



BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK Catholic District School Board

Agenda

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

Special Meeting of the Board Tuesday January 13, 2026 ♦ 6:30 p.m. Board Room

Trustees:

Carol Luciani (Chair), Bill Chopp (Vice-Chair), Dennis Blake, Dan Dignard
Rick Petrella (On-leave)

Senior Administration:

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

1. Opening Business

1.1 Opening Prayer

Almighty God, bless us as we gather today for this meeting. Guide our minds and hearts so that we will work for the good of our community and be a help to all people. Teach us to be generous in our outlook, courageous in the face of difficulty, and wise in our decisions. We give you praise and glory, Lord our God, forever and ever. Amen

1.2 Attendance

1.3 Approval of the Agenda

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1.4 Declaration of Interest

2. Committee and Staff Reports

2.1 Haldimand County Trustee Vacancy Appointment

Pages 2-21

Presenter: Mike McDonald, Director of Education & Secretary

2.2 Declaration of Office and Oath of Allegiance (Section 6.1.2.1, Board By-Laws, 2025)

Presenter: Mike McDonald, Director of Education & Secretary

3. Business In-Camera

207 (2) *Closing of certain committee meetings. A meeting of a committee of a board, including a committee of the whole board, may be closed to the public when the subject-matter under consideration involves:*

- The security of the property of the board;*
- The disclosure of intimate, personal or financial information in respect of a member of the board or committee, an employee or prospective employee of the board or a pupil or his or her parent or guardian;*
- The acquisition or disposal of a school site;*
- Decisions in respect of negotiation with employees of the board; or*
- Litigation affecting the board.*

4. Report on the In-Camera Session

5. Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, we thank you for your gifts to us: for making us, for saving us in Christ, for calling us to be your people. As we come to the end of this meeting, we give you thanks for all the good things you have done in us. We thank you for all who have shared in the work of this Board and ask you to bless us all in your love. We offer this prayer, Father, through Christ our Lord. Amen

6. Adjournment

Next meeting: Tuesday, January 27, 2025, 6:30 p.m., Boardroom

REPORT TO THE BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD

Prepared by: Mike McDonald, Director of Education & Secretary
Presented to: Board of Trustees
Submitted on: January 13, 2026
Submitted by: Mike McDonald, Director of Education & Secretary

TRUSTEE APPOINTMENT PROCESS

Open Session

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

On Friday October 24, 2025, the Director of Education and Secretary of the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board, received a resignation letter from Trustee Mark Watson seeking to resign from the Board effective immediately.

At the October 28, 2025, regularly scheduled meeting of the board, that resignation was ratified upon majority vote by the Board of Trustees.

In accordance with section 221(1) of the Education Act, the Board of Trustees had two options to fill the vacancy to the end of term, November 2026. The first was to appoint a candidate within 90 days of the resignation, or to work with the Haldimand County Municipal Clerk to hold a by-election. The Board of Trustees also passed the motion to fill the trustee vacancy created by the resignation through an appointment process.

On Thursday October 30, 2025, the BHNCDsb began advertising the vacancy and submission of applications process via a variety of sources.

Potential candidates were asked to complete a submission to include, an expression of interest, a current resumé, and to submit a copy of the presentation they intend to make at a Special Meeting of the Board on January 13, 2026, to the Office of the Director of Education.

DEVELOPMENTS:

Under the criteria outlined in the *Municipal Elections Act* all applicants were found to be eligible and have confirmed their presentation to the Board. The eligible candidates are:

- Kevin Brandt
- Toni Poirier
- John Vamos
- Constant Verschoore
- Roy Walsh

After the candidates are introduced by the Chair of the Board, each candidate will have the opportunity to make a verbal presentation of no more than 5 minutes. Trustees will then caucus to deliberate and score the candidates in order to determine the successful candidate.

After the trustees have completed their deliberations and the winner is determined, the Chair of the Board will announce the name of the successful candidate and request a motion to confirm the voting results.

The successful candidate will be appointed to the role and will be sworn in prior to the conclusion of the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board appoint [NAME] as the Trustee representing Haldimand County for the Brant Haldimand Norflok Catholic District School Board.



BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK
Catholic District School Board

Trustee Applicant Presentation Scripts

Kevin Brandt

5-Minute Oral Presentation – Kevin Brandt

Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic DSB – Haldimand County Trustee

Opening

Good evening Chair Luciani, Director McDonald, and Members of the Board. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you this evening.

My name is Kevin Brandt, and I am seeking the role of Haldimand County Trustee because I believe strongly in Catholic education, in public service, and in the responsibility that Trustees have to represent Catholic ratepayers with integrity, humility, and care.

Ability to Represent Catholic Ratepayers

I believe effective representation begins with being accessible, informed, and accountable.

In my professional roles, I support elected officials and public decision-makers on a daily basis. This work has taught me the importance of listening carefully, weighing perspectives responsibly, and making decisions that reflect both community values and long-term stewardship.

Although I live in Brantford, I have strong, hands-on experience working directly in Haldimand County. As a Program Assistant with Norfolk County, specifically supporting work connected to the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit, I worked regularly in Dunnville and Caledonia, engaging with residents, service partners, and local institutions.

In addition, as a Constituency Assistant in for MP Leslyn Lewis, I represented the Member of Parliament at events throughout Haldimand County, meeting with community organizations, attending local functions, and responding to constituent concerns. These experiences gave me a practical understanding of Haldimand's communities and the expectations residents have of public representatives.

I would bring that same approach to this role by being present, responsive, and committed to representing Catholic families and ratepayers with respect and transparency.

Skills, Knowledge and Experience

I currently serve as Deputy Clerk and Communications Coordinator for the Township of Blandford-Blenheim. In this role, I work closely with Council and senior staff on governance, procedure, policy, and public accountability.

My responsibilities include preparing agendas and minutes, supporting decision-making in accordance with legislation, assisting with policy development, and ensuring that municipal operations are transparent, fair, and well governed.

Previously, with Norfolk County, I supported Council Services and committees, coordinated appointments to boards and committees, and researched legislation and governance best practices. These roles have given me a strong understanding of how boards function, the importance of governance over management, and the need for collaboration, confidentiality, and ethical decision-making.

If appointed, I would bring a governance-focused mindset by preparing thoroughly, asking thoughtful questions, respecting staff expertise, and keeping student well-being and Catholic values at the centre of every decision.

Connection to the Catholic Community

My connection to Catholic education is both personal and longstanding. I was raised in the Catholic school system, and those formative experiences shaped my values of faith, compassion, service, and respect for others.

I believe Catholic schools play a vital role not only in academic achievement, but in forming the whole person through spiritual growth, moral development, and a sense of belonging. This role is especially important today as students navigate mental wellness challenges and a rapidly changing world.

I continue to support my local parish community at St. Pius X and see this opportunity as a way to serve through faith-informed leadership, helping ensure our schools remain welcoming, inclusive, and grounded in Catholic identity.

Closing

In closing, I would be honoured to serve as Haldimand County Trustee. I bring governance experience, meaningful connections to Haldimand communities, and a sincere commitment to Catholic education and public service.

Thank you for your time and for the important work you do in support of students, families, and Catholic education across the district. I would be grateful for the opportunity to serve.

Toni Poirier

January 13, 2026

Good evening Trustees, Director McDonald, Superintendents, Staff and Guests,

My name is Toni Poirier, and it would be an honour to represent the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board as the Haldimand County Trustee.

I currently reside in Caledonia with my husband Russ, and have proudly called this community home for the past 34 years. It is here that we raised our two children, Alexis and Mitchell.

I've had the privilege of serving as a Grade 8 teacher with the Catholic school board for over 32 years and recently retired from the classroom in 2024. Teaching was not just my profession, but my passion, and I feel truly blessed to have had a career that I loved and found so fulfilling.

There are three things I hold very dear in my life: my faith, my family, and education. My faith in God is central to all that I do, and these core values are what I believe would make me an asset as a School Board Trustee. My family and I are members of St. Patrick's Parish, where both of my children received their Sacraments. I have always worked to promote strong Catholic values both at home and in the classroom.

I feel very fortunate to have been deeply involved with our board as both an educator and a parent. Our children attended both elementary and secondary schools within the Catholic system. In fact, although we lived just two blocks from the public high school in town, we chose to send our children on a 40-minute bus ride to Assumption College School in Brantford — and it was absolutely worth the drive to Assumption! Both of our children cherished their time there, and the sense of community and belonging they experienced was truly invaluable.

As a Grade 8 teacher, I was able to draw upon my firsthand experience as a parent to strongly encourage students and their families to choose Catholic secondary education. I consistently highlighted the advantages of a catholic education at the secondary level.

Over the years, I have worked closely with Father Jerome, while preparing students for the Sacrament of Confirmation; and after several Confirmation ceremonies, I have also developed a great relationship with Bishop Bergie.

Through my many years of experience, I have gained a deep understanding of the Catholic education system and a strong grasp of how our school board operates. My roles as a teacher and teacher-in-charge have equipped me with strong listening, communication, and organizational skills, allowing me to build meaningful and respectful relationships with parents. As a Trustee, I would listen carefully to the concerns of our ratepayers, advocating on their behalf and, when necessary, directing them to the appropriate supports.

Additionally, my teaching background and leadership experience would allow me to contribute effectively to board subcommittees and initiatives.

Our board's spiritual theme, "*Pilgrims of Hope: On the Path to Holiness*," reminds us that we are all on a journey toward becoming the best versions of ourselves. As your Catholic Trustee, I would strive to walk that path with integrity, compassion, and dedication, always working to serve our students, families, and faith community to the very best of my ability.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Toni Poirier

John Vamos

ORAL PRESENTATION

John Vamos

Board of Trustees and Members of the Audience; Good Evening.

My name is John Vamos, and I would like to thank you in your interest in me as a potential Trustee of the Board representing Haldimand County. Living in a rural area on a farm, my wife and I try our best to live in accordance with Gospel values.

I have been on many Boards and Committees, as outlined in my Resume. I recognize the various governance roles that this position comes with. Such as strategic planning, approving budgets, and holding stakeholders accountable. My past roles have given me vast experience with Governmental interactions. Every week I deal with By-laws, Zoning, Codes, and Acts. I have advised both levels of Government on fiscal and policy needs in my many past listed advisory roles. And continue to every week provide expertise with various planning matters for the County, and also issues surrounding property standards. My background is full of many experiences dealing with Regulations. I have done Committee work with the Provincial Government, and Inspection services for the Federal Government.

Managing a large agricultural operation with many employees, I regularly deal with personal decisions, facility and equipment maintenance, and the purchasing of capital equipment. Does this sound familiar to everyone?

On the Farm we prepare and monitor operating budgets, forecasting future staffing and inventory needs. Just like you do here. I would suspect that always dealing with financial records and bookkeeping, on the farm and at the County level, should easily translate to the School Board level.

As a former teacher with this Board, I am knowledgeable and aware of its operations and history. I am also familiar with many of its members, both past and present. I have obtained valuable school classroom experience, that was demonstrated at both the Elementary and High School levels. And my Master's Degree in Education, Majoring in Administration has taught me much. Lastly, I would still like to believe that I am somewhat skilled in the Politics of surviving a school staff room!

My mother was longtime Grade 5-6 teacher at Our Lady of Fatima School and at the former St. Anthony Daniel School, in Scotland. My sister, a former Science teacher at St. John's College, here in Brantford. Both now retired.

My wife attended St. Bernard's School in Norfolk. It was at St. Bernard's Parish Church in Waterford where we were married by Father Jim, many moons ago.

Our two boys attended Blessed Sacrament School, then Assumption College. My oldest Jonathon is in his 3rd year at Brock University in St. Catherines. Also, by being still just 39 years old (like Jack Benny) I have my youngest Cameron still attending Assumption College. So, I actually have a child still currently in the system!

My family and myself are extremely active members of our local Parish. Our two boys were Baptized and Confirmed there. My wife Krystine was the Sunday School Teacher there for several years. Currently we are the "on-call" bartenders at the Parish Hall when there is a wedding, which are few and far between nowadays. Maybe two a summer!

My connection to the Catholic community is personal and rooted in faith. We all in this room have a shared belief in Jesus Christ. Whether at Mass or simply just offering friendship and support, this district is a place to feel connected. As a trustee I would offer this community friendship and encouragement, in our life journey.

If chosen for this role I will work effectively with all the Board members, the local Pastors, and community partners to achieve the best possible outcome for the entire school system. We as a board should not be content with mediocrity.

Being an effective communicator and my past education and experience make me a most suitable candidate to represent the interests of the Catholic Ratepayers.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to working with all of you in the very near future. Good night!

Constant Verschoore

Constant (Stan) Verschoore

Presentation to Board of Trustees, Catholic Education Centre, Brantford, ON., 6:30 p.m.

January 13th, 2026

Oral Presentation

Slide 1: Family background, parents, siblings

Slide 2: Taught me the value of Family, Mass, Catholic beliefs, Rosary, Guardian Angels and Jesus

Slide 3: My Family. We grew following the values of my Mother and Father. A Family emersed with Catholic Faith and the belief of helping others.

Slide 4: St. Frances Cabrini, Catholic Elementary School, Delhi, Ontario
1961 - Grade 6 Beginning of my Catholic Education

Slide 5: 1964 Regina Mundi Junior Seminary, London, Ontario
Priests and Lay Staff strengthened my Faith and commitment to faithful life. Learned respect for all. Followed the teaching of Jesus. “Spread the Word of Jesus and sometimes use Words.”

Slide 6: King's College, University of Western Ontario
Bachelor of Arts Degree Major: Geography
Minor: Psychology

Teacher's College, London, Ontario
First Teaching Assignment
St. Joseph's School
Thamesford, Ontario
Oxford County Separate School Board
Grades 5, 6 & 7 - Eight Years

Slides 7 & 8:

I spent 40 years in Catholic Education teaching Primary, Junior and Senior grades. In all experiences of Education, I grew into developing a Faith-centered approach to learning. My classroom was my Family. The school, our community was lived by Faith, Respect for Others and to do the Best we could.

My classroom and school community, at all levels, followed Christ's values. I always looked to improve the school I was in and its community. As a Catholic School Board Trustee, my goal is to use my past experiences and skills to further assist in the continued development of our faith-filled system.

During my career in Education, I took many workshops and courses to enhance my development as a Teacher and Administrator.

I was very active in Committees in many student programs, Sports: Oxford-Elgin; The London Catholic School Board Health and Safety taking an Occupational Safety Group course and Accident Investigation to examine causes, classification of causes, prevention of recurrences and accident reports.

Took part in the amalgamation of Boards' contracts for Negotiations as President of Secondary Teacher's, Oxford County.

As a Vice-Principal I was trained on Bullying Prevention in Secondary schools and gave presentations to 20 Ontario Board's. I developed a program at St. Mary's High School, Woodstock, Ontario which grew to include Mental Health.

My Masters' degree focused on At-Risk Students.

I worked in Community services sitting on the Church Hockey committee representing St. Basil's. Spent two years as League President. When I took over the League, the league had a huge debt and I was able to get many people involved helping out with tournaments and holding fundraisers that got the League completely out of debt by working together as a team.

I have been a member of St. Pius X Church since moving into Brantford 38 years ago. I help support Vincent de Paul, Member of 'Be A Man' group, assist with a group attempting to rebuild The Knights of Columbus, Chapter of St. Pius.

As a Trustee, I plan to work as a team member for all Stakeholders, Board Members, Administrative Staff, Teachers, past and present Parish Priests, by being as transparent as much as possible, working together to meet the goals and objectives set out by the guidelines of the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board and the Ministry of Education.

I plan to be a valuable Trustee as requested by the Board for the five Haldimand area schools and make myself available to Principals, Teachers, Parents and Students.

Roy Walsh

Oral Presentation

Roy Walsh

By way of introduction and context let me start by stating that my wife and I are parents of 11 children, ten of whom were adopted from three different family groups.

I mention this to contextualize the challenges these children, most of whom were traumatized, encountered in the school system. Most of them had learning disabilities including severe dyslexia.

My wife, a career high school teacher, and former principal and I spent countless evenings around our dining table trying to decipher the homework assignments from the children's notebooks because there were no textbooks to follow the curriculum.

Nevertheless, all of them graduated from grade 12 and a few of them went to university and community college. Not having textbooks as guides was really frustrating and it hindered their progress. On the positive side, the special education teachers and home room teachers in high school were most compassionate and supportive and skillful in their assistance to them. Having had these experiences pushes me to apply to trusteeship.

During my professional career in child welfare as a social worker and manager and executive, I have worked often with education colleagues advocating for children in our care and developing systemic structures to address educational and social needs. In Brant County I initiated the placement of social workers in school communities that presented high risks for children. In Halton region this program integrated school social workers with child welfare social workers in 32 elementary and high schools. Both organizations cost shared their staffing budgets to maximize the staffing allocations. This created community service hubs in each of the school settings and welcomed other relevant community professionals to collaborate e.g. public health and community living, it greatly enhanced parent access.

During the last federal election I volunteered to serve, as a financial agent for the liberal candidate and as such my wife and I met thousands of residents as we placed 4500 election signs in the Haldimand/Norfolk constituency. I and my wife are painfully aware of the citizen distribution across the rural district and the need to communicate and be inclusive and to seek out input.

Issues that I have encountered in discussions with educators always seem to come around to the inadequate resources for children with special needs, Autism, Developmentally Delayed, Dyslexia, Behaviourally disturbed to name a few. In past years meeting these needs always seemed to be the responsibility and initiative of the public board and the separate board always lagged behind, I expect and hope that this trend has changed.

Another irritant I hear regularly is the onus on individual schools to voluntarily raise funds for essential and discretionary purposes. Personally, with the pressure on families to provide the

basics, I find this onus to be less than equitable and inappropriate treatment to low-income students and families.

I am in favour of structural systems for advice input and feedback. Parent and student advisory committees that meet either quarterly or semi-annually provide direct advice and reality checks unfiltered by school and board personnel. Outcomes for strategic plans and objectives are essential for student success and direct feedback as well as best practice enriched outcome measurements.

I will now turn my attention to my Catholic Church involvement both past and present. In 1972 I was ordained as a priest in the diocese of Grand Falls Newfoundland. I was educated for the priesthood in All Hallows College and Maynooth College Ireland both affiliated with the Gregorian University in Rome. The course of studies included majors in Philosophy Psychology and Theology. I served in the diocese for three years after which I received a dispensation from my vows from Pope Paul 6.

I have remained a committed Catholic having served as president of the diocesan council in Hearst Diocese and also president of the St. Pius Parish Council for three years in Brantford. I am registered as a member of the Waterford parish.

I remain an active participant in the sacraments and spirituality of our faith.

I trust that the above reflections accompanied by my brief resume will provide us with ample discussion in your assessment of my application for trustee appointment.

Respectively submitted,
Roy Walsh