

YORK CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

MINUTES of the Regular Board Meeting

Tuesday, April 30, 2024

PRESENT:

Members: In Person: F. Alexander, M. Barbieri, C. Cotton, E. Crowe, M. Iafrate, J. DiMeo, A. Grella, A. Saggese, J. Wigston
Student Trustees J. James, M. Galstyan, A. Zamanifar
Virtual: T. McNicol

Administration: In Person: J. De Faveri, J. Sarna, A. Arcadi, A. Battick, M. Brosens, J. Chiutsi, K. Elgharbawy, M. Fedrigoni, T. Laliberte, C. McNeil, S. Morrow, L. Paonessa, J. O'Hara, L. Paonessa, T. Pechkovsky, L. Sawicky, A. McDonald, J. Tsui
Virtual: C. Candido, S. Wright

Absent with Notice: All present.

Presiding: E. Crowe, Chair of the Board

2024:312 CALL TO ORDER / OPENING PRAYER

Elizabeth Crowe, Chair of the Board, welcomed everyone to the Regular Board Meeting and welcomed the Faith Ambassador to lead the opening prayer at 7:32 pm. The Land Acknowledgement followed.

2024:313 ROLL CALL – All Present.

2024:314 APPROVAL OF NEW MATERIAL:

Add: Delegations: Pride Flag

Add: Delegations: School Boundaries

MOTION: Barbieri/Saggese

THAT the new material be approved as presented.

- MOTION CARRIED -

2024:315 APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION: Wigston/DiMeo

THAT the agenda be approved as amended.

- MOTION CARRIED -

2024:316 DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST FOR CURRENT MEETING:

Trustee Theresa McNicol declared a personal Conflict of Interest for Item #16I

2024:317 DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST FROM PREVIOUS MEETING: NIL

2024:318 a) APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S):

Regular Board Meeting of March 6, 2024

Special Board Meeting of March 21, 2024

Special Board Meeting of EDC Policy Review, April 9, 2024

Special Board Meeting of EDC Successor By-Law, April 9, 2024

MOTION: DiMeo/Grella

THAT the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of March 6, 2024, Special Board Meeting of March 21, 2024, Special Board Meeting of EDC Policy Review, April 9, 2024 and Special Board Meeting of EDC Successor By-Law of April 9, 2024, be approved as presented.

– MOTION CARRIED –**2024:319 BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:****2024:320 CHAIR'S REPORT / UPDATE / INSPIRATIONAL MESSAGES:**

Elizabeth Crowe, Chair of the Board, provided her Board Report as part of the March 6, 2024 Regular Board Agenda. The topics included Catholic Education Week, Funding for a New YCDSB School in Vaughan, National Volunteers Week, Intermediate Basketball Championship, Deputy Chiefs For a Day, Bargaining With Our Teachers, Feast Days of Our Schools' Patrons.

Inspirational Video: YCDSB Distinguished Alumni

Interim Director, John De Faveri remarked as follows,

I am honoured to recognize the York Catholic District School Board's 2024 Distinguished Alumni Award winners. Tonight is an especially memorable evening for the YCDSB because this is the 20th year that the Distinguished Alumni Awards have been bestowed on the incredible graduates of this board. Over the years, the Distinguished Alumni Award has become a cherished part of the YCDSB. From the posters that are hung in our schools to these special moments of recognition at Board Meetings, the Distinguished Alumni Award gives us an opportunity to put a spotlight on our graduates who embody the Catholic School Graduate Expectations. As a member of the selection committee, I know that this year's award winners exemplify the virtues we hold dear here at the YCDSB. Congratulations to all the winners. Please know that you make us proud and you make the world a better place. A special thanks to the other selection committee members for all their hard work and wisdom. Thank you: Vice Chair Maria Iafrate, Trustee Angela Grella, Student Trustees Amira Zamanifar and Monica Galstyan, as well as Chief Information Officer Scott Morrow. Let's watch a video that will introduce our 2024 Distinguished Alumni Award winners.

The 2024 Distinguished Alumni Award Winners:

- Father Scott Birchall
- Jessica Dizon Burns
- Jeffrey Man
- Kevin McCloskey
- Saneliso Moyo
- Marsha Pinto
- Jordan Romano
- Sierra Scodellaro

The 2024 Distinguished Alumni Award winners present, in person and virtual, had the opportunity to address the Board of Trustees.

2024:321 OCSTA / BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S UPDATE:

Trustee Jennifer Wigston, OCSTA Regional Director representing York Catholic District School Board, advised that she would present a fulsome report after the OCSTA-AGM that is taking place on May 2-4, 2024.

2024:322 DIRECTOR'S REPORT / UPDATE:

Interim Director of Education John De Faveri, provided his report in the April 30, 2024 Regular Board Agenda package. Interim Director De Faveri's topics included Distinguished Alumni Award, Budget Workshop, OECTA Marlies Game, FIRST Robotics Competition Education Forum, Recognizing Our Staff, National Day of Mourning, YCPIC Conference and Terry Fox Fundraising Results.

2024:323 STUDENT TRUSTEES' REPORT:

Student Trustees Monica Galstyan, Jonah James and Amira Zamanifar provided their Student Trustee Report to Board report in the April 30, 2024 Regular Board Agenda package. Topics included March Break, Easter Season, Solar Eclipse, OCSTA Indigeneous Influencer Project, YSCPC Final Meeting 23-24 and Junior Student Trustee (24-26) Elections.

2024:324 RECOGNITIONS / OUTSIDE PRESENTATIONS: NIL**2024:325 DELEGATIONS:**

- a) **Pride Flag - Paolo De Buono - Appendix A**
- b) **School Boundaries - Maryanne Stillo - Appendix B**

2024:326 JOURNEY TOWARDS OUR VISION:**a) International Education Program - Year End Review**

I. Faraone, Principal, International & Continuing Education Programs and C. Recine, Manager of Admissions, Enrolment & International Student Program provided a year in review for the International Education Program. A summary of Recruitment Objectives, Statistics, Department Expansion & School Support and Marketing Initiatives was provided.

The Board of Trustees were pleased with the growth and expansion of International Education. It was noted that the York Catholic DSB is strengthening their global reputation and the Department has done outstanding work.

b) 2024-2029 Draft Long Term Accommodation Plan

T. Pechkovsky, Coordinating Manager, Planning & Operations and J. Tsui, Manager, Community Planning and Partnerships shared the LTAP Overview highlighting that this is a comprehensive, multi-year document that guides future accommodation planning needs and initiatives. The LTAP is a key piece of the Board's MYSP and is guided by the Ministry of Education legislation and expectations. The goal is to provide an overview of planned initiatives in our school communities so stakeholders are aware of what to expect in the coming years. The majority of the initiatives will each have their own consultation and approval process. The LTAP also guides capital investment, program or facility decisions. Notices to the public will be going out in May, with public input sessions scheduled in the fall to inform the final document.

The Board of Trustees asked that, ahead of the November 2024 final LTAP that will be brought to the Board of Trustees for approval, staff prepare a powerpoint for principals to present to their CSC with a deadline.

2024:327 ACTION ITEM(S) (including Committee Reports):**a) APPROVAL OF 2024-2029 DRAFT LONG TERM ACCOMMODATION PLAN**

T. Pechkovsky, Coordinating Manager, Planning & Operations provided a report to introduce the Draft 2024-2029 Long Term Accommodation Plan.

MOTION: Cotton/DiMeo

THAT the Board of Trustees approve the draft of the 2024-2029 Long Term Accommodation Plan as presented.

- MOTION CARRIED -

**b) RECEIPT OF REPORT NO. 2024:05 SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
RECEIPT OF REPORT NO. 2024:06 SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Committee Chair, Angela Grella, presented for receipt, Report No. 2024:05 of the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting held on March 4, 2024 and Report No. 2024:06 of the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting held on April 8, 2024

MOTION: Grella/Wigston

THAT Report No. 2024:05 from the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting held on March 4, 2024, and Report No. 2024:06 from the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting held on April 8, 2024 be received as presented.

- MOTION CARRIED –**c) RECEIPT OF REPORT NO. 2024:01 JOINT BOARD CONSORTIUM**

Committee Member, Joseph DiMeo, presented for receipt, Report No. 2024:01 of the Joint Board Consortium meeting held on March 6, 2024.

MOTION: DiMeo/Barbieri

THAT Report No. 2024:01 from the Joint Board Consortium meeting held on March 6, 2024, be received as presented.

- MOTION CARRIED –**d) APPROVAL OF REPORT NO. 2024:03 TRANSPORTATION REVIEW COMMITTEE**

Committee Chair, Maria Iafrate, presented for approval, Report No. 2024:03 of the Transportation Review Committee meeting held on April 16, 2024.

MOTION: Iafrate/Barbieri**Policy 203 - Proposed Changes and Next Steps:**

THAT Administration be directed to prepare a revised policy for Policy Review Committee to propose changes to the following parameters of Policy 203, 3.6.3; 3.6.4; 3.10.1; 3.12; 3.15; and 3 new parameters as illustrated in Table 1, Category A.

Table 1- Financial Impact Summary of FI Student Sample by Option

Scenario	Distance to a Transit Stop (KM)	Time Travelling to / from School (MINS)*	# of Vehicles to / from School	# of FI Students "Transit-Served"	% Change from Initial # of "Transit-Served" Students	Estimated Cost Increase to the YCDSB
Current Policy 203 Definition	1	75	3 or less	393	0%	\$ -
Option 1	0.8	75	3 or less	240	-39%	\$ 223,277.49
Option 2	0.6	75	3 or less	185	-53%	\$ 303,540.64
Option 3	1	60	3 or less	385	-2%	\$ 11,674.64
Option 4	1	75	2 or less	302	-23%	\$ 132,799.03
Option 5	0.6	60	2 or less	149	-62%	\$ 356,076.52

*Time Travelling to school includes the estimated walk time plus time on a school bus.

THAT Administration be directed to prepare a submission to the budget process for the modification to Policy 203 parameter 3.6.4.2.2 to provide Board transportation to all Secondary French Immersion as per the eligibility criteria in parameter 3.iv;

THAT Administration be directed to prepare a submission to the budget process for the modification to Policy 203 parameter 5.11 the "transit served" definition.

THAT Administration be directed to move parameter 3.1; and 3.1.1 to the budget process.

- MOTION CARRIED –**e) RECEIPT OF REPORT NO. 2024:03 YORK CATHOLIC PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE**

Committee Member, Frank Alexander, presented for receipt, Report No. 2024:03 of the York Catholic Parent Involvement Committee meeting held on April 22, 2024.

MOTION: Alexander/Wigston

THAT Report No. 2024:03 from the York Catholic Parent Involvement Committee meeting held on April 22, 2024, be received as presented.

- MOTION CARRIED –**f) RECEIPT OF REPORT NO. 2024:15 SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

Vice-Chair, Maria Iafrate, presented for receipt, Report No. 2024:15 of the Special Committee of the Whole meeting held on April 22, 2024.

MOTION: Alexander/Wigston

THAT Report No. 2024:15 from the Special Committee of the Whole meeting held on

April 22, 2024, be received as presented.

- MOTION CARRIED -

g) APPROVAL OF REPORT NO. 2024:01 AUDIT COMMITTEE

Committee Chair, Maria Iafrate, presented for approval, Report No. 2024:01 of the Audit Committee meeting held on April 30, 2024.

MOTION: Iafrate/Cotton

THAT the Board approve the 2024 Terms of Reference for the Audit Committee.

THAT the Regional Internal Audit Team 2023-24 Audit Plan be amended to include Succession Planning for Senior Team / Managers (Non-Academic).

- MOTION CARRIED -

h) APPROVAL OF PROPOSED OPERATIONAL BY-LAW CHANGES

Board Chair, Elizabeth Crowe, presented, for approval, the proposed Operational By-Law changes to Parameter 4.1.1; 4.1.15; 4.4.2. (General Committee Information)

MOTION: Crowe/Iafrate

THAT the amendments to the Operational By-Law No. 1 Parameters 4.1.1, 4.1.15 and 4.4.2 be approved.

- MOTION CARRIED -

i) APPROVAL OF COMMUNITY PLANNING AND PARTNERSHIPS FOR 2024-2025

T. Pechkovsky, Coordinating Manager, Planning & Operations provided a report seeking approval of the 2024-2025 Candidate Schools for potential facility partnerships, in accordance with *Policy 704 Community Planning and Partnerships* (CPP).

MOTION: Wigston/Saggese

THAT the Board approve the list of schools as identified on Table 1 and 2 in accordance with Policy

704.

- MOTION CARRIED -

Table 1 - 2024/2025 Candidate Schools for potential facility partnerships

School	Address	Municipality
All Saints	130 Castlemore Ave, Unionville, ON L6C 2P9	Markham
Blessed Scalabrini	290 York Hill Blvd., Thornhill, ON L4J 3B6	Vaughan
Blessed Trinity	230 Hawker Rd., Maple, ON L6A 2R2	Vaughan
Corpus Christi	35 Squire Drive, Richmond Hill, ON L4S 1C6	Richmond Hill
Divine Mercy	251 Melville Ave, Maple, ON L6A 1Z1	Vaughan
Father Frederick McGinn	61 Brockdale St., Richmond Hill, ON L4E 4W2	Richmond Hill
Father Henri Nouwen	121 Larratt Lane, Richmond Hill, On L4C 0E6	Richmond Hill
Father John Kelly	9350 Keele St., Maple, On L6A 1P4	Vaughan
Holy Jubilee	400 St. Joan Of Arc Ave., Maple, On L6A 2S8	Vaughan
Our Lady Help of Christians	275 Redstone Rd., Richmond Hill, ON L4S 2H1	Richmond Hill
Our Lady of Hope	80 Red Cardinal Trail, Richmond Hill, ON L4E 4B8	Richmond Hill
Our Lady Of The Annunciation	30 Bayswater Ave., Richmond Hill, On L4E 2L3	Richmond Hill
San Lorenzo Ruiz	840 Bur Oak Ave., Markham, On L6E 0E1	Markham
San Marco	250 Coronation Dr., Woodbridge, On L4L 6H3	Vaughan
St. Agnes of Assisi	120 LaroCCA Ave., Woodbridge, ON L4H 2A9	Vaughan
St. Andrew	151 Forest Fountain Dr., Woodbridge, On L4H 1S4	Vaughan
St. Anthony	141 Kirk Dr. Thornhill, ON L3T 3L3	Markham
St. Bernadette	5279 Black River Rd., Sutton West, ON L0E 1R0	Georgina
St. Cecilia	300 Peter Rupert Ave, Maple, ON L6A 4P3	Vaughan
St. Clare	391 Velmar Dr., Woodbridge, On L4L 8J5	Vaughan
St. David	240 Killian Rd., Maple, On L6A 1A8	Vaughan
St. Gregory the Great	140 Greenpark Blvd., Woodbridge, ON L4L 6Z6	Vaughan
St. James	171 Mast Rd., Maple, On L6A 3J7	Vaughan
St. Jerome	20 Bridgenorth Dr., Aurora, On L4G 7P3	Aurora
St. John Bosco	199 Belview Ave., Woodbridge, ON L4L 5N9	Vaughan

School	Address	Municipality
St. John Chrysostom	800 Joe Persechini DR., Newmarket, ON L3X 2E8	Newmarket
St. Julia Billiart	2070 Bur Oak Ave., Markham, ON L6E 1X5	Markham
St. Matthew	75 Waterbridge Lane, Unionville, ON L3R 4G3	Markham
St. Michael the Archangel	161 Via Campanile, Woodbridge, ON L4H 3K5	Vaughan
St. Paul	140 William Roe Blvd., Newmarket, ON L3Y 1B2	Newmarket
St. Raphael the Archangel	131 Ravineview Dr, Maple, ON L6A 3T6	Vaughan
Note: More in depth analysis will be completed on a case by case basis to determine the exact square footage available should a community partner inquire.		

Table 2 - 2024/2025 Co-build Opportunities

School Name	Panel	Municipality	Status
St. Robert (Replacement)	Secondary	Markham	TBD*
Vaughan Metropolitan Centre Joint (Joint with York Region District School Board)	Elementary	Vaughan	TBD*
Queensville	Elementary	East Gwillimbury	Ministry Approved, Design is almost complete, preparing for Tender

j) APPOINTMENT TO DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL COMMITTEE

Board Chair, Elizabeth Crowe, presented the Trustee representation on the Director's Performance Appraisal Committee.

MOTION: DiMeo/Barbieri

THAT the Board appoint the following Trustees to the Director's Performance Appraisal Committee: Frank Alexander, Michaela Barbieri, Carol Cotton, Elizabeth Crowe, Joseph DiMeo, Maria Iafrate, Angela Saggese.

- MOTION CARRIED -

-

Trustee Theresa McNicol declared a personal conflict of interest for the following item and recused from any discussion, decision, debate or vote.

k) ALLEGED BREACH OF CODE OF CONDUCT BY TRUSTEE MCNICOL: FINAL INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Board Chair, Elizabeth Crowe presented her report and asked if any trustee wanted to bring forward motions.

MOTION: Iafrate/Saggese

THAT Trustee McNicol breached the Code of Conduct during the November 20, 2023 Inaugural Board Meeting.

- MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY -

If the Board determined that a Trustee has breached the Board's Code of Conduct, the Board may impose a sanction as per the *Education Act S218.3*:

Request for recorded vote

MOTION: lafrate/Barbieri

THAT Trustee McNicol be barred for one year from all committee meetings starting May 1st 2024 to April 30th 2025 and;
THAT this will run concurrently with the existing sanctions that have been placed on Trustee McNicol.

- MOTION CARRIED –

In Favour: Alexander, Barbieri, Cotton, Crowe, DiMeo, lafrate, Saggese

Opposed: Grella, Wigston

2024:328 DISCUSSION ITEM(S):

a) TRUSTEE MOTION: Admission to St. Theresa of Lisieux CHS (M. lafrate)

Whereas *St. Theresa of Lisieux CHS is at capacity and therefore, a cap was placed on the school in order to maintain students and staff safety and well-being;*
Whereas *families are transferring from public, private and other schools to St. Theresa of Lisieux CHS feeder schools, namely, St. Mary Immaculate CES, St. Anne CES, St. Marguerite d'Youville CES and Father Henri Nouwen CES, in order to access entry to St. Theresa of Lisieux CHS.*

LET IT BE RESOLVED

THAT *enrolment to St. Theresa of Lisieux CHS remain capped at 1600 to ensure the safety of all students and staff;*

THAT *staff review St. Theresa of Lisieux CHS admission process while maintaining a fair and transparent process;*

THAT *a recommendation be brought to the Board of Trustees for implementation.*

Vice-Chair lafrate thanked staff for the supplementary report. The Board of Trustees requested staff to incorporate some of the legal terms received in past years into the final report. Chair Crowe asked staff to review how the current TCH19 process giving Superintendent's discretion regarding students attending feeder schools but living outside of the boundary is being applied to ensure fairness.

This Motion will be an Action Item on the May 28, 2024 Regular Board Meeting agenda.

b) Update on Motion to Bring Peace to YCDSB Using the Symbol of Our Faith

M. Brosens, Senior Manager, Brand, Marketing & Communications shared information about various resources that could be produced to support the Motion, "Motion to Bring Peace to the York Catholic District School Board Using the Symbol of Our Faith".

Some members of the Board brought forward concerns with the cost of the promotional material and the environmental impact if they are discarded. They thought that given our deficit the funds would be better used for classroom resources. Other members of the Board felt that the promotional material were of great value and agreed that anything that can be distributed to students with a positive message is beneficial. It was also suggested that the "We Are Diverse. We Are One in Christ." be added to all school agendas if possible. The banner concept was well received and agreed upon for distribution to all schools: one for elementary and two for secondary.

MOTION: Alexander/Saggese

THAT *\$25,000 from the existing budget gets allocated for "We Are Diverse. We Are One in Christ" banners, one per elementary and two per secondary school.*

- MOTION CARRIED -

2024:329 INFORMATION ITEM(S):**a) 2024-2025 Budget Consultation Survey**

C. McNiel, Chief Financial Officer & Treasurer of the Board shared a report summarizing the results of the 2024-25 public budget survey. There were 1446 respondents who participated.

b) Employment Equity Audit Report for York Catholic District School Board

A. Battick, Interim Human Rights and Equity Advisory shared an overview of the initial phase of the Equity Audit concentrating on employment practices within the York Catholic District School Board. The audit is strategically designed to evaluate and improve our approaches to equity, diversity, and inclusion ensuring alignment with the Board's MYSP as well as compliance with Ontario's Education Act and Human Rights Code.

c) Establishing the Anti-Black Racism Advisory Committee

A. Battick, Interim Human Rights and Equity Advisory shared information on the Anti-Black Racism Advisory Committee that was formed in response to the recognized need to address and dismantle systemic and historic racism. Members of the community interested in joining the Anti-Black Racism Advisory Committee are encouraged to join by contacting the Office of the Human Rights and Equity Advisor.

d) Chromebook End-of-Life

S. Morrow, Chief Information Officer shared information on the recent developments concerning Chromebook support and lifecycle management within the YCDSB. Google determines the end-of-life for each device and the information is made public to inform consumers about the support duration for each device. It was clarified that Chromebooks do not expire in 3 years. Google has extended the life cycle for many models to receive security updates for up to ten years. Schools are encouraged to establish an evergreen purchasing plan for their technology resources.

e) March 19, 2024 YRP Letter to YCDSB

A copy of the letter was provided.

f) Implementation of French Immersion at St. Joan of Arc CHS

L. Paonessa, Superintendent of Education for School Area B, provided an overview of the progress thus far, in moving the implementation of the French Immersion program at St. Joan of Arc CHS. Although there was good attendance at the open house and the staff at St. Joan of Arc CHS did a great job, students are not switching from Our Lady Queen of the World CA because they already made a commitment to that school. Due to lack of enrolment the program start will be postponed until September 2025.

g) 2024-2025 Regular Board Meeting Dates

The dates for the 2024-2025 Regular Board Meeting were shared.

h) May 2024 Calendar

The May 2024 calendar was shared.

2024:330 NOTICES OF MOTION: NIL**2024:331 FUTURE AGENDA ITEM(S) / REQUEST FOR INFORMATION**

RECESS AT 10:26 PM TO RECONVENE THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

RECONVENE IN PUBLIC SESSION AT 11:09 PM

MOTION: Iafrate/Barbieri

MOTION TO GO PAST 11:00 PM

- MOTION CARRIED -

2024:332 APPROVAL OF REPORT NO. 2024:15 COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Vice-Chair Maria lafrate presented, for approval, Report No. 2024:15 of the Committee of the Whole private session held on April 30, 2024.

(i) **DECLASSIFIED (Action Items for Approval): NIL**

(ii) **CLASSIFIED:**
MOTION: lafrate/Cotton

THAT the confidential action items from the Private Session held April 30, 2024, be approved as presented.

- MOTION CARRIED -

2024:333 ADJOURNMENT: 11:10 PM
ON MOTION: Wigston/Grella and CARRIED

Secretary of the Board

Chair of the Board

Flying the Pride Flag at the York Catholic District School Board

I made this request years ago as a York Catholic District School Board (“York Catholic”) parent. Today, I am making this request as a resident and business person in York Region, who is also Catholic, that now is the time for York Catholic to fly the Intersex-Inclusive Progress Pride flag, starting in June 2024 and every June thereafter, at its head office and at all of York Catholic’s 101 secondary and elementary schools.

Each June, school boards throughout the Greater Toronto Area fly the Pride flag to celebrate the inclusion in those boards of 2SLGBTQI+ students, staff, family members, and community members. From a student perspective, inclusion improves learning because students feel more welcome and safe in a school board that outwardly, in the form of the Pride flag, displays an intention to be 2SLGBTQI+ inclusive. As a resident and business person in York Region, it is embarrassing to the residents and businesses in York Region that such a large government organization as York Catholic, which is in the heart of Ontario’s most diverse area, lacks the courage and resolve to fully recognize Pride month by flying a Pride flag just like all other government organizations in York Region do.

I am not naive that flying a Pride flag will solve all issues of systemic homophobia and systemic transphobia in York Region. However, flying the Pride flag is a significant step towards making York Region a much safer and more inclusive place for York Catholic’s students.

Approximately a year ago today, York Catholic students (delegates and student trustees) spoke clearly to you at York Catholic’s April 2023 board meeting about the positive for students, especially 2SLGBTQI+ students, if York Catholic were to fly the Pride flag. Now is the time to act. My procedural suggestion is at this April 30, 2024 board meeting to seek a staff report for consideration at the May board meeting, and at the May board meeting you can vote to fly the Pride flag this June and every June thereafter. Thank you for hearing this delegation.

Good evening esteemed members of the board council and trustees, I extend my warm regards to each one of you. My name is Maryanne Stillo, and I stand before you today as a proud parent deeply invested in the vibrant community of St. Clare Catholic Elementary School. With four children actively engaged in their educational journey, my family's connection to St. Clare spans over seven years. From the cherished moments of our eldest daughter starting junior kindergarten, to the current presence of our youngest son embarking on his own educational adventure, and with two children in between, our family's commitment to St. Clare remains unwavering.

Allow me to illuminate a matter that weighs heavily upon the collective conscience of our beloved institution: the concerning trend of declining enrollment at St. Clare. Over the past seven years, I've witnessed a disheartening pattern of dwindling student numbers, particularly evident in our kindergarten classes. Regrettably, this trend extends beyond the earliest years, with students departing our school due to the challenges of assembling full-grade classrooms, the absence of robust peer relationships, and a lack of a variety of extracurricular opportunities ultimately impeding on the quality of education students deserve. Consider, for instance, the sobering reality of graduating classes with as few as eight students, with imbalanced gender ratios amplifying the disconnect of social dynamics within the classroom.

The shifting demographics of our community's boundaries further compound these challenges. Former bustling neighborhoods have undergone significant transformations, with once-familiar faces replaced by the silence of empty nests. Yet, amid this flux, the children of St. Clare remain steadfast in their pursuit of knowledge and belonging. My own daughter's educational journey stands testament to the trials faced by many students, navigating split classes year after year, with limited exposure to diverse teaching methodologies with students having the same teacher multiple times and fleeting friendships as classmates seek alternative educational avenues.

In light of these realities, I implore the York Catholic District School Board to consider a bold course of action: the expansion of St. Clare's boundaries to welcome new students into our fold. Such an initiative promises transformational benefits not only for our current students but for the prospective learners eager to embrace the St. Clare experience. Imagine the prospect of classrooms brimming

with peers of the same age, fostering a sense of companionship and shared academic pursuits. Envision a diverse array of teaching talents, invigorating our curriculum with fresh perspectives and innovative teaching. Picture our students flourishing not only academically but also socially, as they forge new connections and partake in a rich array of extracurricular activities. This creates a well-rounded learning environment, enhancing the overall quality of education of our students.

I am steadfast in my belief that this vision is within our grasp. With the dawn of a new school year upon us, September stands as a perfect moment to enact change. The children and community of St. Clare have demonstrated remarkable patience, but the time for action is now. Let us seize this moment to cultivate an environment where growth, positivity, and opportunity abound—a haven where every child's potential is nurtured and celebrated.

In closing, I extend my gratitude for your thoughtful consideration of these pressing matters. May our collective efforts pave the way for a brighter future for the students of St. Clare and beyond.