



**Special Meeting of the Board
Thursday, March 2, 2017 ♦ 6:00 p.m.
Boardroom**

Trustees:

Present: Rick Petrella (Chair), Dan Dignard (Vice Chair), Cliff Casey, Bill Chopp, Carol Luciani, Bonnie McKinnon

Absent: Rosalin Dubois (Student Trustee)

Senior Administration:

Chris N. Roehrig (Director of Education & Secretary), Thomas R. Grice (Superintendent of Business & Treasurer), Patrick Daly, Michelle Shypula and Leslie Telfer (Superintendent of Education)

1. Opening Business

1.1 Opening Prayer and Welcome

The meeting was opened with prayer led by Chair Petrella. He welcomed members of the public and advised that the purpose of the meeting was to receive input from public delegations regarding the Pupil Accommodation Review (PAR) for Our Lady of La Salette, St. Frances Cabrini and St. Bernard of Clairvaux schools, noting that the meeting is in compliance with Board policy regarding PARs. He clarified that no discussion would be had or decision made at this meeting. Chair Petrella stated that after the community delegations, a summary of feedback would be compiled and attached to the Final Staff Report, which will be presented at the March 23, 2017 Special Meeting of the Board. At that time, a decision will be made regarding this accommodation review.

1.2 Attendance – as noted above.

1.3 Approval of the Agenda

Moved by: Bonnie McKinnon

Seconded by: Cliff Casey

THAT the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board approves the agenda of the Special Meeting of the Board of March 2, 2017.

Carried

1.4 Declaration of Interest - Nil

2. Delegations – Pupil Accommodation Review: Norfolk County

2.1 Amanda Bakker

Ms. Baker introduced herself as a parent of Our Lady of La Salette School. In her presentation she noted that, in her opinion, the Pupil Accommodation Review (PAR) and funding models are flawed, that evidence-based information supporting the reasons being given for closing the school has not yet been provided to the community, and that the low enrolment at Our Lady of



La Salette is a small part of a bigger picture of school under-utilization across Norfolk County. She suggested that a study of all under-utilized school in the County should be undertaken in order to make a fair and informed decision.

2.2 Matthew Malcolm and Jeannine Krupicz

Mr. Malcolm focused his remarks on the impact that longer bus rides has on students and families, the positive aspects of smaller school sizes, and projected population trends/growth opportunities in Norfolk County. Mrs. Krupicz expanded on the impact that closing a rural school has on a community's economic vitality, identity and unity. Mr. Malcolm expressed the community's willingness to work with the Board to find a viable solution and requested Board's support of a moratorium on the closing of Our Lady of La Salette.

2.3 Bernie Byer

Mr. Byer introduced himself as a business owner in La Salette, whose children attended Our Lady of La Salette School. He presented several examples that, in his opinion, demonstrates reckless spending by the Ministry of Education, a flawed funding formula, and lack of willingness on the part of boards of education to do anything about it. He noted a growing movement across the province supporting a moratorium on school closures until a funding formula that recognizes the needs of rural Ontario is in place. He requested that trustees delay their decision until these provincial issues get sorted out.

2.4 Bobbi Ann Brady

Mrs. Brady noted that her son attends Our Lady of La Salette School and that her daughter is a graduate of the school. She expressed her concerns about the short period of time that the community has been given to propose options that would see the school remain open. She added that she feels that many of the community's questions remain unanswered. She suggested that an independent review of the Watson Report should be done as the data may be incorrect, as was the case with the Bluewater District School Board. Mrs. Brady requested a two-year moratorium to allow more time to find viable solutions and not destroy the community.

2.5 Helen Mels

Mrs. Mels shared her family's story of the research they did and how and why they chose Our Lady of La Salette School as the best school for their young family. She expressed concern that the shorter timelines in the revised Pupil Accommodation Review Guidelines (PARG) does not give communities sufficient time to do the required research and to find options to keep under-utilized schools viable. She noted that Our Lady of La Salette School is one of five under-utilized schools in Norfolk County, a county primarily made up of agricultural-zoned areas. She suggested that Boards need to take a more proactive, rather than a reactive approach, to declining population. She asked that the Board set a precedent for the rest of the province by granting a two-year moratorium to allow time to properly evaluate and implement a strategy that would keep the school open.



**Brant Haldimand Norfolk
Catholic District School Board**

Minutes

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

3. Adjournment & Closing Prayer

Chair Petrella thanked the delegations for their time and presentations and led the closing prayer.

Moved by: Carol Luciani

Seconded by: Bonnie McKinnon

THAT the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board adjourns the Special Meeting of the Board of March 2, 2017.

Carried

Next Meetings: Special Meeting of the Board - Thursday, March 23, 2017, 7:00 p.m. - Boardroom
Board Meeting - Tuesday, March 28, 2017, 7:00 p.m. - Boardroom