

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

PUBLIC SESSION

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

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Niagara Catholic District School Board receive the unapproved Minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting of February 10, 2026, as presented.

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

7.1.1 *Student Expulsion Policy (302.6.5)*

THAT the Niagara Catholic District School Board approve the Student Expulsion Policy (302.6.5), as presented.

7.1.2 *Student Exclusion From School or Class Policy (302.6.11)*

THAT the Niagara Catholic District School Board approve the Student Exclusion From School or Class Policy (302.6.11), as presented.

7.1.3 *Elementary and Secondary School Year Calendars: 2026-2027*

THAT the Niagara Catholic District School Board approve the Elementary and Secondary School Year Calendars 2026-2027, as presented.

7.1.4 *Math Achievement Action Plan 2025-2026 Mid-Year Report*

THAT the Niagara Catholic District School Board continue to endorse the Niagara Catholic District School Board Mid-Year Math Achievement Action Plan 2025-2026, as presented.



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

Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee of the Whole of the Niagara Catholic District School Board, held on Tuesday, February 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 Chair Di Lorenzo

2. Roll Call

Chair Di Lorenzo noted that Trustee Burkholder and Student Trustee Pasma were asked to be excused.

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 of Education – Corporate Service; **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 February 10, 2026, as presented/amended.

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 **Extended Overnight Field Trip, Credit Program and Exchange Approval Committee 2025-2026**

Presented for information.

6.2 **Staff Development Department Professional Development Opportunities**

Presented for information.

6.3 **Elementary and Secondary School Year Calendars:2026-2027**

Presented for information.

6.4 **In Camera Items G1**

Moved by Trustee Marino

THAT the Committee of the Whole adopt consent agenda items.

CARRIED

B. PRESENTATIONS

C. COMMITTEE AND STAFF REPORTS

1. **Math Achievement Action Plan 2025-2026 Mid-Year Report**

Director Cipriano introduced Superintendent of Education Kim Kinney.

Superintendent Kinney, presented the Math Achievement Action Plan 2025-2026 Mid-Year Report for information.

Moved by Trustee Bruzzese

THAT the Committee of the Whole recommend that the Niagara Catholic District School Board approve the Math Achievement Action Plan 2025-2026 Mid-Year Report, as presented.

APPROVED

2. Principal and Vice Principal Selection Process

Director Cipriano introduced Superintendent of Education Pat Rocca.

Superintendent Rocca, presented the Elementary and Secondary Principal Pool Selection Process for information. Director Cipriano and Superintendent Rocca answered question of the Trustees.

The Trustees provided input and feedback on the skill set and profile of the Catholic Principal within the Niagara Catholic District School Board. The Trustees suggested that during the Vice Principal Selection Process external candidates will be considered.

3. Monthly Updates

3.1 Student Trustees' Update

Taylor Sexton, Student Trustee, presented a brief verbal update on the current activities of the Student Senate.

Student Highlights included St. Michael Catholic Highschool Grade 10 student Alan Tirop for the month of January and St. Francis Catholic Secondary School Grade 12 student Riyana Chahoud for the month of February.

3.2 Senior Staff Good News Update

Senior Staff highlights included:

Superintendent Kinney

- Superintendent Kinney reported that Ontario Education Minister Paul Calandra's visit to St. Kevin Elementary School, where he met with senior staff and the math team to learn about Niagara Catholic's strategies for improving student achievement in mathematics. He toured classrooms and received a detailed presentation on successful practices that contributed to recent provincial recognition of the board's math performance. The visit was intended to highlight effective approaches and gather insights for broader provincial use.

Following the visit, several trustees expressed strong disappointment and frustration that they were excluded from the meeting, emphasizing that they are elected representatives and should have attended. Many trustees described the exclusion as disrespectful, and inappropriate. They also raised concerns about broader provincial intentions regarding the role of trustees and questioned why their participation was not welcomed during a positive

celebration of student and system success. Trustees requested that a formal letter expressing these concerns be prepared for the February board meeting, with the Chair Di Lorenzo involved in drafting it before it is shared with the full board. They also asked for legal clarification on whether the Minister of Education has the authority to exclude trustees from school visits. Director Cipriano clarified that he had followed the Chair's direction to request trustee attendance but was told by ministry staff that the Minister did not want trustees present. Trustee Turner made a recommendation to bring forward a letter address to the Minister of Education regarding their concerns and put on the agenda for the February Board Meeting.

Moved by Trustee Turner

THAT the Committee of the Whole recommend that the Niagara Catholic District School Board of Trustees bring forward a letter that will be addressed to the Minister of Education and added to the agenda items for the February 2026 Board Meeting, as presented.

APPROVED

Superintendent Kinney

- Niagara Catholic District School Board was invited to participated in the KnowledgeHook Leaders Network Summit in Toronto, joining several school boards and educational leaders from both Canada and the United States. Niagara Catholic participated in a panel presentation highlighting the impact of KnowledgeHook on student learning. The Board received the Impact Award and was recognized for our system-wide gains in mathematics achievement. Director Camillo Cipriano accepted the award on behalf of the Niagara Catholic District School Board.

D. GOVERNANCE POLICIES

1. Governance Policies for Recommendation to the Board

1.1. Student Expulsion Policy (302.6.5)

Superintendent Massi presented feedback received from the vetting process and highlighted recommended amendments to the Student Expulsion Policy (302.6.5) 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 Student Expulsion Policy (302.6.5), as presented.

APPROVED

1.2. Student Exclusion From School or Class Policy (302.6.11)

Superintendent Massi presented feedback received from the vetting process and highlighted recommended amendments to the Student Exclusion From School or Class Policy (302.6.11) following the vetting process.

- No amendment

Moved by Trustee Bruzzese

THAT the Committee of the Whole recommend that the Niagara Catholic District School Board approve the Student Exclusion From School or Class Policy (302.6.11), as presented.

APPROVED

2. Governance Policies Prior to Vetting

2.1. Student Senate – Secondary Policy (100.6.1)

Superintendent Massi, presented the Secondary Policy (100.6.1).

The Committee of the Whole suggested the following amendments:

- The Trustees suggested adding the Growth and Retention AD Hoc Committee to the Policy.

The Committee of the Whole requested that the Student Trustee Policy (100.4), be vetted from February 12, 2026 to March 26, 2026 with a recommended deadline for presentation to the Committee of the Whole in April 2026, for consideration to the Board in April 2026.

2.2. Student Senate – Elementary Policy (100.6.2)

Superintendent Massi, presented the Student Senate – Elementary Policy (100.6.2)

The Committee of the Whole suggested the following amendments:

- The Trustees suggested adding the Growth and Retention AD Hoc Committee to the Policy.

The Committee of the Whole requested that the Student Trustee Policy (100.4), be vetted from February 12, 2026 to March 26, 2026 with a recommended deadline for presentation to the Committee of the Whole in April 2026, for consideration to the Board in April 2026.

2.3. Student Trustee Policy (100.4)

Superintendent Massi, presented the Student Trustee Policy (100.4)

- No amendment

The Committee of the Whole requested that the Student Trustee Policy (100.4), be vetted from February 12, 2026 to March 26, 2026 with a recommended deadline for presentation to the Committee of the Whole in April 2026, for consideration to the Board in April 2026.

3. Governance Policy Review Schedule

Director Cipriano presented the Governance Policy Review Schedule.

E. INFORMATION

1. Trustee Information

1.1 Niagara Catholic Celebrates Dance Festival

Chair Di Lorenzo presented the Niagara Catholic Dance Festival on Thursday, February 26, 2026 from 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. at Lakeshore Catholic Performing Art Centre.

1.2 St. Kateri Tekakwitha School Open House

Chair Di Lorenzo presented St. Kateri Tekakwitha School Open House on February 12, 2026 from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

1.3 2026 Niagara Catholic Skills Event Schedule

Chair Di Lorenzo presented the 2026 Niagara Catholic Skills Event Schedule the week of March 2 to March 5, 2026 at various Niagara Catholic High School locations and the Awards Ceremony on March 12, 2026 from 10:00 am to 12:30 pm at the Seaway Mall – Centre Court.

1.4 Niagara Catholic Special Olympic Event

Chair Di Lorenzo reminded Trustees of the Niagara Catholic Special Olympic Event on February 12, 2026 starting at 10:00 am at St. Paul Catholic High School.

Board Committee Memberships 2026

Chair Di Lorenzo reviewed the Board Committee Memberships Form reminding Trustees it is their duty to attend and take part in the committee meetings. Chair Di Lorenzo asked the Trustees to review the Attendance Policy as it has changed and that if they are unable to attend a meeting, they are to email the Chair.

F. OTHER BUSINESS

1. General Discussion to Plan for Future Action

Nil

G. BUSINESS IN CAMERA

Addressed within consent agenda section.

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 7:47 p.m. and reconvened at 7:50 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 February 10, 2026.

CARRIED

SECTION B: STUDENT TRUSTEES EXCLUDED

Moved by Trustee Marino

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 January 13, 2026, as presented.

CARRIED (Item G1)

In Camera the Board was told the name of the recipients of the Award of Distinction for 2026.

I. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Trustee Marino

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

CARRIED

This meeting was adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

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

Approved on **March 10, 2026.**

Rhianon Burkholder
Vice-Chair of the Board

Camillo Cipriano
Director of Education/Secretary -Treasurer

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

PUBLIC SESSION

TITLE: STUDENT EXPLUSION POLICY (302.6.5)

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Niagara Catholic District School Board approve the Student Expulsion Policy (302.6.5), as presented.

Prepared by: Domenic Massi, Superintendent of Education

Presented by: Domenic Massi, Superintendent of Education

Recommended by: Committee of the Whole

Date: February 24, 2026



Niagara Catholic District School Board

STUDENT EXPULSION POLICY

STATEMENT OF GOVERNANCE POLICY

300 – Schools/Students

Policy No 302.6.5

Adopted Date: June 26, 2001

Latest Reviewed/Revised Date: April 27, 2021

In keeping with the Mission, Vision and Values of the Niagara Catholic District School Board, the Board is committed to promoting and supporting positive student behaviour that fosters a safe, caring, inclusive, and accepting learning environment. Such an environment is essential for all students to achieve their full academic, spiritual, and personal potential, and to grow as living witnesses of Christ.

A positive school climate exists when all members of the school community feel safe, included, and accepted. The Niagara Catholic District School Board actively promotes responsibility, respect, civility, equity, and academic excellence in all of its schools and sites.

As members of the Catholic school community, students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects our Catholic faith, the traditions of Catholic education, and the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations. Student behaviour must also comply with all applicable Ministry of Education and Board policies, the Board's Code of Conduct, and Administrative Operational Procedures.

The Niagara Catholic District School Board recognizes that, in accordance with the Education Act and Ontario regulations, if a student in Grades 4 to 12 engages in behaviour that is inappropriate that significantly disrupts the learning environment, or infringes on the rights and safety of others, the consequences may include expulsion from their school or from all schools of the Board.

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

References

- [*Accepting Schools Act*](#)
- [*Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005*](#)
- [*Caring and Safe Schools in Ontario*](#)
- [*Child & Family Services Review Board*](#)
- [*Child, Youth and Family Services Act 2017*](#)
- [*Education Act and Regulations*](#)
- [*Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*](#)
- [*Ontario Catholic School Graduation Expectations*](#)
- [*Ontario Human Rights Code*](#)
- [*Ontario Student Record \(OSR\) Guideline, 2000 \(Revised 2020\)*](#)
- [*Policy/Program Memorandum 120: Reporting Violent Incidents to the Ministry of Education*](#)
- [*Policy/Program Memorandum 128: The Provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Codes of Conduct. - Issued October 17, 2018*](#)
- [*Policy/Program Memorandum 144: Bullying Prevention and Intervention-Issued October 17, 2018*](#)

- [Policy/Program Memorandum 145: Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour – Issued October 17, 2018](#)
- [Provincial Code of Conduct](#)
- [Regulation 472/07: Behaviour, Discipline and Safety of Pupils](#)
- [Smoke-Free Ontario Act 2017](#)

Niagara Catholic District School Board Policies/Procedures/Documents

- [Access to Board Premises \(302.6.3\) AOP](#)
- [Accessibility Standards Policy \(800.8\)](#)
- [Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy \(302.6.8\)](#)
- [Catholic School Councils \(800.1\) AOP](#)
- [Code of Conduct Policy \(302.6.2\)](#)
- [Complaint Resolution Policy \(800.3\)](#)
- [Criminal Background Check \(302.6.7\) AOP](#)
- [Dress Code – Secondary Uniform Policy \(302.6.6\)](#)
- [Electronic Communications System \(Students\) \(301.5\) AOP](#)
- [Elementary Standardized Dress Code Policy-Safe Schools \(302.6.10\)](#)
- [Equity and Inclusive Education Policy \(100.10\)](#)
- [Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee Policy \(800.7\)](#)
- [Ontario Student Record \(301.7\) AOP](#)
- [Opening or Closing Exercises \(302.6.1\) AOP](#)
- [Progressive Student Discipline \(302.6.9\) AOP](#)
- [Privacy Policy \(600.6\)](#)
- [Records and Information Management Policy \(600.2\)](#)
- [Safe Arrival \(302.3\) AOP](#)
- [Safe Physical Intervention with Students \(301.8\) AOP](#)
- [Safe and Accepting Schools Policy \(302.6\)](#)
- [Student Expulsion Policy \(302.6.5\)](#)
- [Student Suspension \(302.6.4\) AOP](#)
- [Student Transportation Policy \(500.2\)](#)
- [Volunteering in Catholic Schools \(800.9\) AOP](#)
- [Protocol between Niagara Catholic District School Board and Family and Children’s Services
Niagara](#)
- [Protocol Between the Niagara Regional Police Service and the Niagara Catholic District School
Board](#)

Adopted Date:	June 26, 2001
Revision History:	May 28, 2002 February 1, 2008 June 17, 2008 September 18, 2008 June 16, 2009 December 17, 2013 May 26, 2015 February 28, 2017 May 28, 2019 April 27, 2021

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

PUBLIC SESSION

TITLE: STUDENT EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL POLICY (302.6.11)

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Niagara Catholic District School Board approve the Student Exclusion from School or Class Policy (302.6.11) as presented.

Prepared by: Domenic Massi, Superintendent of Education

Presented by: Domenic Massi, Superintendent of Education

Recommended by: Committee of the Whole

Date: February 24, 2026



Niagara Catholic District School Board

STUDENT EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL OR CLASS

STATEMENT OF GOVERNANCE POLICY

300 – Schools/Students

Policy No. 302.6.11

Adopted Date: May 25, 2021

Latest Reviewed/Revised Date:

In keeping with the Mission, Vision and Values of the Niagara Catholic District School Board, the Board supports a welcoming, equitable, safe and accepting learning environment in which the teachings of Christ and the Catholic faith provide a distinctive Catholic education for elementary and secondary students within its jurisdiction.

The Niagara Catholic District School Board is dedicated to creating and maintaining a safe, caring, inclusive, and accepting learning and teaching environment where all students and staff can achieve their full potential and serve as witnesses of Christ.

Under Section 265(1)(m) of the *Education Act*, a Principal has the authority to exclude an individual from the school or a class when necessary to protect the physical or mental well-being of students. This authority is intended solely as a safety measure and not as a form of discipline.

Policy/Program Memorandum 145 (PPM 145) reinforces this intent by stating that exclusion is not a disciplinary action and should only be used when a student's presence is detrimental to the well-being of students. Before a student returns to school following an exclusion, the board must ensure that appropriate supports and resources are in place to enable a successful reintegration.

Parents/guardians or students (if 18 years or 16-17 and independent) can appeal an exclusion from school by providing a written notice to the Director of Education within 10 school days of the date on the letter from the principal which includes the right to appeal under the Education Act.

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

References

- [*Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005*](#)
- [*Education Act and Regulations*](#)
- [*Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*](#)
- [*Ontario Human Rights Code*](#)
- [*Policy/Program Memorandum 120: Reporting Violent Incidents to the Ministry of Education*](#)
- [*Policy/Program Memorandum 124: The Provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Codes of Conduct-Issued October 17, 2018*](#)
- [*Policy/Program Memorandum 144: Bullying Prevention and Intervention-Issued October 17, 2018*](#)
- [*Policy/Program Memorandum 145: Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour –Issued October 17, 2018*](#)
- [*Regulation 472/07: Behaviour, Discipline and Safety of Pupils*](#)
- [*Child, Youth and Family Services Act 2017*](#)

- ***Niagara Catholic District School Board Policies/Procedures***
 - ***Access to Board Premises (302.6.3) AOP***
 - ***Accessibility Standards Policy (800.8)***
 - ***Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy (302.6.8)***
 - ***Catholic School Councils (800.1) AOP***
 - ***Code of Conduct Policy (302.6.2)***
 - ***Complaint Resolution Policy (800.3)***
 - ***Dress Code – Secondary Uniform Policy (302.6.6)***
 - ***Electronic Communications System (Students) (301.5) AOP***
 - ***Elementary Standardized Dress Code Policy-Safe Schools (302.6.10)***
 - ***Equity and Inclusive Education Policy (100.10)***
 - ***Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee Policy (800.7)***
 - ***Ontario Student Record (301.7) AOP***
 - ***Privacy Policy (600.6)***
 - ***Records and Information Management Policy (600.2)***
 - ***Safe Physical Intervention with Students (301.8) AOP***
 - ***Safe and Accepting Schools Policy (302.6)***
 - ***Student Expulsion Policy (302.6.5)***
 - ***Student Suspension (302.6.4) AOP***
 - ***Student Transportation Policy (500.2)***
 - ***Protocol between Niagara Catholic District School Board and Family and Children’s Services Niagara***
 - ***Protocol Between the Niagara Regional Police Service and the Niagara Catholic District School Board***

Adopted Date:	May 25, 2021
Revision History:	

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

PUBLIC SESSION

**TITLE: ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL YEAR
CALENDARS: 2026-2027**

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Niagara Catholic District School Board approve the Elementary and Secondary School Year Calendars 2026-2027 school year, as presented.

Prepared by: Domenic Massi - Superintendent of Education

Presented by: Domenic Massi – Superintendent of Education

Recommended by: Committee of the Whole

Date: February 24, 2026



REPORT TO THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE FEBRUARY 10, 2026

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL YEAR CALENDARS: 2026-2027

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The *Education Act, Regulation 304 - School Year Calendar, Professional Activity Days* outlines the requirements and timelines for preparing and submission of school year calendars to the Ministry of Education for approval.

For the 2026-2027 school year calendars, there are 195 possible school days between September 1, 2026 and June 30, 2027. Within this total, elementary and secondary schools must have a minimum of 194 school days, of which seven (7) days must be designated as professional activity days. Secondary schools may have a maximum of ten (10) instructional days set as examination days. The remaining school days shall be instructional days.

CONSULTATION PROCESS

The 2026-2027 School Year Calendar Committee met to discuss and review the draft calendar and the consultation process.

Members of the 2026-2027 School Year Calendar Committee are:

Domenic Massi	Superintendent (Chair)
Lee Ann Forsyth-Sells	Superintendent
Gino Pizzoferrato	Superintendent
Antonio Cardamone	Elementary Principal
Lou Stranges	Secondary Principal
Anthony Corapi	Coordinator of Staff Development
Anthony Stranges	C.U.P.E. President
Jennifer McArthur	Niagara Elementary Unit OECTA
Joseph Sorrenti	Niagara Elementary Unit OECTA
Brian O'Rourke	Niagara Secondary Unit OECTA
Laura Thomas	Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee
Monique Somma	S.E.A.C.

The consultation process provided the elementary and secondary draft calendars to all elementary and secondary Principals, Vice-Principals, Catholic School Council Chairs/Co-Chairs, the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee (NCPIC), the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), OECTA Elementary and Secondary Presidents, CUPE President and staff for feedback by February 2, 2026.

Simultaneously, there has been on-going consultation with the co-terminus Board to achieve a similar school year calendar, where possible.

SUMMARY OF THE ATTACHED CALENDARS

Highlights of the Proposed School Year Calendars for 2026-2027.

Professional Activity Days

In accordance with the Education Act, Regulation 304 - School Year Calendar, the following seven (7) days have been identified as Professional Activity Days.

Elementary:

Wednesday, September 2, 2026
Thursday, September 3, 2026
Monday, October 26, 2026
Friday, November 27, 2026
Friday, January 15, 2027
Friday, April 30, 2027
Friday, June 4, 2027

Secondary:

Wednesday, September 2, 2026
Thursday, September 3, 2026
Monday, October 26, 2026
Friday, November 27, 2026
Friday, January 29, 2027
Friday, April 30, 2027
Friday, June 30, 2027

Secondary Examination Days

Semester 1 – Friday, January 22, 2027 to Thursday, January 28, 2027
Semester 2 – Wednesday, June 23, 2027 to Tuesday, June 29, 2027

Board and Civic Holidays

Civic Holiday	Monday, August 3, 2026
Labour Day	Monday, September 7, 2026
Thanksgiving Day	Monday, October 12, 2026
Christmas Break	Monday, December 21, 2026 – Friday, January 1, 2027
Family Day	Monday, February 15, 2027
March Break	Monday, March 15 to Friday, March 19, 2027
Good Friday	Friday, March 26, 2027
Easter Monday	Monday, March 29, 2027
Victoria Day	Monday, May 24, 2027
Canada Day	Thursday, July 1, 2027

To comply with the timelines outlined in *Regulation 304 - School Year Calendar*, school boards are required to submit Board approved school year calendars to the Ministry of Education by March 1, 2026 and Board approved **regular** school year calendars to the Ministry of Education by May 1, 2026.

Based on feedback from the consultation process, discussions with the School Year Calendar Committee, Senior Administrative Council and the coterminous board, the 2026-2027 Elementary and Secondary School Year Calendars will be submitted immediately following the Board Meeting of February 24, 2026 for approval.

Appendix A: *Proposed Elementary School Year Calendars for 2026-2027*

Appendix B: *Proposed Secondary School Year Calendars for 2026-2027*

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Committee of the Whole recommend the Elementary and Secondary School Year Calendars for the 2026-2027 school year, as presented.

Prepared by: Domenic Massi, Superintendent of Education

Presented by: Domenic Massi, Superintendent of Education

Recommended by: Camillo Cipriano, Director of Education/Secretary-Treasurer

Date: February 10, 2026

School Year Calendar 2026 - 2027

Legend **H** - Statutory Holiday **E** - Scheduled Examination Day **P** - Professional Activity Day **B** - Board Designated Holiday  Half Day

ELEMENTARY DRAFT

Month	Number of Instructional Days	Number of Professional Activity Days	Number of Scheduled Examination Days	1 st Week					2 nd Week					3 rd Week					4 th Week					5 th Week				
				M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
August 2026				3 H	4	5	6	7	10	11	12	13	14	17	18	19	20	21	24	25	26	27	28	31				
September 2026	17	2			1	2 P	3 P	4 B	7 H	8	9	10	11	14	15	16	17	18	21	22	23	24	25	28	29	30		
October 2026	20	1					1	2	5	6	7	8	9	12 H	13	14	15	16	19	20	21	22	23	26 P	27	28	29	30
November 2026	20	1		2	3	4	5	6	9	10	11	12	13	16	17	18	19	20	23	24	25	26	27 P	30				
December 2026	14				1	2	3	4	7	8	9	10	11	14	15	16	17	18	21 B	22 B	23 B	24 B	25 B	28 B	29 B	30 B	31 B	
January 2027	19	1						1 B	4	5	6	7	8	11	12	13	14	15 P	18	19	20	21	22	25	26	27	28	29
February 2027	19			1	2	3	4	5	8	9	10	11	12	15 H	16	17	18	19	22	23	24	25	26					
March 2027	16			1	2	3	4	5	8	9	10	11	12	15 B	16 B	17 B	18 B	19 B	22	23	24	25	26	29 H	30 H	31		
April 2027	21	1					1	2	5	6	7	8	9	12	13	14	15	16	19	20	21	22	23	26	27	28	29	30 P
May 2027	20			3	4	5	6	7	10	11	12	13	14	17	18	19	20	21	24 H	25	26	27	28	31				
June 2027	21	1			1	2	3	4 P	7	8	9	10	11	14	15	16	17	18	21	22	23	24	25	28	29	30		
July 2027							1 H	2	5	6	7	8	9	12	13	14	15	16	19	20	21	22	23	26	27	28	29	30
TOTAL	187	7	N/A	<p>Note: The 2026-2027 calendar provides for 196 possible school days between September 1, 2026 and June 30, 2027. The school year shall include a minimum of 194 school days of which three days must be designated as professional activity days with respect to specific provincial education priorities as outlined in the Policy/Program Memoranda 151 and up to four extra days may be designated by the board as professional activity days. The remaining school days shall be instructional days. The boards may designate up to ten instructional days as examination days</p>																								

School Year Calendar 2026 - 2027

SECONDARY DRAFT CALENDAR

Legend ▶ **H** - Statutory Holiday **E** - Scheduled Examination Day **P** - Professional Activity Day **B** - Board Designated Holiday  Half Day

Month	Number of Instructional Days	Number of Professional Activity Days	Number of Scheduled Examination Days	1st Week					2nd Week					3rd Week					4th Week					5th Week				
				M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
August 2026				3 H	4	5	6	7	10	11	12	13	14	17	18	19	20	21	24	25	26	27	28	31				
September 2026	17	2			1	2 P	3 P	4 B	7 H	8	9	10	11	14	15	16	17	18	21	22	23	24	25	28	29	30		
October 2026	20	1					1	2	5	6	7	8	9	12 H	13	14	15	16	19	20	21	22	23	26 P	27	28	29	30
November 2026	20	1		2	3	4	5	6	9	10	11	12	13	16	17	18	19	20	23	24	25	26	27 P	30				
December 2026	14				1	2	3	4	7	8	9	10	11	14	15	16	17	18	21 B	22 B	23 B	24 B	25 B	28 B	29 B	30 B	31 B	
January 2027	14	1	5					1 B	4	5	6	7	8	11	12	13	14	15	18	19	20	21	22 E	25 E	26 E	27 E	28 E	29 P
February 2027	19			1	2	3	4	5	8	9	10	11	12	15 H	16	17	18	19	22	23	24	25	26					
March 2027	16			1	2	3	4	5	8	9	10	11	12	15 B	16 B	17 B	18 B	19 B	22	23	24	25	26 H	29 H	30	31		
April 2027	21	1					1	2	5	6	7	8	9	12	13	14	15	16	19	20	21	22	23	26	27	28	29	30 P
May 2027	20			3	4	5	6	7	10	11	12	13	14	17	18	19	20	21	24 H	25	26	27	28	31				
June 2027	16	1	5		1	2	3	4	7	8	9	10	11	14	15	16	17	18	21	22	23 E	24 E	25 E	28 E	29 E	30 P		
July 2027							1 H	2	5	6	7	8	9	12	13	14	15	16	19	20	21	22	23	26	27	28	29	30
TOTAL	177	7	10	<p>Note: The 2026-2027 calendar provides for 196 possible school days between September 1, 2026 and June 30, 2027. The school year shall include a minimum of 194 school days of which three days must be designated as professional activity days with respect to specific provincial education priorities as outlined in the Policy/Program Memoranda 151 and up to four extra days may be designated by the board as professional activity days. The remaining school days shall be instructional days. The boards may designate up to ten instructional days as examination days</p>																								

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

PUBLIC SESSION

**TITLE: MATH ACHIEVEMENT ACTION PLAN 2025-2026
MID-YEAR REPORT**

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Niagara Catholic District School Board continue to endorse the Niagara Catholic District School Board Mid-Year Action Plan 2025-2026, as presented.

Prepared by: Kim Kinney - Superintendent of Education, Board Math Lead

Presented by: Kim Kinney – Superintendent of Education, Board Math Lead

Recommended by: Committee of the Whole

Date: February 24, 2026



REPORT TO THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE FEBRUARY 10, 2026

MATH ACHIEVEMENT ACTION PLAN 2025-2026

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Ministry of Education launched Ontario's Math Achievement Action Plan during the 2023-2024 school year to support student achievement and results in math across the province. The ministry brought together experts in mathematics education to better understand next steps for math improvement in Ontario. Through this work, the ministry developed *Taking Action in Mathematics* (Appendix A), an iterative framework to capture areas of focus and guide improvement actions.

Math Achievement Action Plan

All school boards are required to have dedicated Board Math Leads. Board Math Leads, working at the Supervisory Officer level, are expected to plan, implement, monitor, and report progress towards math achievement and improvement targets as well as lead board-wide actions to meet these targets.

School boards have also been funded for dedicated School Math Facilitators to work in Grades 3, 6, and 9 classrooms in identified Priority Schools. The role of School Math Facilitators is to work in Priority Schools to support mathematics academic achievement efforts in alignment with the school and board improvement goals and actions, provide in-class facilitation to strengthen math knowledge and pedagogy, collaborate with educators, and share resources and effective practices.

The Ministry identified priority elementary and secondary schools based on an analysis of 2021-2022 EQAO mathematics achievement data. The priority schools across the province included over 1250 schools that achieved at the lowest 20% of schools in the 21-22 EQAO assessment. Based upon this data, Niagara Catholic currently had 10 priority schools at the primary level and 10 schools at the junior level. Of these schools, three schools were identified at both the primary and junior level. Currently, there are no secondary schools identified as priority schools.

Informed by the ministry's *Taking Action in Mathematics* framework, the Board Math Lead, along with the Math Facilitators developed a board Math Achievement Action Plan, which included three sections:

- All schools report to provide board-wide improvement efforts and results in mathematics
- Priority Schools report to provide intensive improvement efforts
- Priority Schools Provincial KPI (Key Performance Indicators) report to provide intentional monitoring of student achievement KPI's common to all priority schools across the province.

The Math Achievement Action Plan outlines the board's concrete, visible, and measurable strategies as well as key performance indicators at the board, school, and classroom level under the four areas of focus:

1. Curriculum Fidelity
2. Math Content Knowledge for Teaching

3. Knowing Your Student
4. Measurable Results: Improvements in Math Achievement

The Math Achievement Action Plan is to be endorsed by the Director and Trustees of the Board and will be submitted to the ministry under the following timelines:

- November 14, 2025 (Initial): Initial strategies and KPI's
- March 27, 2026 (Progress): Incorporate data from Term 1/Semester 1
- July 17, 2026 (Final): Incorporate data from Term 2/Semester 2

The Board Math Lead will continue to provide updates on progress of the Math Achievement Action Plan to the ministry Math Action Team through regular meetings. The Board Math Lead will also communicate updates and progress to the Board and the Niagara Catholic community.

Niagara Catholic District School Board Math Achievement Action Plan 2025-2026

Goals:

All schools will see an increase in student achievement as measured through Classroom assessment data, Report Card data and EQAO data.

Staff survey information will show an increase in teacher understanding of math content knowledge for teaching.

There will be an increase in the percentage of students whose individual attendance rate is equal to or greater than 90 percent.

There will be an increase in the percentage of Grade 3, 6, and 9 students who report positive results regarding math attitudes and confidence.

Implementation of the Math Achievement Action Plan

The Program and Innovation team continues to work with all schools throughout the Board ensuring continued opportunities for all classroom teachers to receive professional learning opportunities rooted in the three priority areas identified by the Ministry.

Building upon organizational structures from the previous year, the Math Consultant and Math Facilitators maintain weekly focused visits to all Priority Schools where they model, co-plan, and co-teach with Grade 3 and 6 classroom teachers. This also includes all classes that are combined grades with Grade 3 and Grade 6. The weekly visits ensure continued momentum with teachers as they engage with the curriculum, pedagogical approaches, and responding directly to the needs of the students in their class.

Schools that were originally identified as Priority Schools in the first year of the Math Achievement Action Plan that demonstrated significant gains in achievement results were replaced by other schools who required support. Even though no longer officially identified by the Ministry as Priority Schools, they receive “reach back” support by the Consultant and Math Facilitators.

Support in Priority Schools has been differentiated by the amount of experience that teachers have teaching within the Priority Schools. This means that teachers who are in their third year of teaching Grade 3 or 6 in a Priority School receive different support than those teachers who are in their first or second year in the Priority School.

Data obtained through the digital math tool – Knowledgehook – continues to show increased use by staff and students both at school and at home. Increased student proficiency across strands was also recorded.

Knowledgehook Student and Educator Data

January 2026 data reflects data from September 2025 to January 2026, representing approximately half of the academic year. In comparison the most current data indicates that for the full year 2025-2026 both student and educator engagement is tracking to surpass the engagement data for 2024-2025.



Niagara Catholic Data - Student Engagement

	2024-25	Oct 2025	Jan 2026
# of students completing GameShow and Missions	18,339	12,081	16,071
# of students accessing Question Help	2,198	554	1,689
# of students doing activities after school	6,415	1,860	4,789
# of questions answered after school	892,452	162,455	622,961
# of students asking for more Missions	2,046	240	6,999
# of students playing the Games	3,463	953	2,920



Short Learning Cycles



	NCDSB 2024-25	NCDSB Nov 2025	NCDSB Jan 2026
# of Teachers	509	217	350
# of SLCs	3,598	699	1,822
% of Teachers	67%	31%	47%
# of SLCs per Teacher	7	3.2	5.2
# of Students	13,448	4,953	7,985
% Growth	9.7%	10.4%	10.2%

The 2024-2025 EQAO results marks the first time since the shift to a digital assessment that cohort data is available. As a school board, Grade 3 and Grade 6 results for Mathematics continue to surpass the Province.

A positive three-year trend is evident in Grade 3 and 6. At the Grade 9 level, the Board surpasses the Province and while there is an increase in achievement over the last three years, the increase is minimal.

EQAO Data

Comparison of 2022-2023, 2023-2024, and 2024-2025 Results EQAO Primary Division

	Province 2022-2023	Province 2024-2024	Province 2024-2025	Board 2022-2023	Board 2023-2024	Board 2024-2025
Mathematics	60%	61%	64%	66%	68%	76%

Comparison of 2022-2023, 2023-2024, and 2024-2025 Results EQAO Junior Division

	Province 2022-2023	Province 2023-2024	Province 2024-2025	Board 2022-2023	Board 2023-2024	Board 2024-2025
Mathematics	50%	50%	51%	52%	53%	61%

Comparison of 2022-2023, 2023-2024, and 2024-2025 Results Grade 9 Mathematics

	Province 2022-2023	Province 2024-2024	Province 2024-2025	Board 2022-2023	Board 2023-2024	Board 2024-2025
Mathematics	54%	54%	58%	56%	58%	59%

Priority Schools

Across each review cycle we are seeing a consistent upward trend in Priority School performance.

Schools designated as Priority Schools in the 2023–2024 cycle demonstrated three-year growth in the proportion of students meeting or exceeding the provincial standard in both Grade 3 and Grade 6 Mathematics.

Schools identified in the 2024–2025 cycle and again in the 2025–2026 cycle each showed three-year growth in the proportion of students performing at or above the provincial level in Grade 6.

Taken together, these results indicate that focused support for Priority Schools is translating into measurable improvement in student achievement.

Principal Leadership

Targeted work continues to be a focus at the Principal level with all school Principals working directly with the Board Math Lead with a focus on instructional leadership within the schools. Principal Learning Teams that focus both on Instructional Leadership and using school level data to determine whether there has been impact on student learning continues.

All schools continue to create, implement, monitor, and report to their individual School Math Achievement Action Plan within the Niagara Catholic Student Achievement Plan tool will include the school's Math Achievement Action Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Niagara Catholic District School Board continue to endorse the Niagara Catholic District School Board Math Achievement Action Plan 2025-2026.

Prepared by: Kim Kinney, Superintendent of Education, Board Math Lead

Presented by: Kim Kinney, Superintendent of Education, Board Math Lead

Recommended by: Camillo Cipriano, Director of Education/Secretary-Treasurer

Date: February 10, 2026

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

PUBLIC SESSION

**TOPIC: APPROVED MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION
ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SEAC) MEETING OF
JANUARY 7, 2026**

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Niagara Catholic District School Board receive the Approved Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of January 7, 2026, as presented for information.



NIAGARA CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

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

JANUARY 7, 2026

Minutes of the Meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee, held on Wednesday, January 7, 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 6:32 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, Rhianon Burkholder			X		
Trustee, Jim Marino		X			

The following staff were in attendance:

Gino Pizzoferrato, Superintendent of Education, Roxanne Rees, Nicole Royer, Grace Brochu, Lisa Clark, Susy Walsh, Danny Giancola, Darcy Fox, Tina Hornick, Brooke Loughhead, Kelly Keighan, Vincent Mancuso, Ashley Prohaszka, Jessica Mastroianni

4. **Approval of the Agenda**

Moved by: Chair Somma

Seconded by: Trustee Burkholder

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the agenda of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of January 7, 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 December 3, 2025**

Moved by: DJ Holmes

Seconded by: Michelle Toy

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of December 3, 2025 as presented.

CARRIED

B. PRESENTATIONS – Brooke Loughhead, Darcy Fox, Tina Hornick – Overview of ABASE Program

Brooke Loughhead, Darcy Fox and Tina Hornick presented:

- An overview of the ABASE program, outlining end result achievements in participating students, including:
 - Drastic Behavior Reduction, in such areas as aggression, throwing, and dumping
 - Communication Breakthroughs, giving students tools to use their words instead of acting out when trying to express themselves
 - Successful Reintegration into their regular classroom, following routines independently, interacting positively with peers, and regulating their emotions at a level typical for their age.
- The "Capacity Building" Approach
 - The program's success relies on more than just student intervention; it focused on the support system:
 - School Staff Collaboration: Teachers and EAs visit the A-BASE classroom to learn specific strategies in a low-pressure environment, ensuring the student's progress continues after they leave the program.

- Parental Trust: ABASE has been viewed as a foundation and life-changing trajectory for its participants by their parents.

C. POLICY REVIEW – Superintendent Pizzoferrato

- Policies Under Review:
 - Policy 302.1: Supporting children and students with prevalent medical conditions.
 - Policy 800.8.1: Accessibility Standards for Customer Service.
 - Policy 302.6.11: Student Exclusion From School or Class
- These policies are not finalized. They are currently being presented to the Board of Trustees before being distributed for public and stakeholder input.
- Members are instructed to look for specific color-coding in the drafts:
 - Red: Recommended changes.
 - Strikethrough: Proposed deletions.
 - Blue: Previous recommendations already incorporated into the current revision.
- SEAC members are encouraged to send their recommendations to Jenna Young or Gino Pizzoferrato. This feedback is then collated by the responsible Superintendent to determine what will be included in the final version for board approval.

D. CHAIR’S REPORT-*Chair Somma*

Chair Somma reported:

- Early Transition Planning: A continued focus on connecting elementary "feeder" schools with secondary schools early on to help families plan for the future.
- Community Agency Involvement: Emphasizing the need for community agencies to support school activities (e.g., open houses) and creating new partnerships to help students who are struggling to succeed.
- Service Overlap: Exploring ways for agencies to offer direct support when students face specific challenges where school and community services might overlap.
- Upcoming Presentation in February from Dr. Poling Bork, covering her research and providing resources/workshops available for families.
 - For more information on Dr. Poling Bork: <https://polingbork.com/home>

E. AGENCY REPORTS

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

No report.

2. Niagara Children's Centre – Chris Tawil

Chris Tawil reported:

- Erin Davis has been hired as the new manager for the autism portfolio, succeeding the retired Jackie Van Langenfeld.
- The center is currently completing functional checklists to share with school boards. These help classrooms prepare for students with special needs entering the system this coming September; planning meetings begin in February.
- A final virtual "Transition to School" session for parents and caregivers is scheduled for Wednesday, January 14, 2026, at 4:00 PM.
- A new group led by Occupational Therapists (OTs) has launched to support students as they age out of school and move into adult services.
- The center continues to offer various recreational activities, with full listings and registration details available on their website.

3. Pathstone Mental Health – Michelle Toy

No report.

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

DJ Holmes reported:

- A well-attended Christmas party for younger children and their families featured food and entertainment.
 - A generous donation from Meridian Credit Union allowed the organization to provide holiday presents to over 35 children and their families.
- The annual food drive was highly successful, providing food boxes to families in need
- Fundraising & Events
- A campaign is currently underway to fund a new accessible playground. Donations are being accepted directly through their website (clpcw.com).
- Inaugural Golf Tournament: The first annual tournament in support of the playground is scheduled for June 19th. Registration details will be posted soon.

5. Inclusion West Niagara – Patricia Ferrie

Patricia Ferrie reported:

- Upcoming Respite Schedule
 - January 10–11: 4:00 PM to 9:00 AM.
 - February 28 – March 1: 4:00 PM to 9:00 AM.

- Expansion Starting March 13: Plans are in place to move to full weekend coverage (Friday at 4:00 PM to Sunday at 1:00 PM) occurring every weekend.
 - The full weekend schedule is expected to be finalized and confirmed at the next meeting.

6. Down Syndrome Niagara - Andrea Pede

No report.

7. Mainstream - Erica Simmanivong-Elizarraras

No report.

8. Bethesda Services – Melissa Sullivan

Melissa Sullivan reported:

- Entry to School Program: The program is on track to serve 90 children this year. To date, 60 intakes have been completed, and the full group of 90 is scheduled to begin the program in March.
- Caregiver Sleep Training: In partnership with Brock University's PhD program, a sleep training initiative is available for children aged 3–12.
 - Focus: Helping children who struggle with routines or sleeping through the night to improve school attendance.
 - Availability: There are currently vacancies; interested families can contact service coordinators or use the general service email.
- Foundational Family Services:
 - Male Caregiver Support Group: A monthly group led by a male behavior therapist and a male psychotherapist, currently seeing high engagement.
 - Teen Workshops: Active programs for this quarter include "Teen in Motion Toolbox" and "Pathways to Employment."

9. Autism Ontario Niagara Region – Cynthia Peterson

Cynthia Peterson reported:

- Two key Signature Series webinars are currently available for viewing:
 - "Autism Science Explained": Discussing genetics, environment, and how to evaluate evidence-based information.
 - "Autistic Burnout, Meltdowns, and Shutdowns": Providing strategies for support at home, school, and during homework.
- Ongoing "Caregiver Coffee Drop-ins" and an Aquafit class are available to help parents connect and recharge.

- Adaptive Karate: A 4-week trial program for children is available for \$20, allowing them to test their interest in the sport.
- Social Age-Group Clubs:
 - Play Pals: For younger children (ages 5–7).
 - Fast Club: An inclusive social program for pre-teens (ages 8–12).
 - Teen Social Club/STARS: Focuses on group social skills for teenagers.
- Upcoming family-friendly outings include a Fallsview Indoor Waterpark Day, family swims, and private sensory room bookings.
- March Break Reimbursement Fund: Applications are open from December 20 to January 20.
 - Families can apply for up to \$350 in reimbursement for one-to-one support workers or camp fees.
 - Recipients are chosen via a random draw and will be notified by early February.

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:

- The year concluded with a traditional Christmas assembly, focusing on the spiritual preparation for the birth of Jesus and providing a positive send-off for staff and students
- This month, Dennis Morris and Saint Michael are hosting open houses to showcase academic and extracurricular opportunities for prospective students.
- Secondary students are currently preparing for final exams at the end of the month, which will officially close out Semester 1 and lead into the start of Semester 2.

I. STAFF REPORTS

1. Elementary Principal – Susy Walsh

Susy Walsh reported:

- Registration for the September 2026 school year officially opens the first week of February. While registration is available year-round, this marks the primary enrollment push.
- All Niagara Catholic elementary schools will host open houses from February 2nd to February 6th.
- Community partners and agencies are encouraged to prompt families to visit their local schools during this window to ensure a smooth and successful transition for new students.
- Specific dates and times for every individual elementary school are listed on the Niagara Catholic website within the moving announcement banner.

2. Secondary Principal – Nicole Royer and Roxanne Rees

Nicole Royer and Roxanne Rees reported:

- Exam Preparation for Special Education:
 - Locally developed classes have culminating assessments during class time
 - Resource teacher meets with grade 9s, specifically to review the exam schedule and go over the expectations for exam days
 - Students on IEPs are given the opportunity to write in Resource for alternative space, extended time, scribe accommodations
 - Some students have the opportunity to create study sheets to help with executive functioning and working memory limitations
 - Some students are given a limited number of pages at a time, then a movement break, then more pages to alleviate some test-taking anxiety
- Homework help after school - Monday to Thursday with a different teacher each day and senior students tutoring junior students

3. Student Support – Danny Giancola

Danny Giancola reported:

- New Emergency Response Technicians (ERTs) completed their full Behavioral Management Systems (BMS) certification on January 6, supported by the ABA team.
- Educational Assistants (EAs) will receive BMS refresher training during the January 16 (Elementary) and January 29 (Secondary) PD days.

- During these PD days, EAs will also attend a session led by Autism Ontario. This includes an autism overview, Q&A, and scenario-based training focused on evidence-based ABA interventions.
- Specialized Programs: Gifted Module
 - Focus: Electricity and Electrical Science.
 - January 27–28 at Saint Michael Catholic Secondary School.
 - Students will study voltage, current, and resistance.
 - The module culminates in students designing and building an electric vehicle model. It also covers safety, power generation, and career pathways in the electrical field.
- Parental Support & Transitions:
 - The final Transition to School Orientation for parents and guardians will be held virtually on January 14.
 - This is a collaborative effort with the Niagara Children’s Centre (NCC) and other local boards to help families prepare for the next steps in their child’s education.
- Empower training:
 - Day 3 of Empower training is taking place January 21 for ERTs new to the program.
 - Staff from SickKids will be hosting staff virtually.

4. Superintendent Pizzoferrato – Gino Pizzoferrato

No report.

J. TRUSTEE REPORTS - Trustee Burkholder/Trustee Marino

No report.

K. NIAGARA CATHOLIC PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

No report.

L. NEW BUSINESS/AGENDA ITEMS

No report.

M. NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, February 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

This meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.
