



BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK
Catholic District School Board

Minutes

Catholic Education Centre
322 Fairview Drive
Brantford, ON N3T 5M8

Accommodations Committee
Wednesday, April 1, 2026 – 3:00 p.m.
Boardroom/ Microsoft Teams

Trustees:

Carol Luciani (Chair), Bill Chopp, Dan Dignard, Dennis Blake, Toni Poirier

Senior Administration:

Mike McDonald (Director of Education & Secretary), Rajini Nelson (Superintendent of Business & Treasurer), John Della Fortuna, Kevin Greco, Michael Lawlor, Phil Wilson (Superintendents of Education)

Staff and Other Resources:

Jack Ammendolia (Watson & Associates Economists Ltd.), Lou Citino (Manager of Facilities and Construction Services), Katherine Reddicliffe (Recording Secretary)

1. Opening Business

1.1 Land Acknowledgement

The meeting was opened with land acknowledgement led by Superintendent Lawlor.

1.2 Opening Prayer

Superintendent Lawlor led opening prayer.

1.3 Attendance

Attendance was noted as above.

1.4 Approval of the Agenda

Moved by: Dennis Blake

Seconded by: Toni Poirier

THAT the Accommodations Committee approves the Agenda of April 1, 2026.

Carried

1.5 Declaration of Interest: Nil.

1.6 Approval of the Minutes:

Moved by: Dan Dignard

Seconded by: Bill Chopp

THAT the Accommodations Committee approves the Minutes of October 1, 2025.

Carried

1.7 Business Arising from the Minutes: Nil.

2. Staff Reports & Information Items:

2.1 Enrolment Projection Update



Director McDonald provided a brief synopsis of the Enrolment Projection Update Report on behalf of Superintendent Nelson.

Mr. Jack Ammendolia, Managing Partner, Watsons & Associates Economists Ltd. provided a high-level overview for the committee on:

- Accommodation planning landscape
- Enrolment projections update
- Capital priorities
- Attendance boundary reviews
- Municipal partners meeting update
- Data dashboard update

Accommodation Planning Landscape – Economic Context

The current housing market has experienced a slowdown, requiring careful consideration of enrolment projections. Recent reductions in immigration levels and changes in migration patterns have contributed to this shift. Growth previously driven by movement from the Greater Toronto Area to Brantford and surrounding communities during the pandemic has moderated. While Southwestern Ontario experienced similar trends, growth has now slowed across the region.

Enrolment Projections

Elementary Enrolment: Current projections indicate no significant changes in elementary enrolment. Overall enrolment is expected to increase gradually over the next decade.

Secondary Enrolment: Projections show an increasing share of students entering secondary schools. Historically, the Board has experienced higher enrolment at the Grade 9 level compared to that at Grade 8, reflecting student transitions from other boards. This trend is consistent with patterns observed across many secondary schools in Southern Ontario and will continue to be monitored by the consultants.

Capital Priorities

Mr. Ammendolia advised that there is no immediate urgency to advance a secondary school project based on current Ministry metrics, though early exploration is underway for a potential business case in Caledonia for a secondary school. Preliminary enrolment data and mapping are being used for scenario planning, recognizing that not all students would attend a new school but that local options could reduce out-of-region commuting. An enrolment range of approximately 800–1,000 students was identified as optimal for program viability. A Grades 7–12 school model was mentioned and noted as previously being supported by the Ministry due to operational efficiencies. Given ministry approval timelines, early inclusion in long-term planning was emphasized.

Dialogue continued with the topic of recent provincial legislation related to the removal of HST. This applies to municipal development charges and does not currently extend to education development charges (EDCs). The EDC landscape has shifted, with several school boards having renewal by-laws not approved by the Ministry of Education. Additional boards are currently awaiting decisions, and there is uncertainty regarding future approvals. The Board is approximately two years away from needing to consider EDC renewal. In Haldimand, the



intention had been to review EDCs following completion of the Attendance Boundary Reviews (ABRs). The Board has not historically required EDCs at the current scale, though future need is now emerging. Further consideration will depend on Ministry direction and outcomes from other jurisdictions.

With respect to long-term growth planning, there was indication that discussions with municipalities regarding school sites are initiated when accommodation pressures can no longer be managed within existing capacity. Securing land for elementary schools is generally less complex than for secondary schools due to site size requirements. The Board continues to monitor opportunities and processes with the continued growth and enrolment. The Board is taking a proactive approach to ensuring school sites are considered early in municipal planning applications.

Attendance Boundary Reviews Update

City of Brantford – Attendance Boundary Review (ABR)

The review has progressed to the point where geographic areas have been narrowed and will be presented to the Board of Trustees. A new attendance area has been created for the new elementary school in Southwest Brant. Existing boundaries were reviewed based on current school locations and student distribution. Minor adjustments were made to several schools to help address enrolment pressures and to better align students with schools closer to their place of residence.

Board-Wide Secondary Attendance Boundary Review

The primary focus has been the creation of a new attendance boundary for the new secondary school. This will be presented to the Board of Trustees at some point this Spring.

County of Brant Attendance Boundary Review

The final committee meeting is scheduled for end of April, at which time the committee will determine whether there is consensus on an option to present to the Board of Trustees. Feedback from both committee discussions and public meeting has largely supported the creation of new attendance boundaries, with no interest expressed in program changes. The new school is expected to accommodate a larger share of bused students, which is considered advantageous as the facility will be designed to support efficient transportation flow, including drop-off and parking.

Status Updates: Municipal Partners & Data Dashboards

Municipal Partners Meeting

An annual municipal partners meeting is held with external stakeholders, consistent with practices used with other client boards. The meeting serves as a collaborative information-sharing session with the Board to support alignment and shared understanding across the jurisdiction. The meeting is generally done virtually and includes municipality representatives, consultants, senior leadership, daycare providers, joint facilities and many more. A primary focus is accommodation. Timing for the meeting is being considered for either early June or the beginning of September, aligned with the start of the new school year.

Data Dashboard

Watson & Associates has developed a data dashboard for school board clients that provides a user-friendly platform for accessing key information. The dashboard includes tiered user



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permissions, allowing Board staff full access while providing the public with limited, appropriate access. Watson & Associates will work with the BHNCD SB senior leadership team to refine the information presented. The intent is for the dashboard initiative to complement the municipal partners meetings.

Questions

Discussion was had regarding a capital build proposal for a secondary school in the Haldimand area and how it would impact the student population. Mr. Ammendolia explained that new school facilities and program offerings typically attract new student registrations from a broad geographic area. In addition, some current students may seek to transfer to reduce bus travel times. As a result, projected enrolment for opening day must allow for these anticipated registrations. Enrolment projections provide reasonable data to support appropriate opening numbers and avoid under- or over-utilization. Should the Board wish to explore this option, Senior Administration and Watson & Associates would work collaboratively to initiate the process.

Moved by: Toni Poirier

Seconded by: Bill Chopp

THAT the Accommodations Committee recommends that the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board receives the Enrolment Projection Update for information.

Carried

3. Business of the In-Camera Session: Nil.

4. Report on the In-Camera Session: Nil.

5. Adjournment

Moved by: Dan Dignard

Seconded by: Dennis Blake

THAT the Accommodations Committee adjourns the meeting of April 1, 2026.

Carried

Next Meeting: Call of the Chair