



BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK Catholic District School Board

Agenda

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

Committee of the Whole Tuesday, November 25, 2025 ♦ 4:30 pm Boardroom

Trustees:

Carol Luciani (Chair), Dan Dignard (Vice-Chair), Dennis Blake, Bill Chopp
Rick Petrella (on-leave), Mulan How (Student Trustee), Riley O'Brien (Student Trustee)

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)

1. Opening Business

1.1 Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the land upon which we gather is the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe Nations. We recognize that the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board and its schools have many ties to Six Nations of the Grand Rivier and Mississaugas of the Credit First Nations, situated on the traditional land of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, within the Two Row Wampum and the One Dish One Spoon Treaty areas. As a Catholic learning community and as Treaty People ourselves, we strive to build the Kingdom of God; where all people are treated with respect and dignity as we move forward, as allies towards truth and reconciliation.

1.2 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. Amen

1.3 Attendance

1.4 Approval of the Agenda

Pages 1-2

1.5 Declaration of Interest

1.6 Approval of Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes – October 28, 2025

Pages 3-8

1.7 Business Arising from the Minutes

2. Presentations

3. Delegations

4. Consent Agenda

4.1 Unapproved Minutes of the Faith Advisory Committee

Pages 9-12

- October 14, 2025

4.2 Unapproved Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee

Pages 13-15

- October 21, 2025

5. Committee and Staff Reports

5.1 New Teacher Induction Program Update Presenter: Phil Wilson, Superintendent of Education

Pages 16-18

5.2 Special Education Department Report Literacy Intervention Program for Complex Learners (Readtopia) Presenter: Phil Wilson, Superintendent of Education

Pages 19-21



BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK Catholic District School Board

Agenda

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

6. Information and Correspondence

6.1 New School Build Updates

6.2 Attendance Boundary Review Updates

7. 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,
- a. The security of the property of the board;
 - b. 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;
 - c. The acquisition or disposal of a school site;
 - d. Decisions in respect of negotiations with employees of the board; or
 - e. Litigation affecting the board.

8. Report on the In-Camera Session

9. Future Meetings and Events

Pages 22-23

10. 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

11. Adjournment

Next meeting: Tuesday, December 16, 2025, 4:30 p.m. – Boardroom



BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK Catholic District School Board

Minutes

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

Committee of the Whole Tuesday, October 28, 2025 ♦ 4:30 pm Boardroom

Trustees:

Carol Luciani (Chair), Dan Dignard (Vice Chair), Dennis Blake, Bill Chopp
Mulan How (Student Trustee), Riley O'Brien (Student Trustee)

Regrets: Rick Petrella (on leave), Mark Watson (excused)

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)

1. Opening Business

1.1 Land Acknowledgement

The meeting was opened with a land acknowledgement by Superintendent Greco.

1.2 Opening Prayer

Trustee Dignard led the meeting in prayer.

1.3 Attendance

Attendance was as noted above.

1.4 Approval of the Agenda

Moved by: Bill Chopp

Seconded by: Dan Dignard

THAT the Committee of the Whole of the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board approves the agenda of the October 28, 2025, meeting.

Carried as amended

1.5 Declaration of Interest – Nil

1.6 Approval of Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes – September 23, 2025

Moved by: Dan Dignard

Seconded by: Dennis Blake

THAT the Committee of the Whole of the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board approves the minutes of the September 23, 2025, meeting.

Carried

1.7 Business from the Minutes - Nil

2. Presentations – Nil

3. Delegations – Nil



BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK Catholic District School Board

Minutes

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

4. Consent Agenda

A question was posed regarding the Terms of Reference at the Mental Health Committee. It was noted that the terms of reference were not discussed at the September 29, 2005 meeting. Discussion was had explaining why those were not brought to the Board and how it is a recommendation of School Mental Health that there should not be a Trustee representative on that committee.

4.1 Unapproved Minutes from the Special Education Advisory Committee – September 16, 2025

Moved by: Dennis Blake

Seconded by: Dan Dignard

THAT the Committee of the Whole of the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board receives the unapproved minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of September 16, 2025.

Carried

4.2 Unapproved Minutes from the Mental Health Steering Committee – September 29, 2025

Moved by: Dennis Blake

Seconded by: Dan Dignard

THAT the Committee of the Whole of the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board receives the unapproved minutes of the Mental Health Steering Committee Meeting of September 29, 2025.

Carried

4.3 Unapproved Minutes from the Accommodations Committee – October 1, 2025

Moved by: Dennis Blake

Seconded by: Dan Dignard

THAT the Committee of the Whole of the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board receives the unapproved minutes of the Accommodations Committee of October 1, 2025.

Carried

5. Committee and Staff Reports

5.1 Unapproved Minutes and Recommendations from the Policy Committee Meeting – October 21, 2025

Vice-Chair Dignard presented the unapproved minutes and recommendations from the Policy Committee meeting which includes:

- THAT the Committee of the Whole refers the Catholic Family Life Program Policy #200.04 to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for approval.
- THAT the Committee of the Whole refers the Volunteer and Staff Trip Drivers Policy #200.21 to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for approval.
- THAT Committee of the Whole refers the Progressive Discipline (Employees) Policy & AP #300.19 to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for approval.
- THAT Committee of the Whole refers the Educational Partnerships Including Third Party Professional and Paraprofessional Service Providers Policy #400.36 to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for approval.



BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK Catholic District School Board

Minutes

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

Moved by: Dan Dignard

Seconded by: Bill Chopp

THAT the Committee of the Whole refers the recommendations of the Policy Committee Meeting of October 21, 2025, to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for approval.

Carried

Moved by: Dan Dignard

Seconded by: Bill Chopp

THAT the Committee of the Whole refers the unapproved minutes of the Policy Committee Meeting of October 21, 2025, to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for receipt.

Carried

5.2 Health and Safety Update

Superintendent Greco presented the Health and Safety Update report. The Board works closely with the Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) fostering employee health and safety in the workplace through cooperation and joint efforts in the design and implementation of educational programs for employees; investigation and resolution of safety problems; training and support of committee members; and development and promotion of enhanced awareness of occupational health and safety matters. Discussion was had regarding the number of incidents, and it was noted that lost time is down.

Moved by: Dennis Blake

Seconded by: Dan Dignard

THAT the Committee of the Whole refers the Health and Safety Report to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for receipt to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for receipt.

Carried

5.3 Trustee Honoraria

Superintendent Nelson presented the Trustee Honoraria report. Ontario Regulation 357/06 Honoraria for Board Members establishes the methodology for calculating the limits on honoraria paid under Section 191 of the Education Act. In accordance with Board Policy #100.06 Trustee Honoraria, the annual trustee honorarium is composed of the following three components, the base amount, enrolment amount and chair/vice-chair amounts. These components collectively determine the total annual compensation for trustees, ensuring consistency with provincial legislation and board policy. There are no changes to the base amount for the new term and the adjustment to trustee honoraria reflects changes in student enrolment.

Moved by: Bill Chopp

Seconded by: Dan Dignard

THAT the Committee of the Whole refers the Trustee Honoraria for the period November 16, 2025, to November 14, 2026, to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for approval.

Carried



BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK Catholic District School Board

Minutes

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

5.4 Contract Summary

Superintendent Nelson presented the contract summary report. The purpose of this report is to provide the Board with a summary of cooperative purchasing agreements and contracts approved in accordance with Policy 700.01 Procurement for the 2024- 25 school year. This annual reporting fulfills the Board's policy requirement for accountability and transparency in procurement activities and aligns with the principles outlined in the Broader Public Sector Accountability Act.

Moved by: Dennis Blake

Seconded by: Dan Dignard

THAT the Committee of the Whole refers to the Contract Summary report for the 2024-25 year to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for receipt.

Carried

5.5 Mental Health Update

Superintendent Della Fortuna presented the Mental Health and Well-Being Action Plan 2025-2026 to the board. The Mental Health and Well-Being Action plan 25-26 is part of the three-year mental health and additions strategy, and continues to reflect the Boards Strategic Plan, with a focus on Belonging, Teaching and Learning, and Wellness for all. The action plan highlights the Board's commitment to mentally healthy learning environments that honour, celebrate and support the identities and lived realities of every student; where meaningful connections to life at home and in the community, while promoting hope, resilience, and optimism are made. Discussion regarding the anticipated changes for the next three-year mental health and additions strategy was had including the rise of Artificial Intelligence and its mental health impacts on youth, along with a greater focus on student attendance and how it relates to mental health.

Moved by: Dan Dignard

Seconded by: Dennis Blake

THAT the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board refers the Mental Health and Well-Being Action Plan 2025-2026 to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for approval.

Carried

5.6 Student Achievement Update

Superintendent Wilson presented the Student Achievement update. This update highlights the collaborative work being undertaken across all BHNCDSB schools to enhance student learning and achievement through faith-based education, data-informed instructional practices, and targeted professional development. The implementation of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) across all BHNCDSB schools, the expanded and refined New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP), the implementation of new religion and family life curriculum, along with updates in elementary literacy and numeracy, secondary literacy and various other programs were provided.

Moved by: Bill Chopp

Seconded by: Dennis Blake

THAT the Committee of the Whole refers the Student Achievement Department Report to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for receipt.

Carried



BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK Catholic District School Board

Minutes

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

5.7 Special Education Department Update

Superintendent Wilson presented the Special Education Department Update. The purpose of this report is to provide the Board with an update on current initiatives, staffing, programming, and supports within the Special Education Department as of October 2025. This update reflects the department's ongoing commitment to providing equitable, inclusive, and evidence-based support for students with diverse learning needs across all BHNCDSD schools. An update on the staffing overview of Educational Assistants was provided. There have been several additional permanent allocations made to meet emerging identified needs. These flexible staffing adjustments ensure that schools can respond promptly to emerging student needs and maintain a safe and supportive learning environment for all. Additional updates were provided on specialized student support services including the benefit of the services of Bartimaeus. Intervention Programs and Literacy Initiatives that align with the *Right to Read* report and the Board's focus on literacy improvement for all learners were highlighted. New SERT appointments, professional learning, communication and inclusion resources, speech-language and occupational therapy support, and various other initiatives were discussed. The board highlighted the great work of allocating ample special education supports in the budget process and the student successes that come from it.

Moved by: Dan Dignard

Seconded by: Dennis Blake

THAT the Committee of the Whole refers the Special Education Department Report to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for receipt.

Carried

6. Information and Correspondence

6.1 New School Builds Updates

The BHNCDSD is in the process of purchasing the land for the two new elementary schools and the construction and wastewater contract for the Brantford high school was recently issued. With the Brantford elementary and Brantford/ Brant County secondary boundary reviews currently underway, a question was asked how the information is being communicated to parents. It was noted that all boundary review minutes are on the board website for public viewing.

Moved by: Dan Dignard

Seconded by: Bill Chopp

THAT the Committee of the Whole receives the information and correspondence since the last meeting.

Carried

7. Business In-Camera

Moved by: Bill Chopp

Seconded by: Dan Dignard

THAT the Committee of the Whole of the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board moves to an In-Camera session.

Carried



BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK Catholic District School Board

Minutes

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

8. Report on the In-Camera Session

Moved by: Dan Dignard

Seconded by: Bill Chopp

THAT the Committee of the Whole of the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board approves the business of the In-Camera session.

Carried

9. Future Meetings and Events

Chair Luciani drew attention to the upcoming meetings and events.

10. Closing Prayer

The closing prayer was led by Chair Luciani.

11. Adjournment

Moved by: Dennis Blake

Seconded by: Dan Dignard

THAT the Committee of the Whole of the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board adjourns the October 28, 2025, meeting.

Carried

Next meeting: Tuesday, October 28, 2025 - 4:30 p.m. – Boardroom



**Faith Advisory Committee (FAC)
Tuesday, October 14, 2025 ♦ 1:30 p.m.
In person at CEC or Microsoft Teams**

- Present:** Dan Dignard (Vice Chair of the Board), Andrew Hall, Carole Allen (FACE), Michael Lawlor (Superintendent of Education), Keri Calvesbert
- Regrets:** Carol Luciani (Chair of the Board), Heather Graham, Tara Williams, Fr. Augustine Ogundele, Fr. Rudolph D'Souza, Carlo Fortino, Carole Allen (FACE), Fr. Kevin D'Souza,
-

1. Opening Prayer

Dan Dignard opened the meeting in prayer.

2. Welcome/Introductions

Michael Lawlor welcomed members to the meeting.

3. Approval of the Minutes

The Minutes of the June 10, 2025 meeting were approved.

4. Information and Discussion Items

4.1 2025-2026 Pastoral Plan and Faith Day Review

Keri Calvesbert shared the 2025-2026 Pastoral Plan (Board Spiritual Theme), "Catholic Education: Pilgrims of Hope: *On the Path to Holiness*," rooted in the Scripture, "As God who called you is holy, be holy yourselves." (1 Peter 1:15-16) was officially launched across the district on Faith Day held October 7, 2025. The Pastoral Resource Document containing liturgical, prayer, and community building supports for this year's theme was provided to Administrators, Managers and Supervisors and will be updated monthly throughout the duration of this school year. Keri reported Faith Day for all staff was a success. The day began with Mass in four parishes locations including St. Pius X, Brantford, St. Mary's, Brantford, St. Patrick's, Caledonia and St. Mary's, Simcoe. The new permanent employee commissioning for staff took place during each of the Masses. A time of fellowship with refreshments was provided in all parish hall locations to honour and appreciate staff. Staff traveled to their schools/sites for lunch and participated in afternoon sessions planned by school and site Administrators, Managers and Supervisors. All staff engaged in viewing the video provided by BHNCD SB featuring Bill Acres, Principal, St. Cecilia School, Port Dover sharing his experience of pilgrimage along the Camino de Santiago. Guided questions for discussion and debrief of the video were provided. In the afternoon, staff engaged in a variety of community building, social justice outreach, prayer and reflection activities and closed the day using the CEW prayer cards provided by BHNCD SB. A Faith Day survey was sent out and results once compiled will be used to assist with the planning of next year's Faith Day.



4.2 Religion and Family Life Curriculum Updates

Keri Calvesbert noted the new Family Life Program, *Blessed & Beloved* for Grades 2 and 3 has now been fully implemented in all our Elementary schools. Grades 2 and 3 Educators received support for a soft launch implementation of the new program and are receiving ongoing support to learn to navigate the digital resources. In Secondary, BHNCD SB has purchased the new Religious Education Program, "Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ" for Grade 9. The RFL Consultant is meeting with Religious Education Department Heads in early November to plan the support of Grade 9 Educators with implementing a soft launch of the program throughout the duration of the 2025-2026 school year.

4.2 Secondary Feedback on Faith Day/Faith Activities

Andrew Hall shared on behalf of St. John's College as part of the afternoon on Faith Day, staff engaged with the video on Pilgrimage provided by BHNCD SB and signed up to participate in one of the following offsite activities:

Youth Fusion (20-30 staff) - Youth Fusion is a peer mentorship program for newcomer youth. Through recreation and leadership activities, newcomer youth learn new skills, connect with peers and improve their self-confidence.

Pathways to Hope (10 staff) - Serves those who live with Autism (ASD) or other complex needs and aims to help those who care for these individuals and support them on their journey through life.

Why Not Youth Centre (20-30 staff) - The young people who attend Why Not have a few things in common: almost all of them live in poverty, most only have contact with one or fewer of their parents, and even fewer have a safe, consistent place to live. While the organization is not a shelter, it functions like a community living room so that, no matter how many places their clients sleep, the Youth Centre remains the same.

Friendship House (20-30 staff) - Empowers individuals experiencing homelessness and poverty by providing comprehensive support to nurture their physical and emotional wellness.

St. Basil's Church (to view replica of the Holy Door) – The Holy Door plays a large role in a Jubilee year. Staff were invited to view the holy door replica, learn about its importance in a Jubilee year, and hear Fr. Kevin's pilgrimage story.

Following the offsite activities, SJC staff listened to guest speaker, Eric G. Martin (Mohawk & Chippewa Nations, Bear Clan - Stone Carver). Eric shared his artwork and spoke on the following topics: What is the path to holiness through an Indigenous lens? How does Indigenous artwork help along the path to holiness? How does your own artwork help you on the path to holiness and how do you hope it helps others?

4.3 Elementary Feedback on Faith Day/Faith Activities

N/A

4.4 Diocesan – Deanery Updates

N/A

4.5 F.A.C.E. Updates

Carole Allen provided an update on Current FACE initiatives.



5. Questions/Discussions

5.1 Receiving the Eucharist: Trustee Dignard shared an observation from the Faith Day Mass about a staff member who was unsure how to receive the Eucharist. Trustee Dignard recommended that staff be reminded at the next available opportunity that it is important to consume the Eucharist immediately after it is received from the priest or eucharistic minister at mass. For future Faith Day Masses, the Pastoral Team will include remarks about how to receive in the opening commentary.

5.2 Diocese of London Mass Protocols: Superintendent Lawlor shared the Diocese of London as requested by Bishop Fabbro has recently been asked to re-examine the way Mass is celebrated, particularly when it comes to Silence and Posture in the Liturgy:

Silence in the Liturgy: The Constitution on the Liturgy says, the Church earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to fully conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations and that silence is a privileged means of promoting the participation of the people of God in the liturgy. Sacred silence is not an empty absence of noise but an active and integral part of the liturgy. The purpose of silence changes depending on when it occurs.

- Before Mass begins to allow us to prepare for the sacred action.
- In the penitential act, when we are invited to recall what separates us from God and remembering our dependence on God's mercy.
- At the Collect (the prayer after the Gloria), when the presider says, "Let us pray", we reflect on what we bring to the liturgy, and for whom we wish to offer the Mass; the presider then collects all of our prayers into one and offers them to God.
- After the first and second readings, the Gospel, and the homily, silence allows the us to grasp the sense of what was proclaimed in the word and to internalize it so as to better respond to the prompting of the Holy Spirit.
- After the Communion procession is finished, all may sit or kneel to reflect on the gift of the Eucharist and to offer our personal thanksgiving.

Posture in the Liturgy: Body language can convey feelings and states of mind, and liturgical postures are a way to express internal responses to God's love and truth. The unified postures and gestures of the congregation express our collective participation in the Body of Christ and help to engage the entire person in prayer and worship.

We recognize the presence of some among us who are not able to stand for any length of time or kneel, depending on age or infirmity, so heroic effort to conform to the directives is not expected. In other words, do what you are able to do.

The normal postures in Catholic liturgy are **standing, sitting, and kneeling**. Here are the postures we should be observing, some new, some not:

- At the Preparation of the Offerings, the people are sitting but should **stand after the washing of the priest's hands** to be ready for the invitation, *pray brothers and sisters*, and make the response.
- We kneel after the *Holy, holy, holy*, and stand after the *Great Amen*.
- Our practice is to kneel at the end of the *Lamb of God*. The Priest then genuflects, holds the Host above the paten or chalice, and says *Behold the Lamb of God* to which the Priest and assembly respond *Lord, I am not worthy*. **At the end of this prayer, the assembly stands,**



Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board

Minutes

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

-
- after which the Priest will receive Communion, and all **remain standing during the Communion Procession until everyone has received Communion.** Procession starts when the priest receives Communion and ends only when the last person has received Communion. Then, at that point, people may sit or kneel. The Communion Holy Communion is to be received standing, though individual members of the faithful may choose to receive Communion while kneeling.
 - In some places the practice is to continue standing until the Blessed Sacrament is placed in the Tabernacle. This should not continue, because **the focus must be on the Holy Communion received and not on the Blessed Sacrament in the Tabernacle.**
 - Following a period of silence, the priest and people stand and, after saying "Let us pray," the priest offers the Prayer After Communion which ends the Communion Rite.

5.3 Faith Formation for Staff: Superintendent Lawlor mentioned we are working with Communications on creating a site to be housed in the bhnHUB which will offer a collation of Adult Faith Formation opportunities that can be accessed by staff and will be updated on a regular basis.

6. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned by Michael Lawlor.

Next Meeting: January 13, 2026



BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK Catholic District School Board

Minutes

Catholic Education Centre
322 Fairview Drive
Brantford, ON N3R 2X6

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE Tuesday, October 21, 2025 – 1:00pm Catholic Education Centre and Microsoft Teams

Members: Dennis Blake (Trustee), Melanie Caldwell (Contact Brant), Shannon Korber (Child and Family Services of Grand Erie), Lauren Moulton (Woodview Mental Health and Autism Services), Tammy West (Haldimand Norfolk REACH)

Regrets: Ashlee Anderson (Indigenous: Child and Family Services of Grand Erie), Michelle Drake (Crossing All Bridges), Simon Jennions (Community Living Brant), Judy McCaffrey (Lansdowne Children's Centre), Kerri Lomax (Principal, Elementary), Patti Mitchell (Parent, County of Brant), Marilyn Noi (Autism Ontario)

Resources: Sandra DeDominicis (Vice-Principal of Inclusive and Special Education), Jennifer Rudyk (Principal, Elementary), Phil Wilson (Superintendent of Education)

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Lauren Moulton welcomed the committee.

2. Land Acknowledgement

Superintendent Wilson read the board's land acknowledgement.

3. Opening Prayer

Sandra DeDominicis shared an opening prayer.

4. Approval of Agenda

Moved by: Dennis Blake

Seconded by: Shannon Korber

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approves the agenda of the October 21, 2025, meeting.

Carried

5. Approval of the Minutes

Moved by: Tammy West

Seconded by: Shannon Korber

THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approves the minutes of the September 16, 2025, meeting.

Carried

6. Correspondence

The SEAC committee received correspondence from Shadow Ministers, Chandra Pasma and Alexa Gilmour, expressing concern regarding Bill 33 and its potential impact on governance and

supports for students with special education needs. The letter highlights the importance of maintaining local decision-making authority and ensuring adequate funding to meet the needs of students with exceptionalities. The correspondence encourages SEAC members to advocate for the withdrawal of Bill 33 and the restoration of education funding to support equitable access for all learners.

It was discussed that individual members, who are not members of the board can consider sending a letter together. A decision will be made by the end of the week whether a response will be prepared.

7. Community Agency Updates

Shannon Korber

Child and Family Services updated that they are in the process of moving and will be in the new location on Henry Street on November 9, 2025.

Lauren Moulton

Woodview Mental Health and Autism Services updated that they held their 16th anniversary at the Ancaster Fairgrounds, and it was well attended. Also, the upcoming holiday party will be held in December.

Jennifer Rudyk

Principals updated that in the schools, Grade 4 CogAT testing is underway and Individual Education Plan's (IEP's) went home. There is Catholic School Advisory Council meeting on October 21, 2025, at the Catholic Education Centre.

8. Student Achievement Lead and Superintendent of Education

The Special Education Department has had a strong start to the 2025–26 school year, with a number of initiatives and professional learning opportunities underway:

- The department hosted its first Parent Engagement Night on October 1, 2025, with strong participation and positive feedback. Seventy-eight percent of attendees were families of students in Grade 7 and above, while twenty-two percent were from Grade 4 and under. There was representation from all three counties, and thirteen community agencies participated in the event.
- Training for new Special Education Resource Teachers (SERTs) has been completed, covering topics such as IEP expectations, structured learning, safety plans, OnSIS and PowerSchool, Hawaii Early Learning Profile (HELP), and Special Equipment Amount (SEA) processes. In addition, Empower Reading training was provided for new SERTs.
- The first Community of Practice meeting took place on September 25, 2025, featuring Dr. Jim Little's presentation on Understanding Psychological Assessment, and a presentation from Lansdowne Children's Centre on Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, and Speech-Language Pathologist (S-LP) supports. Other topics included the Individual Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) process, IEP guidelines, progress reporting, nursing supports, SERT mentorship, CogAT, Applied Behaviour Analysis, and S-LP services.
- Educational Assistant (EA) allocation for the school year has been finalized, with 3.5 additional EAs added across the system to support student needs.
- The department recently completed several system-level IPRCs for the Primary Learning Strategies Class, Assumption College School (ACS), and St. John's College special classes. Additionally, ACS hosted an opening liturgy to welcome new students and staff to the self-contained programs.

9. Closing Remarks/Adjournment

Lauren Moulton thanked everyone. The meeting adjourned at 1:43p.m. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 18, 2025.

REPORT TO THE BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Prepared by: Phil Wilson, Superintendent of Education
Presented to: Committee of the Whole
Submitted on: November 25, 2025
Submitted by: Mike McDonald, Director of Education & Secretary

NEW TEACHER INDUCTION PROGRAM (NTIP) UPDATE

Public Session

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP) is a Ministry of Education–mandated program designed to provide new teachers with the professional learning, mentorship, and evaluation necessary to support a successful transition into the teaching profession. The NTIP is the second step in a continuum of teacher professional learning following initial teacher education and represents a critical investment in teacher confidence, efficacy, and instructional growth.

The overarching goals of NTIP are to help new teachers develop:

- Confidence – 'I can do it; I have the supports to be successful.'
- Efficacy – 'My teaching makes a difference in the lives and learning of every student.'
- Instructional Practice – 'I can respond to diverse learning needs with effective strategies.'
- Commitment to Continuous Learning – 'I want to grow as a professional in collaboration with my students, colleagues, and community.'

These goals are achieved through three induction elements: orientation to the school and board, mentoring by experienced teachers, and professional learning tailored to individual teacher needs. The BHNCD SB NTIP model aligns fully with this provincial framework and integrates relational trust, differentiated learning, and authentic professional collaboration grounded in the Catholic faith.

DEVELOPMENTS:

Program Structure and Participation

For the 2025–2026 school year, the BHNCD SB NTIP has been expanded and refined to provide structured, differentiated support to over 100 eligible teachers. Eligibility and level of support were determined collaboratively with Human Resources, in accordance with Ministry criteria.

Tier	Participant Group	Number of Teachers**	Support Provided
Tier 1	First-Year Permanent Hires	57	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assigned mentor • Three release days for mentor and mentee • School Level / mentoring Web Mentorship • Onboarding • Access to NTIP resources • Professional learning sessions
Tier 2	Second-Year Permanent Hires (who did not complete NTIP in 2024-2025)	18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One release day • School Level / mentoring Web Mentorship • Access to NTIP resources • Professional learning sessions
Tier 3	First-Year Long-Term Occasional (LTO) Teachers	34	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One release day • School Level / mentoring Web Mentorship • Access to NTIP resources • Professional learning sessions

** (as of November 12, 2025)

In total, 109 teachers are participating in NTIP for 2025–2026, supported by 394 release days for mentorship and/or self-directed professional learning. The program ensures compliance with NTIP requirements for permanent hires, who must complete two satisfactory Teacher Performance Appraisals (TPAs) within 24 months.

Onboarding and Orientation

All new teachers participated in the New Teacher Onboarding Session on August 26, 2025, titled 'Called to Teach, Chosen to Serve.' The session introduced participants to the board's mission, NTIP leadership team, and departmental supports. The day reflected the spiritual theme, 'Pilgrims of Hope,' emphasizing faith, community, and collaboration.

Mentorship Framework

The mentorship component of NTIP remains central to its success. BHNCD SB has shifted from a single-board mentor model — in which one mentor provided system-wide resources — to a more personalized and relational framework that includes one-to-one mentorship, school-based mentorship, and access to broader mentoring webs. This model ensures that each new teacher receives differentiated, context-specific support while also benefiting from a network of experienced educators across the system. Mentors receive dedicated training, release time, and ongoing guidance to foster relational trust, facilitate learning-focused conversations, and promote reflection through co-planning, classroom observation, and professional dialogue. Mentors are recruited through an annual call for interest and receive dedicated training, release time, and support. Foundational mentoring skills include building relational trust, facilitating

learning-focused conversations, providing meaningful feedback, and utilizing powerful mentoring designs such as co-planning and reflection.

Professional Learning and Individual NTIP Strategy

Professional learning opportunities are embedded throughout the school year and include after-school sessions, faith formation, and online modules via the Student Achievement Team Hub. The Individual NTIP Strategy (INS) serves as a living document guiding professional goals and reflection.

Faith and Formation

Faith formation is woven throughout the NTIP experience. The theme 'Pilgrims of Hope' invites mentors and mentees to journey together in faith, cultivating a culture rooted in reflection, compassion, and service.

Next Steps

The NTIP Leadership Team will continue to monitor program delivery, collect feedback, evaluate mentor-mentee pairings, and review professional learning data to inform future planning.

Summary

The 2025–2026 NTIP embodies both the provincial NTIP vision and the board's Catholic mission. With over 100 educators engaged and 394 release days supporting their growth, the program promotes mentorship, professional learning, and faith-based formation. Grounded in the theme 'Pilgrims of Hope,' this year's program fosters collaboration and lifelong learning among BHNCDSB's newest educators.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Committee of the Whole refers the New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP) Report to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for receipt.

REPORT TO THE BRANT HALDIMAND NORFOLK CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Prepared by: Phil Wilson, Superintendent of Education
Presented to: Committee of the Whole
Submitted on: November 25, 2025
Submitted by: Mike McDonald, Director of Education & Secretary

Special Education Department Report – Literacy Intervention Program for Complex Learners (Readtopia)

Public Session

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Special Education Department is very pleased to share that a new literacy program, *Readtopia*, has been introduced across the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for our most complex learners in Community Living, Personal Active Learning (PAL), and Spectrum Abilities Program (SAP) classrooms.

This initiative directly responds to the recommendations of the Right to Read Report, which emphasized the need for evidence-based, comprehensive literacy instruction accessible to all students — including those with the most significant learning challenges.

For many years, supporting literacy development for our most complex learners has been a significant struggle. *Readtopia* provides a holistic, developmentally appropriate approach that values the dignity and potential of every learner.

Unlike programs that focus only on isolated literacy components, *Readtopia* offers a comprehensive and integrated literacy curriculum that supports:

- Phonics and phonemic awareness
- Vocabulary and background knowledge
- Reading comprehension
- Writing development
- Communication and self-expression

This program allows our students to experience the full cognitive, academic, and social benefits of literacy, advancing the Board's commitment to equity, excellence, and high expectations for all learners.

DEVELOPMENTS:

Program Features

Readtopia provides a robust and flexible framework designed to meet diverse literacy needs while maintaining age-appropriate and engaging content. Its key features include:

- Differentiated instructional materials spanning emergent, transitional, and early conventional readers
- Online access for use in any instructional setting
- Age-respectful thematic units integrating phonics, comprehension, writing, and communication
- Cross-curricular connections to Science, Life Skills, Social Studies, and Math

- Experiential learning supports such as video content to build background knowledge and vocabulary
- Assessment tools including Emergent Literacy Measures, Fluency Passages, and Student Placement Tools
- Embedded functional life skills such as daily living, interpersonal communication, and employment readiness
- Over 30 thematic units (and growing), each offering 6–12 weeks of instructional content

Importantly, *Readtopia* is easy to implement and does not require storage of personalized student data in the cloud, maintaining student privacy while ensuring broad accessibility.

Professional Learning and Support

Implementation of *Readtopia* is being supported by Bridges Canada, who provide professional learning, coaching, and ongoing technical assistance. A series of professional development sessions have been organized for all participating educators to ensure a strong, consistent rollout.

Training sessions are facilitated at the Catholic Education Centre (CEC) by:

- Stephanie Bergman, Speech-Language Pathologist
- Tracie Witteveen, System Special Education Consultant
- Sandra De Dominicis, Vice-Principal of Inclusive Learning and Special Education

Training Schedule:

- Session 1: October 27 (morning)
- Session 2: November 3 (morning)
- Session 3: December 10 (morning)
- Session 4: January 14 (morning)

This phased approach allows for reflection, practice, and refinement between sessions, ensuring effective implementation and sustained teacher confidence.

Why This Matters for BHNCD SB

As the Right to Read Report highlighted, literacy is a human right—a gateway to communication, independence, and lifelong learning. For too long, students with complex learning needs have been underserved in the area of literacy.

Readtopia changes this narrative by offering our students meaningful literacy engagement, equitable access to rich, evidence-based instruction, and opportunities to communicate, express, and grow.

This initiative reflects BHNCD SB's steadfast dedication to fostering inclusion, honouring each person's dignity, and believing in the potential of every learner.

Staff Input and Existing Practices

To better understand current literacy supports, a minds-up activity was conducted with participating staff. Teachers and department members anonymously listed the strategies and resources they currently use to promote literacy development. Their responses included:

- Brigrance
- iXL Diagnostics
- Learning Upgrade
- Raz-Kids
- Prodigy
- Epic
- Lexia
- Structured Learning
- Leveled Readers
- AAC Devices
- Read Alouds

This input illustrates both the dedication and creativity of our educators in supporting literacy development across a range of needs. However, it also highlights a critical need for greater consistency and coherence in how literacy instruction is delivered to our most complex learners.

While individual teachers employ strong, research-informed practices, the absence of a unified framework can result in uneven opportunities for students. *Readtopia* addresses this need by providing a consistent, evidence-based, and developmentally appropriate program that ensures all students—regardless of classroom placement or teacher—receive equitable access to high-quality literacy instruction.

Trained Staff

- All core PAL teachers from the three secondary schools
- All core Community Living teachers from the three secondary schools
- SERT for SAP at Madonna Della Libera
- All three Department Heads
- All four Speech-Language Pathologists
- All three System Special Education Consultants tied to a secondary school

Summary

The introduction of *Readtopia* marks a significant milestone for the BHNCDsB's Special Education Department. It reflects our collective belief that all students can learn to read and write when provided with the right tools, instruction, and support.

Readtopia embodies the Board's spiritual and educational mission by empowering students to find their voice, experience success, and engage fully in learning—truly living out our shared call to be 'Pilgrims of Hope.'

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Committee of the Whole refers the Special Education Department Report – Literacy Intervention Program for Complex Learners (Readtopia) Report to the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board for receipt.

2025-2026
Trustee Meetings and Events

Date	Time	Meeting/Event
November 25, 2025	4:30 pm	Committee of the Whole
November 25, 2025	6:30 pm	Board Meeting
December 8, 2025	3:00 pm	Accommodations Committee
December 8, 2025	3:00 pm	Executive Council
December 9, 2025	6:30 pm	Annual Board Meeting
December 11, 2025	3:00 pm	Budget Committee
December 16, 2025	1:00 pm	Special Education Advisory Committee
December 16, 2025	2:00 pm	Student Transportation Services BHN
December 16, 2025	4:30 pm	Committee of the Whole
December 16, 2025	6:30 pm	Board Meeting
<i>December 22 2025- January 2, 2026</i>		CHRISTMAS BREAK
January 13, 2026	1:30 pm	Faith Advisory Council Meeting
January 15, 2026	3:00 pm	Executive Council Meeting
<i>January 16-17, 2026</i>		OCSTA Trustees Seminar
January 19, 2026	6:30 pm	Regional Catholic Parent Involvement Committee
January 20, 2026	1:00 pm	Special Education Advisory Committee
January 20, 2026	3:00 pm	Policy Committee
January 27, 2025	4:30 pm	Committee of the Whole
January 27, 2025	6:30 pm	Board Meeting
February 10, 2026	2:00 pm	Student Transportation Services BHN
February 12, 2026	3:00 pm	Executive Council Meeting
February 17, 2026	1:00 pm	Special Education Advisory Committee
February 17, 2026	3:00 pm	Policy Committee
February 19, 2026	9:00 am	Mental Health Steering Committee
February 24, 2026	1:00 pm	Accessibility Steering Committee
February 24, 2026	4:30 pm	Committee of the Whole
February 24, 2026	6:30 pm	Board Meeting
March 10, 2026	3:00 pm	Policy Committee
March 12, 2026	3:00 pm	Executive Council Meeting
<i>March 16-20, 2026</i>		MARCH BREAK
March 24, 2026	1:00 pm	Special Education Advisory Committee
March 24, 2026	4:30 pm	Committee of the Whole
March 24, 2026	6:30 pm	Board Meeting
March 30, 2026	6:30 pm	Regional Catholic Parent Involvement Committee
April 1, 2026	3:00 pm	Accommodations Committee Meeting
April 9, 2026	3:00 pm	Executive Council Meeting
April 14, 2026	2:00 pm	Student Transportation Services BHN
April 16, 2026	1:30 pm	Faith Advisory Committee
April 21, 2026	1:00 pm	Special Education Advisory Committee
April 21, 2026	3:00 pm	Policy committee
April 28, 2026	4:30 pm	Committee of the Whole
April 28, 2026	6:30 pm	Board Meeting
April 30, 2026 – May 2, 2026		OCSTA AGM & Conference
<i>May 3-8, 2026</i>		Catholic Education Week
May 4, 2026	5:00 pm	Catholic Student Leadership Awards
May 11, 2026	3:00 pm	Budget Committee
May 11, 2026	6:30 pm	Regional Catholic Parent Involvement Committee
May 14, 2026	3:00 pm	Executive Council
May 19, 2026	1:00 pm	Special Education Advisory Committee
May 19, 2026	3:00 pm	Policy Committee
May 21, 2026	1:30 pm	Mental Health Steering Committee
May 26, 2026	1:00 pm	Accessibility Steering Committee

May 26, 2026	4:30 pm	Committee of the Whole
May 26, 2026	6:30 pm	Board Meeting
June 2026		CCSTA AGM
June 9, 2026	1:30 pm	Faith Advisory Committee
June 9, 2026	2:00 pm	Student Transportation Services BHN
June 11, 2026	3:00 pm	Executive Council
June 15, 2026	5:00 pm	Audit Committee
June 16, 2026	1:00 pm	Special Education Advisory Committee
June 16, 2026	3:00 pm	Policy Committee
June 22, 2026	3:00 pm	Budget Committee
June 23, 2026	1:00 pm	Accessibility Steering Committee
June 23, 2026	4:30 pm	Committee of the Whole
June 23, 2026	6:30 pm	Board Meeting
June 25, 2026	4:45 pm	Assumption College Graduation
	6:30 pm	Holy Trinity Graduation
	7:00 pm	St. John's College Graduation

Meetings scheduled at the Call of the Committee Chair: Accommodations Committee, Audit Committee, Budget Committee, Faith Advisory Committee, Policy Committee