



NIAGARA CATHOLIC  
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

**MINUTES OF THE  
SAINT PAUL HIGH SCHOOL CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING**

**Tuesday, September 17, 2024  
Saint Paul School Library**

Minutes of the Meeting of the Saint Paul High School Catholic School Council, held on April 23, 2024 at 6:00pm.

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 pm by Chair Alex Attree

**A. ROUTINE MATTERS**

**1. Opening Prayer –**

Led by Alex Attree

**2. Roll Call**

CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP		Present	Excused	Absent
Principal/Vice-Principal	Kelly Majka – Principal Jennifer Pirosko - VP	√		
Co - Chair	Amanda Leon	√		
Co-Chair	Alex Attree	√		
Secretary	Erin Clark	√		
Teacher Representative	Lindsay Pacilli	√		
Student Representative	Kate Bishop	√		
Parish Representative	Melissa Ross, Teresa Reich	√		
OAPCE Representative	Dana Sacco	√		
NCPIC Representative	Julie Bateman	√		
SEAC Representative	Tara Formisano	√		
	Lisa Caruso	√		
	Frank Caruso	√		
	Robyn Pearson	√		
	Julie Bateman	√		
	Rhonda Van Kleef	√		
	Shelby Brunni			

Melissa Procopio	√		
Christine Sidliom	√		
Jennifer Dolon	√		
Monica Bertolo	√		
Teresa Reich	√		
Tara Formisano	√		
Sandra Greco	√		
Impa Bahati	√		
Linda Rosano	√		
Tara Thornton	√		

3. **Approval of the Agenda**

Moved by Erin Clark and Julie Bateman

**THAT** the SPHS Catholic School Council approve the Agenda of the SPHS Catholic School Council Meeting of September 17, 2024

**CARRIED**

4. **Approval of Minutes of the Saint Paul High School Catholic School Council Meeting of April 23, 2024.**

Moved by Lisa Caruso and Amanda Leon

**THAT** SPHS Catholic School Council approve the Minutes of the SPHS Catholic School Council Meeting of (April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024) as presented. Approved meeting minutes will be posted on the spchs.ca website.

**CARRIED**

**B. REPORTS;**

**1) Chair Report – Amanda Leon and Alex Attree**

In lieu of a Chair Report, Alex Attree and Amanda Leon held nominations and elections for the following positions; Chair, Secretary, OAPCE representative, Parish Representative, NCPIC representative and SEAC representative. The positions of co-chair, secretary, parish representative, NCPIC and OAPCE were acclaimed with no other nominees. Tara Formisano accepted the SEAC representative position again with no opposition.

**2) Student Report – Kate Bishop**

Hello Catholic School Council, Moderators, Mrs. Majka and Parents,

My name is Kate Bishop and I am both humbled and honoured to be Saint Paul's Student Council President for this 2024-2025 school year. I am so excited for this year not only because I am finishing my fourth year here as a grade 12 student but also because I know all the events that will take place this year, some traditional and some new, will all uplift our school spirit and promote what Saint Paul is all about: family.

As Student Council President I am here to update you all on what has happened thus far in the year and what is to come for our student council and Saint Paul as a whole.

As for student council and athletic council, a very successful grade nine orientation was held at the end of August where incoming Patriots were able to participate in engaging, team building games. The students were provided lunch as well as their timetables. Then the students were allotted the rest of the morning to walk the halls, find their classrooms and practice opening their locks. There was a great response from the grade nines with over 200 new Patriots attending the event.

As for the start of the school year, practice fire drills and grade level assemblies have kicked off the school year, reminding students of all updated procedures and expectations especially because this year has had a lot of changes to adjust to. Our school also has announced a plethora of sports, music, art, drama, tech and academic activities that have started up, even within the first few weeks of school.

Going back to Student Council, our Patriot Perks Program has made a return this year changing its name to VIP (Very Important Patriot) with similar perks as last year such as out of uniform days, discounts on Semi and Prom tickets, and monthly draws.

We are looking forward to October as we plan for our annual pilgrimage which will have its kickoff on the ninth and the full mass and walk on the 23rd with our theme song of Pride (In the Name of Love) by U2. Finally, as Halloween Spirit week approaches we have so much to look forward to upcoming for Saint Paul.

Thank you for all that you do as a Catholic School Council to support all of the student activities here at St. Paul. Going to class is only one aspect of life at St. Paul, and while it is very important, there is so much more to life as a Patriot, and that could not happen without your support. On behalf of the students of St. Paul, thank you so much for your ongoing support.

### **3) NCPIC/OAPCE/SEAC Report –/Julie Bateman/Dana Sacco**

#### NCPIC Report – Julie Bateman

Julie Bateman reported that the minutes will not be available until the next meeting as they are awaiting approval. We will therefore defer this report until the next meeting.

#### OAPCE Report – Dana Sacco

**As We Walk Forward in Faith Together:  
Our New Theme!**

This year, let's focus on nurturing not just academic success but the whole child mind, body, and spirit. With all the excitement and anticipation, we encourage you to approach this year with an emphasis on well-being. Ensuring children feel supported both personally and academically will help them thrive.

### **Tips for Parents**

Here are some tips to ensure both you and your child have a smooth, successful school year:

- Create structured routines and support healthy habits: Create routines that balance schoolwork, relaxation, and physical activity. A structured approach helps children stay focused and reduces stress.
- Check in regularly with your child.
- Celebrate progress, no matter how small.
- Set up a quiet study area at home.

### **What Students Can Do**

For students, this year is an opportunity to grow academically and spiritually. Encourage your child to:

- Set clear goals.
- Stay organized.
- Manage time effectively.
- Participate in school masses and faith-based activities.

### SEAC Report – Tara Formisano

Summary:

Bethesda Services provides a range of free support programs for families registered with the Ontario Autism Program or Children's Behaviour Services. You can find their latest Service Guide on their website: [bethesdaservices.com](https://bethesdaservices.com). Available services include:

- Caregiver and Youth Workshops
- Social and Recreational Groups
- Family and Sibling Support
- Clinical Group Services
- Family Activities and Events
- Brief Consultations (Speech, Occupational Therapy, ABA, and Mental Health)

For more details, contact their Service Coordinators at (905) 684-6918 ext. 170 or email [serviceinfo@bethesdaservices.com](mailto:serviceinfo@bethesdaservices.com).

Bethesda also offers youth workshops like:

**Strategies for Successful Homework** (October 2, 2024, 5:15-6:15 pm)

Learn tips to plan, stay organized, and tackle assignments with confidence.

**Organizational Skills** (October 9, 2024, 5:15-6:15 pm)

Discover techniques to balance school, activities, and social life while managing your time and tasks.

Bethesda also partners with the Niagara Children's Centre to provide the Ontario Autism Program's Entry to School (ETS) Program, helping children transition smoothly to school with up to 15 hours per week of support. The program operates across several schools in Niagara and continues to offer consultations for educators and caregivers.

Additionally, Niagara Children's Centre continues to offer Tiered OT Services and support for students with extensive needs across Niagara Catholic schools.

For upcoming events, visit the Niagara Children's Centre calendar

(<https://www.niagarachildrenscentre.com/calendar>). You can also support their annual **Superhero**

**Run** fundraiser at Brock University on Sunday, September 29, 2024. Sign up or donate here: [NiagaraSuperheroRun.ca](http://NiagaraSuperheroRun.ca).

#### **4)- Parish Report- Melissa Ross**

##### Children's Liturgy

- There is a meeting on Wednesday, Sept 18<sup>th</sup> at 7pm in the Lacey Room
- They are looking for new catechists
- The tentative start date for this year is September 22<sup>nd</sup> during the 9:30am mass

##### Youth Ministry

- Father Greg is preparing to begin movie/discussion nights
- He is looking for leaders to run these nights
- The funds from Avery Ross' fundraiser last school year will get things started
- Avery will be running her fundraiser again this year with new stuffies. She is branching out to the feeder schools and will enlist other grade 7/8 students to run it at their schools

##### Fr. Greg and Fr. Ronnie Welcome

- The St. Vincent de Paul is having coffee and refreshments on Sunday, Sept 29<sup>th</sup> after the 11am mass in the church hall to welcome Fr. Greg and Fr. Ronnie

##### Anniversary Certificates from Bishop Bergie

- For 25/40/50/60 years
- The deadline to receive certificates for 2024 is November 8<sup>th</sup>
- Registration forms are available at the church office or you can email Christina for an electronic form

##### Book Donations for the Adoration Chapel

- They've had a lot of donations and are no longer accepting further donations

##### Youth Ministry Training Day

- Frank Capisciol is running the training at the Catholic Centre
- September 28<sup>th</sup> from 9am – 2pm
- Includes mass, confession and pizza lunch (may go to St. Julia's for mass if numbers are high)
- \$10 for Adults (18+); \$5 for teens (grade 9-12)
- The training is for those looking to start or who are already involved in youth ministry

##### Volunteers Needed

- Fr. Greg is looking for volunteers for Reader, Eucharistic Minister, Hospitality Team, ad Monday morning money counters
- Sign up sheets have been at the back of the church for a few weeks
- You can also contact the church office to sign up.

##### CWL Rummage Sale

- This year's sale will be held October 5<sup>th</sup> from 8:30am to noon
- They are looking for donations of clothing, household items, glassware, books and toys
- Donation drop offs can be made in the parish hall October 3<sup>rd</sup> from 1:30-4pm and October 4<sup>th</sup> 8:30am -4:30 pm

##### Diocesan Holy Name Society Meeting

- Taking place today; 6:15 rosary; 7:00 mass; 7:30 meeting in hall

##### Men's Day of Reflection

- Taking place October 5<sup>th</sup> 8am-3pm

- Sponsored by the Holy Name Society
- Run by Fr. Ben Weber at St. Thomas Aquinas
- \$40 to register; deadline is Sept 28th
- Includes 2 talks, adoration, confession, mass, and lunch
- Contact Garret Smits at 905-988-3220 or the church office

#### Adoration Chapel

- The PIN pad is being replaced with card access after hours
- \$10 per card; see the office to register for a card
- The doors are open Mon-Fri from 8am-4:30pm

#### Knights of Columbus Spaghetti Dinner

- Taking place tomorrow night; can still get tickets at the door
- Columbus Club Hall; 4-7pm
- \$15 for adults; \$7 for 12 & under

#### RCIA Open House

- Taking place Sept 30<sup>th</sup> at 7pm in the Ferando room
- For all those looking to learn more about their faith or looking to become a part of the Catholic faith

#### **5) Staff Report – Lindsay Pacilli**

##### Sports:

- The Fall sports season is underway – sports include Football, Girls Flag Football, Girls Basketball, Boys Volleyball, Cross Country, Tennis, and Golf. Schedules and results can be found on the board's N.C.A.A. website (<http://www.ncaa.ca/>).

##### Co-curriculars:

##### Music and Arts-

We have many events planned this year!! At the moment our Vocal Ensemble are preparing our theme song for the Pilgrimage Mass, and Ms. Iorio and Mr. Rondinelli are getting all of our ensembles up and running for another busy year! Besides our regular key events like performing at the Santa Claus Parade, Colour Wars, Liturgies and school assemblies, this year we will also be performing at our FEEDER SCHOOLS for the entire school!! We are very excited about this venture as the little ones are so very engaged when we perform for them! Our culminating music event for semester 1 will once again be the Christmas Roadshow on December 12 and 13! And we will also be taking our newly formed Musical Theatre and Drama club students (as well as students from Ms. Iorio's Drama classes) to the regional Star Festival and hopefully nationals again this year as it's being held in Niagara Falls w/ Ms. Iorio and Mr. Rondinelli assisting in its organization and running workshops!

Our concert Band will also be heading to Nationals on May 15 at York University and our school will be hosting the regional music fest competition on May 22! We will also hold a culminating Concert in the Spring of 2025!!

· We had a very successful opening Mass today. Both masses were held at Our Lady of the Scapular church.

Spec. Ed:

- The Spec. Ed. Room is back in the swing of things. Students are integrated and doing great things in a variety of classes including Horticulture, Physical Education, Food and Nutrition, Art, Technology and English.
- There will be a number of activities, events and opportunities for these students to participate in during the school year (such as the 35-session program “Niagara Catholic ROCKS with Mendelt!”); there will be more information as these events are offered and planned.
- The Spec. Ed students will be starting up a coffee cart after Thanksgiving.

## **6) Principal Report – Kelly Majka**

### ➤ Introduction of Mrs. Majka (Principal)

- Niagara Catholic Grad
- 4 years at St. Michael (Science & PE)
- 1 year at St. Alfred (Grade 8)
- 1 year as Fresh Start/Jump Start (Alternative Education)
- 4 years at Lakeshore Catholic (2 years: Science; 2 years Special education Classroom Teacher)
- 5 Years at Saint Paul (Program Chair of Special Education, Educational Resource Teacher)
- 5 Years at Notre Dame (Vice Principal)
- 1 year at Denis Morris (Vice Principal)
- First year at Saint Paul (Principal)
- Very excited and enthusiastic to be back at Saint Paul. Feel extremely blessed and grateful to have this opportunity to lead and journey alongside students and staff.

### ➤ Introduction of Ms. Pirosko (Vice Principal)

- Graduate of St Paul CHS and resident of Niagara Falls
- ten years at Notre Dame College School- Business/ Tech
- ten years at Catholic Education Centre- serving K-12 as Consultant- SHSM/ OYAP/ Dual Credit and then Coordinator of Student Success (Ministry Student Success Lead)
- focus on at risk programs, experiential learning, pathways awareness and opportunities

### ➤ The start of the school year was a success. Students and staff have settled into their class routines and our fall co-curricular program is in full swing. We had a good number of new student registrations this year and our student population has grown to approximately 804 students.

Currently our grade cohorts are as follows:

- Grade 09: 236
- Grade 10: 194
- Grade 11: 187
- Grade 12: 187

### ➤ We have several new staff members due to retirements and an increase in enrollment:

- Carla Agbonwoneten – English Teacher
- Crystal Balanowski – Math Teacher
- Francesca Bambara – French Teacher
- Lindsay Bernacci – Culinary Teacher
- Emma Hendrie – Science Teacher
- Devin Ward – Math, Science Teacher

- Madison House – LTO – French Teacher
  - Angela Wilchiwsky – LTO – English Teacher
- 
- September 4 & 5 we had our Grade Level assemblies which reviewed the rules, student code of conduct, policies and procedures so that all staff and students are safe and can meet their full potential.
  - Picture Day was held on Monday September 9<sup>th</sup>
  - We had 1 successful Practice Fire Drill and still need to have two more fire drills as well as a practice lockdown drill before end of January.
  - Today, September 17<sup>st</sup> was our Opening School Mass held at Our Lady of the Scapular Church.
  - Tomorrow September 18<sup>th</sup> we have Niagara Foundation for Catholic Education Charity Golf Tournament (one admin and one student represents Saint Paul).
  - Next Thursday September 26<sup>th</sup> is our Grade 9 Curriculum Night. Parents will have an opportunity to walk in the footsteps of their child's steps as they visit with their classroom teachers. Teachers will provide a brief but descriptive outline of the Grade 9 program specific to the subject.
  - Chaplain Josie has been busy Preparing for our upcoming Grade 9 Retreats as part of their Period 1 classes. These retreats will take place at Our Lady of Scapular Hall.
  - Grade 12 Retreats – May 9<sup>th</sup> at Heartland Forest
  - We will be hosting our annual Girardo Cup on Tuesday Sept 24 at 3pm. This is a Junior football game that will be held in honour of teacher: Mr. Fred Girardo who passed away.
  - PA Day Scheduled for Friday September 20<sup>th</sup>. This will focus on our Boards Mental Health Strategy as well as individual departmental PD in the afternoon. Our Math and English Departments will be focusing on developing our Math & Literacy Action Plan.
  - Monday Sept 30 is National Day for Truth & Reconciliation – Orange Shirt Day. Students are encourage to wear orange shirts with uniform bottoms and shoes.
  - Pilgrimage – supporting our brothers and sisters in Haiti. Our Pilgrimage will take place on Wednesday October 23<sup>rd</sup>. During Period 4 there will be a Pilgrimage Mass followed by the Pilgrimage walk after school. Students will receive community service hours for raising funds and walking. We will finalize plans and rolls it out to the students through our Pilgrimage committee during the first couple weeks in October.  
THEME: Walking for Haiti in the Name of Love  
SONG: U2: Pride in the name of Love
  - There are many unique components to curriculum delivery at Saint Paul:
    - To begin our French Immersion Program in now available to Gr. 9, 10 & 11 students.
    - Also, the Advanced Placement (AP Prep) program is in our Gr. 9 classes in English, Geography, Mathematics and Science. Grade 10 classes in English, History, Mathematics and Science, Gr. 11 English, Math & Science.
  - It is nice to see all the students in full swing of getting involved and immersed in school and extra-curricular life. Each and every day we are communicating tryouts on our morning announcements, social media account and TV screens. We strongly encourage all students to get involved. There is surely something for everyone to participate in 😊

### C. OPEN DISCUSSION –

#### QUESTION PERIOD:

**Christine Q:** Christine indicated that she loves the posts on Facebook. She wondered if students are on Facebook. Is this the intended audience of post?

**Kelly A:** Anything posted to Facebook is auto-posted across a multitude of social media sites including Instagram and X (formerly Twitter). There is no one answer to the best way to reach students and parents so a multi-targeted approach seems best. Morning announcements over the PA system and then



rebroadcast on Television screens around the school is another way that Saint Paul is ensuring that students get the necessary information. Mr. Mauri and Mr. Tropea are the moderators of the social media component.

**Robin:** Students are also involved in the tech component.

**Melissa R:** Saint Paul Arts also has their own social media presence

**Kelly:** Anything posted on Saint Paul Arts site is cross-posted automatically to all of our social media identities.

**Monica Q:** Discussing the experience of her own children in highly competitive STEM programs at post secondary (Calculus, Physics, Biology and Chemistry). Monica mentioned that IPAD annotations using “Goodnotes” is almost exclusively the practice. Monica questioned if we can incorporate these technological devices and apps in the senior academic program at the least to prepare students for post secondary.

**Kelly A:** Thank you for the feedback. This is an important discussion and Kelly felt that it is necessary to pass along to program chairs for discussion at subject council to best serve the individual programs that would each have their own needs.

**Linda Q:** Wondered how we are fostering a move away from cell phones given the current ministry ban for students but reliance on social media etc.

**Kelly A:** The social media ban has been a change for all people involved in education including both staff and students. The staff are ensuring that when there are sign up lists, QR codes but also pen and paper options are available. The current cellphone ban is a non-negotiable from the ministry and Kelly made the analogy to the non-negotiable masks from Covid.

**Lindsay:** as someone in the trenches, she reported that the students are responding well.

**Alex:** reports that for some students and classrooms there has been little change as teachers had always collected phones

**Jen P:** suggested that it is not about eradication but responsible use

**Kelly:** Some Northern boards are using a Bell-to-Bell method where students don’t even have their phones at lunch. Agreed that Saint Paul students have been very respectful.

**Frank Q:** What did the August memo about extended vacations mean?

**Kelly A:** The school board has seen an increase in extended vacations or absences from school for students. It is impossible to ignore that extended absences do get in the way of education. Prior knowledge is helpful to students and staff. There are forms in the main office that should be completed for any extended absences. Kelly also offered a reminder that an absence from a class for more than fifteen days straight would result in removal from the class according to ministry policy unless a child is on a learning plan during that time.

#### **D. NEXT MEETING DATES;**

**November 26 2024**

**February 18, 2024**

**April 22, 2025**

#### **E. Closing Prayer**

The closing prayer (*Hail Mary*) was led by Alex Attree

#### **F. ADJOURNMENT**

That the September 17, 2024 meeting of the SPSHS Catholic School Council be adjourned. Moved by Erin Clark and seconded by Dana Sacco

**CARRIED**

This meeting was adjourned at 7:16 pm.