

YORK CATHOLIC PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE
Minutes of Meeting
Monday, March 9, 2015
7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

PRESENT:

Committee Members: Januario de Souza, Gail Cheung, Ida Di Tacchio,
Mary Giardino, Meeta Kirkham, Yolanda Lobo,
Veronica Reis, Diane Scaini, Danny Scenna

Administration: Patricia Preston, Director of Education,
Nancy Di Nardo, Superintendent of Education

Parent Guest: Jennifer LaGrandeur-Wigston

REGRETS:

Committee Members: Gary Chan, Diana Corsi, Agatha Fallone Cretaro,
Paula Irwin, Maria Le, Christina Melick, Rosa Micieli,
Emanuela Polin-De Luca, Donna Psaila, Maurizio Ruberto,
Rose Scaccia, Maria Siciliano, Rosanna Soda,
Marisa Snider

Administration: Olga Ferro, Principal

Trustees: Teresa Ciaravella, Carol Cotton, Maria Marchese

Recording Secretary: Yolanda Lobo

1. **WELCOME/PRAYER**

Jan de Souza, Chair of YCPIC, welcomed and thanked everyone for being present. Reminded all about the contents of the package i.e. agenda, prayer and minutes of meeting. A prayer was said by all.

2. **WEBSITE PRESENTATION**

Presentation made by Sonia Gallo, Acting Communications Manager. A hard copy sample look of the website was handed out.

The presentation was very informative presentation.

Live demonstration was made of the new and improved Board and school websites.

Part of the Board's Multi-Year Strategic Plan was to revamp the board website and school websites...to give it a unified look and create consistency with the 104 schools.

The Board website is clearly labelled and very user friendly. The idea is to ensure that no matter which school you are browsing you will see the same information in the same layout. The new website has created a very consistent navigation across all the school and is more intuitive in terms of where the information is stored.

Different tabs in the website to allow the right audience to access when needed (parents, students, staff, parish, CSC, etc.). The website also allows for 5 school stories and tweeter feeds (where applicable).

The work was started on March 2nd, 2015, and is due to be completed by May 2015.

Part of the website design is to ensure that assistance is given to school administration to ensure that all school websites are kept current and up-to-date with information that is happening at the school.

The new website will be communicated to all families via email, school newsletters, etc.

Question: Can the website ensure to update all policies on the board website with the new or changed/updated policies (i.e. give old policy number to what it is changed to)?

A special thank you to Sonia Gallo, Acting Communications Manager, for doing a fabulous job in such a short time with the revamping of the new website.

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion by Meeta Kirkham and seconded by Veronica Reis

THAT the minutes of the YCPIC Meeting held on January 19 2015, be approved.

-MOTION CARRIED-

4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion by Gail Cheung and seconded by Diane Scaini

THAT the agenda of the YCPIC meeting held on March 9, 2015, be approved with adding an item for open forum. All in favor & agenda approved.

-MOTION CARRIED-

5. **CHAIR'S REPORT/UPDATES**

Jan de Souza, Chair of YCPIC, provided updates on the following:

YCPIC Current Members

2015-2016 Membership confirmation forms due back March 6, 2015. If you have not completed the form, please fill it out and return it to me the end of the meeting.

YCPIC New Members

Application forms are due on or before Wednesday, April 1, 2015.

Application forms are available on our YCDSB website.

Encourage parents on your CSC to apply.

Successful candidates will be contacted mid May 2015.

2015-2016 PRO Grant Applications

On March 3, 2015, Ministry of Education announced that applications are now being accepted for Parents Reaching- Out Grants (PRO Grants).

There are two types of PRO Grants:

Grants for school councils.

Grants for regional/provincial projects

More information is available at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/reaching.html>

Last day to apply is Tuesday, May 19, 2015.

YCPIC with the help of Olga Ferro, Principal, will conduct a workshop to assist school councils in submitting their PRO Grant applications every year and this year we will need to do the same in April, 2015. Once date is set we will let everyone on YCPIC know, so you can come to assist if you can (action item for Chair de Souza).

Trustee Carol Cotton's request to Director Preston is to ensure that the email regarding the PRO grant deadline and related info could go out to all system school council chairs and principals this week (action item for Director Preston).

Spring Newsletter

Will go out in in March 2015.

Thank you to Donna Psaila for the article and Gail Cheung for being our editor.

Ministry of Education's 6th Annual PIC Symposium in Toronto

April 24th and 25th, 2015

It brings together more than 200 dedicated and committed parents and ministry staff from across the province to discuss the importance of parent engagement to support student achievement and well-being in Ontario's education system.

The 6th *Annual PIC Symposium* will take place on the afternoon and evening of Friday, April 24th, 2015, and all day on Saturday, April 25th, 2015, at 900 Bay Street, Toronto.

Registration will begin at 12: p.m. on Friday, April 24th.

There will be displays of interest to PIC members and an opportunity to meet with Ministry staff.

The formal afternoon program will begin at 1 p.m.

There will be a dinner followed by an evening program.

On Saturday, there will be workshops, plenary sessions and keynote presentations that will provide participants with information, strategies, resources as well as opportunities to meet with ministry officials, and network with colleagues from across Ontario.

The Saturday program will begin at 8:30 a.m. and end at 3 p.m. to facilitate travel.

Registration deadline is on Friday, April 10th, 2015.

Every year the PIC Chair and Vice-Chair attend, this year we are trying to see if we can give the opportunity to other members on YCPIC to experience the symposium.

The Mental Health Steering Committee update (on behalf of Paula Bandi)
Meeting held on December 4th, 2014.

There were 2 guest speakers:

- 1) Dr. Kenneth Fung-Psychiatrist and Associate Professor at U of T. -spoke about ***Resiliency & Vitality***.
 - Discussed how we need to get away from labeling people by their roles.
 - Our sense of self is defined by labels, roles and titles in society, but we need to change that and be more flexible.
 - Flexibility is extremely important in the classroom.
- 2) Jacquie Brown- an Implementation Specialist spoke about the need for all Board personnel to be aware of mental health issues.
 - Teachers will be provided with the tools to help them be aware of mental health issues & will have resource personnel available to assist them when needed.
 - She expressed the need for the Board's Strategic Multi-Year Plan to include the Board's mental health strategy and what it does.

Dr. Giuliana then did an update on the Mental Health Steering Committee activities.

They have created a created a ***Suicide Awareness Protocol, Response Plan & Quick Reference Guide***.

A symposium on mental health is being planned for the students for this spring. Staff will be focusing on mental health on the P.A. day in March 2015.

Dr. Giuliana has put together a video that will be shown to all staff, about mental health.

Many different members from the community speak in the video, the Board Psychologist

Dr. Shrine Persaud; students and Paula Bandi and others.

Paula Bandi did a part on: what parents' expectations are from the Board in the area of mental health.

Paula stated that:

- “Parents expect the staff, administration and the Board to be partners with them. Not only for academics, but for the overall health & well-being of all children.”
- “Parents expect that the ***Charter of Rights for Students on Mental Health & Well-being*** be followed and respected at all times.”
- “Given these expectations, parents hope that the school system will be able to provide resources; timely referrals for specialized professional treatment; support and direction.”
- “Parents look to the school system as their partner for the educating, mentoring and raising of healthy and happy successful children.”

The next Mental Health Steering Committee meeting is being planned for May 2015.

6. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT/UPDATES**

Good evening everyone.

Lenton Season

The Lenton Season has begun - this is a season of penance and reflection, which prepares us for Christ's Resurrection on Easter Sunday. All of schools marked the beginning of the Lenten Season with Ash Wednesday services. This was wonderful opportunity for our students and staff to take some time for reflection, and for our youngest students to learn about Jesus Christ -- his suffering and his sacrifice, his death and resurrection.

YCPIC How Can I Help My Child Succeed Brochure

Tonight we are sharing with you an updated version of the YCPIC elementary brochure, “How Can I Help My Child Succeed: Parents as Partners.” Over 3,600 new YCDSB parents will receive a copy of this brochure as part of the Welcome to Kindergarten Package given to parents during the “First Impressions” Kindergarten Meetings, scheduled across the Board this May. A list of resources, as well as tips has been updated, and we included our Board's new Mission and Vision on the brochure. We will be revising the Secondary Brochure later this spring.

HPE Curriculum

As you may be aware, on February 23, 2015, the Ministry of Education released a revised curriculum for Health and Physical Education. The revised curriculum contains new material related to important issues such as healthy relationships, consent, mental health, and online safety, and is more inclusive of Ontario's diverse population. It promotes the healthy development – physical, social, emotional, and cognitive -- of

all students, and builds the skills and knowledge to lead and promote healthy, active lives now and in the future. Schools and parents play critical and complementary roles in supporting all students learning, including learning about human development and sexual health. This revised Health and Physical Education curriculum will be delivered in all classrooms across the province commencing September 2015.

The Catholic education community of Ontario is currently working together to produce resources that will support our Catholic teachers, ensure that the curriculum delivered in our classrooms is consistent with our Catholic teachings, and appropriate within the context of a Catholic classroom. The Institute for Catholic Education, our partner in education, will coordinate this work. As a Catholic school community, we are committed to offering a holistic curriculum that is shaped by a Catholic world-view, and is faithful to the tradition and teachings of the Church.

We created a section on our Board website that includes a letter for elementary parents, secondary parents, a Q&A document, a document with key messages as well as a link to the Family Life and Religious Education Curriculum. As we receive additional information and resources regarding the revised curriculum, we will post this information to this section of our website. The information can be found on the homepage of the Board website under “Board News.”

Edtech Conference - Saturday, March 7th, 2015 - St. Augustine CHS

This past Saturday, our Curriculum and IT Departments hosted our second annual “Ed-Tech Saturday” at St. Augustine. This was a one-day seminar for all educators in the YCDSB and included several presenters from our own Board. Teachers, administration and students shared their experiences with technology in the classroom. Sessions on D2L, Advanced Twitter for teachers, Google Apps for Education, QR Codes, the flipped classroom and Minecraft EDU, based on the popular game Minecraft, were among some of the featured workshop sessions. The day was very well organized and the teacher feedback was very positive. Our Board’s own Twitter page was buzzing with activity and feedback.

Among the feedback:

- *Today proved, without a doubt, @YCDSB has made great gains in EdTech over the last few years. So excited for what's still to come #ycdsb21c.*
- *Packed house at @ycdsb EdTech Saturday. So proud to be among so many motivated teachers and administrators.*
- *Great day today with the passionate educators @ycdsb. Exciting times in #education #ycdsb21c.*

Chief-for-a-Day Contest

This morning, I attended the York Regional Police Headquarters to hear 4 of our YCDSB finalists recite their essay submissions for *Chief for a Day*. Each year, the York Regional

Police Appreciation Dinner Committee sponsors an essay contest based on policing in partnership with the York Region Boards of Education. The Chief for a Day is outfitted with a specially made uniform, given a tour of police facilities and units across the region and presents the winning essay to the more than one thousand guests at the annual YRP Appreciation dinner. This year's dinner will take place on May 12th at the Paramount Event Venue in Vaughan. We received some wonderful essay submissions by our grade 5 students this year, and we are very proud of all of our participants.

ShareLife Week

The York Catholic District School Board proclaims March 23- 27, 2015, ShareLife Week. YCDSB schools are committed to participating fully in ShareLife every year. Staff and students are busy throughout the week preparing activities and fundraisers in support of ShareLife.

ShareLife is the charitable arm of the Archdiocese of Toronto, supporting Catholic Agencies in 42 municipalities and 225 parishes, in 20 languages. ShareLife agencies help more than 40,000 children and young people every year, offering counselling, guidance and community education. When necessary, they can also offer meals and shelter in troubled times.

Student Achievement

I would like to congratulate one of our YCDSB students on a very special achievement... Nicole Flanagan, a Grade 12 student at Our Lady of the Lake Catholic College School in Keswick received the Loran Scholarship in the amount of \$100,000! The Loran Scholarship identifies and supports exemplary young Canadians who demonstrate character, service and leadership. Founded in 1988, the Loran Scholars Foundation was the first national organization in Canada to grant scholarships based on a mix of academic achievement, extracurricular activity and leadership potential.

AP Honour Roll

More achievement news...

I am pleased to announce that our board has made the 5th Annual Advanced Placement (AP) District honour roll. Our board and Waterloo Catholic School Board are the only boards in Ontario who have successfully achieved this recognition. Inclusion on the 5th Annual AP District Honour Roll is based on the examination of three years of AP data. Congratulations to our students! We are very proud of their achievements and we are honoured to receive this recognition.

Catholic Education Week and Province-wide Mass May 7th, 2015

May 3rd to 8th marks Catholic Education Week in the province of Ontario. This year's theme for Catholic Education Week is *Exploring Paths of Joy*.

As part of the Catholic Education Week celebrations for 2015, a province-wide Student Mass will be held on Thursday, May 7th, in all Catholic high schools across Ontario. This

event, organized by our Catholic Student Trustees is a celebration of youth leadership in Catholic education and our Board is very proud to support this initiative in our high schools. A special thank you to our Student Trustees Joe McLeod and Natasha Iaboni for all of their coordinating efforts.

Mental Health Symposium

The Board's first-ever student Mental Health Symposium will take place on March 30th, here at the CEC. A number of speakers have been secured to address various topics including reducing stigma, and building resiliency. Students will gain valuable information that they can take back to their schools to share with their school communities. As part of the event-day festivities, a slogan contest will be introduced, inviting all secondary students to submit a slogan to support the Board's Mental Health initiative. The winner(s) will receive a \$250 Gift Card to the Apple Store, and the slogan will be used on all promotional materials related to our work on Mental Health and Addiction.

March Break

In just a couple of days, we will begin the March Break, and I would like to take this opportunity to wish all of our students and families a well-deserved, fun-filled and safe break. We look forward to welcoming our students and staff back on March 23rd.

Thank you.

7. OAPCE UPDATE

A detail update wasn't provided as neither Maurizio Ruberto nor Christine Melick was present at the meeting.

OAPCE will have their 76th annual conference in Penbrooke, Ottawa in May 22-23. Register directly onto OAPCE's website to receive latest updates and newsletters via email.

8. OTHER ITEMS:

Clarification regarding board and school policies:

A clarification was requested re the policy on volunteers in the school. Specifically, volunteers by high school students to returning to their elementary school to do volunteer work and encourage elementary students to go to high school. Topic will be discussed off-table with the board administration and committee member to provide details and more clarity.

Knights of Columbus held their annual Basketball free throw.

141 kids participated.

Event was held at Villanova.

The tournament was won by St. Raphael the Archangel CES.

St. Augustine CHS in Markham in collaboration with their parent engagement committee will be holding a speaker panel session entitled “extraordinary careers and life moments”.

Four different career professionals will speak to parents and students.

An invite was extended to everyone that would like to attend.

The session will be held on April 13th, 2015, at 7pm.

9. **NEXT MEETING DATE**

Monday, June 8, 2015, at 7 p.m.

10. **ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.