District School Board be adjourned.

**CARRIED**

This meeting was adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

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Minutes of the Inaugural Meeting of the Niagara Catholic District School Board held on **December 4, 2018.**

Approved on **December 18, 2018.**

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Frank Fera  
Chair of the Board

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John Crocco  
Director of Education/Secretary –Treasurer

## APPENDIX A

### **Remarks from the Chair – Frank Fera Annual Organizational Meeting of the Niagara Catholic District School Board December 4, 2018**

Welcome all,

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I am honoured to acknowledge His Excellency, Bishop Bergie, the Honourary Chair of the Board; a true disciple of Christ and a Bishop who tends to his flock with the utmost piety and sincerity. Thank you, Your Excellency, for your presence here this evening and for celebrating Mass with us on this important occasion. I also wish to acknowledge the co-celebrants of this evening's Mass, and thank them for their participation, Monsignor Clutterbuck, Father Paul MacNeil and Father Aji Varghese.

A special welcome to the newly elected trustees, who have entrusted me with this vote of confidence as Chair of the Board, a position I will hold seriously, with integrity and humility.

To begin with, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to those who daily are given the distinct privilege of touching the lives of our students in so many capacities: Thank you religious leaders, principals, teachers, support staff and custodial workers. It is you who are the heart of our schools. It is all of you whom we owe a debt of gratitude. Thank you. Let us always keep in mind that it is our students who give us purpose and hope.

As we move forward focusing on students as a priority, at the centre of our Board's mandate, we must keep Catholicity at the core of our decision-making. This is what makes us unique – let us embrace it. Together we must work collaboratively to create a culture of kindness, a system that values and upholds positive communication with all employees.

Communication is essential to the credibility and welfare of this Board. It will be the conduit for our successes. Above all, I wish to remind all of the trustees that it is our job to listen and receive feedback from everyone in the community that we serve, especially the parents and guardians who depend on us to ensure that their voices will be heard.

Furthermore, we have an obligation as trustees to inspire our staff and, in turn, our students, to instill faith in them, to encourage them and to provide them with unique opportunities to walk in the footsteps of Saint Paul and become true followers of Christ. And this should not be taken lightly. For it is my profound belief that our public activities are undeniable manifestations of what we profess as a Catholic community.

Lastly, as we begin this new Board year, with the overwhelming theme of bringing forth positive change, together, let us embark upon a fulfilling journey of hope and faith, and let it be our priority to help to grow and support our students and staff. As we strive to encourage the triad that is our school board, let us draw upon the words of Bishop Bergie, who, in a recent article of *The Vineyard*, stated, and I quote: there can be peace and calm in our faith in the midst of any storm, but to find it, we must go deep and encounter our faith."

Thank you, and enjoy the evening.

## APPENDIX B

### **Remarks from the Vice-Chair – Dino Sicoli Annual Organizational Meeting of the Niagara Catholic District School Board December 4, 2018**

Your Excellency, trustee colleagues and guests: Welcome to the Inaugural Meeting of the Niagara Catholic District School Board, which officially marks the beginning of the 2019 School Board year.

Good evening and thank you for the opportunity to address you tonight as the Vice-Chair of The Niagara Catholic District School Board.

Let me extend thanks on behalf of our new Board to our outgoing Chair, Trustee Fr. Paul McNeil, Vice-Chair Pat Vernal. We thank them for their contributions and for the important work they have done for Catholic Education in Niagara.

I am proud to be a Catholic trustee and I am honoured to serve as the Vice-Chair of this Board. I accept this important role with humility. I thank my fellow trustees for allowing me the opportunity to serve in this privileged role. The trust and faith you have placed in me is very much valued and it gives me the confidence I will need to serve this Board.

As I have done in the past, I can only promise to continue to do the best job I can. The rest we do and accomplish as a team. We are in the midst of a period of transition here at Niagara Catholic. We welcome five new trustees to the Board. For many organizations this amount of change could signify significant challenges. I choose to look at it as a time for opportunities - opportunities that will allow us to move forward in our quest to provide a quality Catholic education to our students. Opportunities to work with our dedicated staff, senior administration, parents, clergy and students in bringing a faith based, and Christ centered education to all who choose to attend our schools. This is our opportunity to let our constituents know that Catholic education in Niagara will be healthy, strong and a vital part of the publicly funded education system in this province.

Biblically speaking this is an opportunity to re-build a positive culture of hospitality, collegiality, one of integrity, honesty and respect –building of the Kingdom of God. This is indeed a great opportunity to make a difference...one step at a time.

A special thank you is extended to all of our teaching & support staff, our principals and vice-principals who everyday go above and beyond for our students. Your commitment is evident in the vibrancy of spirit that is experienced in our Catholic school communities and it is a testament to the exceptional quality of education offered in our classrooms.

Catholic education is a gift to treasure, to cherish, to promote and to protect. Trustees, the responsibility to do that falls squarely on our shoulders. Our message needs to be about the value of Catholic education. As always, it is our students who give us purpose and hope. They are the reason we are here. We delight in seeing how engaged they are in their learning, how they give witness to their faith, and how they are making a positive impact on our world. I thank them for the inspiration they bring to us.

As we begin this new board year, I look forward with hope, with confidence, and with optimism, in working with all of the Educational partners.

In closing, I want to share with you a closing prayer from today's Mass. "*LORD, come and dwell in every part of our life. Make us into your glorious dwelling place.*" This is a place where we bring peace, justice, truth to one another.

Thank you and God Bless all of you.