



*Encountering Souls and Opening Minds So That All Students Succeed*

**Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee**  
**Meeting**  
**November 7, 2024**

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# Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee (NCPIC)

The Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee (NCPIC) is a regional body of representative stakeholders that supports Catholic education by providing a communication link to parents/guardians, Catholic School Councils, the Diocese of St. Catharines, the Director of Education, and the Board.

The Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee promotes, encourages, and supports parent engagement at the Board and school levels, building strong Catholic identity and community, nurturing the distinctiveness of Catholic education, and advancing student achievement and well-being of all students in the Niagara Catholic District School Board.



Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee Policy (800.7)

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# Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee (NCPIC)

The Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee meets the on first Thursday of the month on a bi-monthly basis (or as noted) at the Catholic Education Centre from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Meetings are open to the public, recorded and livestreamed.

## **2024-2025 Meeting Dates**

September 5, 2024

November 7, 2024

January 9, 2025

March 6, 2025

May 1, 2025

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# Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee (NCPIC)

## 2024-2024 Membership

### Parent Members

Laura Thomas, **Chair**

Brenda Annen

Julie Bateman

Rose Heron

Sara Ivicic

Caroline Polgrabia

Carrie Vernelli

Fr. Paul MacNeil, Bishop/Diocesan Representative

Josie Rocca, Community Representative-St. Vincent de Paul

Alexandra Gonzales, Community Representative

Ella Colaneri, Secondary Student Senate Representative

Natalia Benoit and Joe Bruzzese, Trustees of the Board

Lee Ann Forsyth-Sells, Director's Designate/Superintendent of Education

Maria Solomon, Elementary Principal

Kevin Timmins, Secondary Principal

Yvonne Anderson, Administrative Assistant/Recording Secretary

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# Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee (NCPIC)

Each year, the Niagara Catholic District School Board sends out a communication notice to “Call for Nomination” for representation on the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee. Niagara Catholic parents/guardians and community representatives are invited to complete and submit a nomination form for membership on the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee.

Nomination Forms will be made available on the Board website and at all elementary and secondary schools in March 2025 for the 2025-2026 school year.

## ➤ Parent/Guardian Representation

To be eligible for election/appointment as a parent/guardian representative to the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee, a person:

- must be a parent/guardian of a student enrolled in a school of the Board,
- must reside within the jurisdiction of the Board,
- must support the Mission, Vision and Values of the Niagara Catholic District School Board, and
- must fully participate in the annual Commissioning Ceremony of NCPIC members.

## ➤ Community Representatives

Community representatives should represent and be supported by an agency, association, or organization in the Niagara Region.

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## Parent Resources

The Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee supports many student-focused initiatives. [Mental health and well-being](#) is a key concern for the NCPIC, as is [creating safe and accepting schools free of bullying](#). We support students as they grow in faith. We are partners with the [Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education \(OAPCE\)](#), which is the voice of parents of children in Catholic schools and protects and promotes publicly funded Catholic education. Niagara Catholic's NCPIC supports students as they work to achieve the [Ontario Catholic Graduate Expectations](#), and supports the mission of [People for Education](#), which supports and advances public education through research, policy, and public engagement.

At home, at school, and in the community, parents matter!

Parent resources, NCPIC agendas, approved meeting minutes and the current livestream meetings are available on the Board website by selecting:

- “Parents” dropdown list
  - “Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee”

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## Mandate of the Catholic School Council

A Catholic School Council is established and maintained in each elementary and secondary school in the Board to encourage the active participation and faith formation of its members, supporting the triad of church, home and school, to improve student achievement and well-being of all students in their school community, and to enhance the accountability of the education system to parents/guardians.

A Catholic School Council's primary means of achieving its purpose is by making recommendations to the principal of the school and/or the Board.

[Catholic School Council AOP \(800.1\)](#)

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## Role of the Catholic School Council Chair/Co-Chairs

The Chair/Co-Chairs of a Catholic School Council shall:

- determine the dates of Catholic School Council meetings in consultation with the school principal.
- plan the agenda in consultation with the school principal.
- chair the Catholic School Council meetings.
- communicate regularly with the school principal regarding matters of the Catholic School Council.
- be diligent in ensuring that any views presented in the capacity of Chair/Co-Chair(s) represent fairly the position of the Catholic School Council.
- review the Catholic School Council By-Laws annually in consultation with Catholic School Council members.
- participate as ex-officio members of all subcommittees established by the Catholic School Council.

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# Agendas and Approved Catholic School Council Meeting Minutes

- ❖ A Catholic School Council shall meet between September to June at least four times in each school year.
  - ✓ Catholic School Council elections are to be held within the first 30 calendar days of the each new school year.
  
- ❖ All meetings will be held at the school that has established the Catholic School Council and shall be open to the public.
  
- ❖ Catholic School Council Meetings cannot take place unless:
  - ✓ The principal and/or vice-principal is present,
  - ✓ the majority of current members are present (quorum=50%+1), and
  - ✓ the majority of the members present at the meeting are parents.
  
- ❖ Catholic School Council meeting agendas, approved meeting minutes, and financial records (up to four years) shall be available at the school, for examination without charge by any individual.

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# Parent Engagement and Funding Opportunities

- ❖ Each year, the Ministry of Education provides funding to support parent engagement at the Board and school levels.
- ❖ Elementary and secondary schools are allocated \$500.00 to support the operation of the Catholic School Council and for parent engagement in the school to support student achievement and well-being.
- ❖ In 2023-2024 Catholic School Councils were provided with an opportunity to apply for additional funds up to \$1000.00 to support parent engagement activities through an application process. Applications and funding allocations were approved in alignment with Ministry criteria.
  - Eight elementary and two secondary Catholic School Councils submitted an application and received funding to support parent engagement in their school communities.
- ❖ For the 2024-2025 school year, Catholic School Councils will have the opportunity to submit an application for additional funding to support parent engagement in their school communities.
  - Please speak with the school principal for further details and to access the application form. Completed applications are to be sent to Yvonne Anderson at [yvonne.anderson@ncdsb.com](mailto:yvonne.anderson@ncdsb.com).

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## Catholic School Council Fundraising

- ❖ Any fundraising activities must be conducted in accordance with Board Administrative Operational Procedures:
  - ✓ Fundraising (301.4), and
  - ✓ School Generated Funds (301.6).
  
- ❖ Funds raised are to be used for a purpose approved by the principal of the school and/or the Board.
  
- ❖ Any funds and assets generated through fundraising activities assisted by the Catholic School Council are the property of the Board.

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# Catholic School Council Annual Reports

Catholic School Council Chairs/Co-Chair(s) in consultation with the school principal are to complete a Catholic School Council Annual Report.

The annual report is comprised of three sections:

1. **CSC Membership and Activities Report:** This report is to provide a brief summary of CSC activities and events that have taken place throughout the school year, the CSC membership, and meeting dates.
2. **Project-Fundraising Report:** This report describes the revenue and expenses of fundraising activities done in collaboration with the Catholic School Council and purchases made with fundraising profits.
3. **Operating Report:** This report describes the operating expenses of the Catholic School Council.

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# POLICY VETTING

Niagara Catholic appreciates and welcomes feedback from all Niagara Catholic parents/guardians especially when policies are being vetted.

Niagara Catholic policies are reviewed on a 5 year cyclical process or as required by the Ministry of Education.

Policies for vetting, are posted on the Board website for review, and feedback timelines are identified. [Policies for Vetting](#).

The following Governance Policies are currently being reviewed as part of the Establishment and Cyclical Review of Policies Policy (100.5) review process.

*Feedback is to be submitted to [Anna Pisano](#) by 12:00pm November 20, 2024*

- [Board By-Laws Policy 100.1](#)
- [Trustee Expenses and Reimbursement Policy 100.13](#)
- [Complaint Resolution Policy 800.3](#)

All feedback received by the designated date and time is presented to Senior Administration and the Board of Trustees for consideration. Parent voice matters: even feedback submitted as “no comment” is recorded as feedback.

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# Ontario Association for Parents in Catholic Education



The Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education (OAPCE) is the voice of parents/guardians of children enrolled in the publicly funded English Catholic System of Education in the Province of Ontario since 1939.

OAPCE is the only Catholic parent association recognized by the Ministry of Education and is mandated through the Education Act in Regulation 612 School Councils to have an OAPCE representative on the each Catholic School Council. The contact information of the Catholic School Council OAPCE representative is shared with OAPCE allowing OAPCE to directly send newsletters, updates and information about upcoming events/conferences to be shared at Catholic School Councils meetings.

Niagara Catholic values the partnership with OAPCE and renews the OAPCE membership on an annual basis. As part of the OAPCE membership, Niagara Catholic has the opportunity to have a parent voice at the discussion table, through the position of the Niagara Catholic OAPCE Regional Director.

Niagara Catholic is currently seeking to fill the position of the Niagara Catholic OAPCE Regional Director.

- Parents/guardians who may be interested in the voluntary role as the Niagara Catholic OAPCE Regional Director, are welcome to contact Lee Ann Forsyth-Sells, Superintendent of Education, Director's Designate for further details.

## **October Newsletter: *Parents4Parents Press***

Click on the link to access OAPCE's October newsletter for updates on OAPCE's advocacy for Catholic education, resources for families, and details about their upcoming social media campaign.

<https://oapce.org/wp-content/uploads/October-Newsletter.pdf>

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## Frequently asked questions:

**Q-**Do you have to be Roman Catholic to be a member of a Catholic School Council?

**A-** An individual does not have to be a Roman Catholic to be a member of a Catholic School Council.

- To be eligible, an individual has to be a parent/guardian of a student who is enrolled in the school.

**Q-**Can an individual join a Catholic School Council at anytime throughout the school year?

**A-**An individual wishing to join a Catholic School Council must be present and declare their intent, at the first meeting of the Catholic School Council.

- However, meetings are open to the public and parents/guardians may attend as observers.

**Q-**Can an employee of the Board be a parent member of a Catholic School Council?

**A-**Employees of the Board are welcome to participate on Catholic School Councils. However the following applies:

- the employee must be a parent/guardian of a student who is enrolled in the school;
- the parent/guardian cannot be employed at the school; and
- the parent/guardian must disclose at the first meeting before elections, that they are an employee of the Board.

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## Frequently asked questions:

**Q**-Can an employee of the Board hold the position of the Catholic School Council Chair and/or Co-Chair?

**A**-An employee of the Board is not eligible to hold a position of the Chair and/or Co-Chair on a Catholic School Council.

**Q**-How many terms can an individual be a Chair/Co-Chair on Catholic School Council?

**A**-Unless there are provisions outlined in By-Laws of the Catholic School Council an individual may be annually re-elected or re-appointed as the Chair/Co-Chair.

**Q**-When a Catholic School Council makes a recommendation to the principal, what is the responsibility of the principal regarding the recommendation?

**A**-“*The principal of a school shall consider each recommendation made to the principal by the school council and shall advise the council of the action taken in response to the recommendation.*” (Education Act - Regulations 298-Operation of Schools-General)

**Q**-Who is eligible to vote at Catholic School Council meetings?

**A**-All members of the Catholic School Council are eligible to vote with the exception of the principal.

**HAVE A QUESTION CONTACT US!**

**[ncpicinfo@ncdsb.com](mailto:ncpicinfo@ncdsb.com)**

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# Thank you!

The Niagara Catholic District School Board and the Niagara Catholic Parent Involvement Committee (NCPIC) would like to thank the Chairs/Co-Chairs and all members of Catholic School Councils for their ongoing support and commitment to Catholic education, parent engagement and student achievement and well-being of all students.

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