



**Brant Haldimand Norfolk
Catholic District School Board**

Minutes

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

**Faith Advisory Committee (FAC)
Tuesday, January 20, 2026 ♦ 12:00 p.m.
Microsoft Teams**

Present: Heather Graham, Dan Dignard (Trustee- Brant), Michael Lawlor (Superintendent of Education), Carole Allen (FACE), Andrew Hall, Keri Calvesbert

Regrets: Fr. Augustine Ogundele, Fr. Rudolf D'Souza, Fr. Kevin D'Souza, Riley O'Brien, Mulan How, Carlo Fortino, Tara Williams, Carol Luciani (Chair of the Board)

1. Opening Prayer

Michael Lawlor opened the meeting in prayer.

2. Welcome

Michael Lawlor welcomed members of the committee.

3. Approval of the Minutes

The Minutes of the October 14, 2025, meeting were approved.

4. Information and Discussion Items

4.1 Catholic Student Leadership Awards

Keri Calvesbert shared planning for the 2026 Catholic Student Leadership Awards afternoon leadership symposium and evening celebration are well underway. The event will be held in-person at Holy Trinity Catholic High School, Simcoe on May 4, 2026. His Excellency, Bishop Fabbro, Diocese of London will preside at the awards celebration. Elementary and Secondary Nominations have been received by Directors Office. Congratulatory letters are being processed to be mailed out to families. There will be one Distinguished Catholic Graduate Award and two Outstanding Contribution to Catholic Education Awards being presented at this year's celebration.

4.2 Looking Ahead to Lent

This year, Ash Wednesday is Wednesday, February 18, 2026. Schools are to proceed with Ash Wednesday plans for Liturgy and receipt of ashes as in previous years. Schools are to participate in either a Liturgy of the Word (in the school) or a Mass (at the Parish). Administrators will be informed via email to connect with their Parish Priest or Pastoral Team attached to their schools to make the necessary arrangements to celebrate Ash Wednesday. An Ash Wednesday Liturgy of the Word is provided in the Pastoral Resource Package for Administrators and schools to follow. Keri stated that she connected with Brant SSVP and Norfolk SSVP. Collections of Caring and Reaching Out for Lent will take place. All Administrators will receive this information via email outlining the priority needs, as determined by SSVP, for donations and collections. During Lent, all schools are encouraged to participate in Lenten Almsgiving and/or a Collection of Caring. Haldimand schools are welcome to participate in either Brantford or Norfolk campaigns, or if schools wish to connect with local food banks in Haldimand County, this is permissible also.



4.3 Secondary Feedback on Faith Activities

Andrew Hall shared activities happening at St. John's College including:

- In late October, SJC Campus Ministry students made a pilgrimage to St. Basil's to see a replica of the Holy Doors. Students heard Fr. Kevin's pilgrimage story, viewed relics, and were able to get their pilgrimage passport stamped.
- In November, SJC Campus Ministry students visited the elderly at Riverview Terrace
- In October and November, Gr.9 and 10 students were invited to the chapel to participate in a Jubilee year reflection activity.
- In October and November, Gr.9 religion classes participated in retreats with chaplaincy in the Divine Mercy Room.
- Both of our SJC Junior Worship Bands recorded original worship songs at a professional recording studio in Stoney Creek.
- Our Worship Bands also submitted three original worship songs to the 2027 World Youth Day Song Contest which is taking place in Seoul, South Korea. The theme of the contest is **"Take courage! I have overcome the world"** (John 16:33)

Keri Calvesbert shared on behalf of Tara Williams, activities taking place at Assumption College School and Holy Trinity, respectively:

- Pennies From Heaven supported 39 families this year.
- The 180 Team created packages with Christmas morning gifts for the SOAR youth shelters (32) which included winter hat and gloves, a few chocolates and a water bottle. Each package contained 3 hand-made colourful Christmas cards and the water bottles also each had attached a hand-made decorated tag.
- Over the semester the 180 Team made over a dozen trips to St. Andrew's Soup for the Soul community lunch program to prep and serve lunch, also to the ARTC therapy center, and in the fall apple picking for local food banks. We also helped a few times at Friendship House with packing lunches for elementary school students in need.
- Teacher Thursday prayer schedule has been filled over the semester with teachers who volunteer to lead the morning prayers. Teachers write and share their own personal faith through their thoughts and prayers.
- ACS school pastoral team lead praying a decade of the Rosary every morning with staff throughout October in the mornings at 8:15am in the chapel.
- Student-led grade level Liturgies were held during Advent.
- Social Justice Class and 180 Team wrapped up our Confidence Closet initiative to provide professional clothing and shoes for those age 14-29 who stay/will stay in SOAR shelters over the year (approx. 320). We had a staff clothing drive which raised 460 pieces of lovely professional clothing, and the school shoe drive (gently used) brought in 120 pairs of shoes.
- In November some of the Social Justice Class and 180 Team attended the Peace Medal Breakfast in Hamilton where our Peace Medal Scholarship was acknowledged and our specific project was highlighted.



At Holy Trinity:

- **Giving Tree Campaign:** We served 119 people (56 of whom were under the age of 18) across 21 families for our giving tree campaign this year. We offered Groceries for the Holidays, A Christmas Dinner, Toiletries for each person in the household and Gifts for all those under the age of 18.
- **Catholic Family of Parishes in Norfolk Giving Tree Campaign:** Our Job skills class also volunteered at the St. Vincent de Paul Giving Tree helping organize and move a lot of food.
- **Titans Scare Hunger:** Our leadership class overwhelmed the St. Vincent de Paul at Halloween with our Titans Scare Hunger food collection - we filled a large SUV 3x between Friday collection at the Superstore and Monday collection going door to door in various neighbourhoods. The St. Vincent de Paul volunteer said it was the largest single donation they'd ever had to sort.
- **Semester 1 Grad Retreat:** All 4 Grade 12 religion classes just finished participating in a 33 day Marian Consecration for Teens. Each day consisting of Scripture, thoughts from Katie and Mark Hartfiel who wrote the book we used as a guide, and various other prayers both familiar (like the Our Father) and unfamiliar (like the Litany of the Holy Name of Jesus). We also worked from 1 minute to eventually finishing with 5 minutes of silence each day. Here are some notable comments from the student's feedback forms (one from each class):
 - "Silence was nice." (Student from Doug Ivak's period 1 class HRE4M1)
 - "I liked the silent meditation the most as I connect the most with the Holy Spirit even though I got distracted easily I still thoroughly enjoyed it" (Student from John Bramer's period 2 HRE4O1 class)
 - "I honestly enjoyed the whole thing and found it very interesting and almost relaxing in a way. I found it a really great way to strengthen my faith" (Student from Doug Ivak's period 3 HRE4O1 class)
 - "The prayers were the part I found most enjoyable. I found the Prayer of St. Francis Interesting" (Student from Doug Ivak's period 4 class HRE4M1)

4.4 Elementary Feedback on Faith Activities

Heather Graham highlighted some activities in our Catholic Elementary Schools across the district since the October meeting:

- Collections of donations for Tree of Warmth (hats, mittens, socks)
- Christmas Family Open Houses at various schools
- Donations for St. Vincent de Paul (e.g. toys, non-perishable food, personal items and donation of clothes)
- Visiting senior's homes to participate in Christmas carols
- Creation of Christmas hampers which supported local families
- Confirmation preparations occurring for various schools across the district

4.5 Diocesan – Deanery Updates

N/A



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4.6 F.A.C.E. Updates

Carol Allen provided updates from F.A.C.E.

5. Questions/Discussions

Michael Lawlor gave an update regarding Faith Day 2026. At this time, we have been asked to plan for a half-day Faith Day on the October PD Day. If an opportunity arises to turn the October PD Day into a full-day, Michael will communicate this to the committee.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by Trustee Dignard.

Next Meeting: TBD – April 2026 (In-person at CEC)