YORK CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
MINUTES
of the Regular Board Meeting

Tuesday, September 30, 2025

PRESENT:

Members:	In Person:	F. Alexander, C. Cotton (left at 10:00 pm), E. Crowe, J. DiMeo, A. Grella, M. Iafrate, T. McNicol, A. Saggese, J. Wigston Student Trustees S. Cuesta, A. Shenouda
	Virtual:	M. Barbieri
Administration:	In Person:	J. De Faveri, J. Sarna, R. Antunes, A. Arcadi, M. Brosens, J. Chiutsi, G. De Girolamo, A. Driscoll, K. Elgharbawy, N. Galatianos, T. Laliberte, C. McNeil, S. Morrow, L. Paonessa, L. Sawicky, S. Wright
	Virtual:	A. Iafrate
Absent with Notice:	All Present	
Recording Officer:	S. Greco	
Presiding:	E. Crowe, Chair of the Board	

2025:476 **OPENING PRAYER AND CALL TO ORDER**

Chair of the Board, Elizabeth Crowe, welcomed everyone to the Regular Board meeting at 7:31pm and welcomed K-12 System Support Consultants, Ashley Gatto and Joanna Kurtz, to lead the prayer service followed by the Land Acknowledgement.

Chair Crowe acknowledged the importance of Truth and Reconciliation and expressed gratitude to the Board of Trustees for their continued efforts in expanding the system and for approving new positions that reflect a strong and ongoing commitment to the principles of Truth and Reconciliation.

2025:477 **ROLL CALL:** All Trustees Present.

2025:478 **APPROVAL OF NEW MATERIAL:**

14a Delegation: Extended Day Language Program
14b Delegation: Student Census Advisory Committee
16a Change to Page 11
16d Change to Page 42 Recommendation
16h Receipt of Report No. 2026: 01 Audit Committee
18i, Update on eScribe - Moved from CTW Part A
18j Community Use of Schools - Ministry Grant Expenditures - Moved from CTW Part A
18k Accessibility Funding and Implementation Plan Moved from CTW Part A

MOTION: Grella/Alexander

THAT the new material be approved as presented.

- MOTION CARRIED -

2025:479 **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Move 18a - TRUSTEE MOTION: Motion to Request a Report on Expanding International Language Extended Day Program - from Info to Discussion
16e - Receipt of Report 2025:08 SEAC Report - from Chair Grella

MOTION: Saggese/Wigston

THAT the agenda be approved as amended.

– MOTION CARRIED –

2025:480 DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST FOR CURRENT MEETING: NIL

2025:481 DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST FOR PREVIOUS MEETING: NIL

2025:482 a) APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:
Regular Board Meeting of August 26, 2025

MOTION: Iafrate/Saggese
THAT the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of August 26, 2025, be approved as presented.
– MOTION CARRIED –

2025:483 BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: NIL

2025:484 CHAIR'S REPORT / UPDATE / INSPIRATIONAL MESSAGES:
Elizabeth Crowe, Chair of the Board, included her Chair's Report as part of the September 30, 2025 Regular Board Agenda. Topics included: Cardinal Leo to Guide the Global Clergy, MYFRP Updates, St. Robert CHS Milestone 50th Anniversary, Board Retirement Evening, OCSTA Fall Central Ontario Regional Meeting, Call for YCPIC Members, Cross-Country Meets.

a) Commissioning of Senior Administration
Chair of the Board, Elizabeth Crowe and Vice-Chair Maria Iafrate, participated in a ceremonial swearing in/pledge of service ceremony with Nicholas Galatianos, Superintendent of Education. A candle and a Bible to commemorate the occasion was provided.

2025:485 OCSTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS UPDATE:
Trustee Jennifer Wigston OCSTA Regional Director, representing York Catholic District School Board, provided her report as part of the September 30, 2025 Regular Board Agenda. Topics included: OCSTA Regional Meeting, Supporting Catholic School Trustees, OCSTA Short Video Contest for Students, OCSTA Website.

2025:486 DIRECTOR'S REPORT/ UPDATE:
Director of Education, J. De Faveri, provided his Director's Report in the September 30, 2025 Regular Board Agenda package. Topics included: Return to School, September 26 PA Day, Terry Fox Run, Walks and Rolls, Secondary Open House Dates.

2025:487 STUDENT TRUSTEES' REPORT:
Student Trustees Sabine Cuesta and Abby Shenouda provided their Student Trustee Report to Board in the September 30, 2025 Regular Board Agenda package. Topics included: Back to School, Terry Fox Run, YSCPC Executive Meeting, Grade 9 Orientation Trips, National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

2025:488 RECOGNITIONS / OUTSIDE PRESENTATIONS:
a) 2025 Pan American U11 Championship for Table Tennis
L. Paonessa, Superintendent of Education acknowledged C. Zhang, Gr 6 student from St. Marguerite d'Youvlle CES for representing Canada at the 2025 Pan American U11 and U13 Table Tennis Championships in Antigua, Guatemala.

b) Conservation Authority Flood and Education Programs
Darryl Gray, Director of Education & Training at the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), provided an overview of TRCA's efforts to conserve, restore, and manage the region's natural environment through programs that balance human, environmental, and economic needs that comprises 9 watersheds and the Lake Ontario shoreline. TRCA was established under the Conservation Authorities Act, mandated to prevent, eliminate, or reduce the risk to life and property from natural hazards including flood hazards and erosion hazards, watershed-based jurisdiction. TRCA is one of 36 conservation authorities in Ontario. Mr. Gray also shared an overview of the GTA Outdoor Education Centres, highlighting their importance in connecting students and communities to nature through experiential, curriculum-linked learning.

The Board of Trustees thanked Mr. Gray for his informative presentation. Chair Crowe acknowledged that access to transportation is often a barrier to participation and suggested that this may be an area to address within the Board's equity plan. Chair Crowe also noted that the YCDSB is looking forward to expanding its participation in TRCA programs.

2025:489 DELEGATIONS: ***(Chair Crowe read an introductory statement)***

a) Extended Day Language Program

Laura De Francesco presented her delegation to initiate and support the request for the Extended Italian Day Program at Pope Francis CES.

b) Student Census Advisory Committees

Paolo Benedicti presented his delegation regarding an incomplete list of Student Advisory Committees.

RECESS at 8:20 PM to 8:30 PM

Chair Crowe reiterated that the opinions expressed were those of the speaker and do not reflect YCDSB. Both the Chair of the Board and the Director made the decision to allow the delegation and everyone to present. Chair Crowe commented, *"this Board recognizes that equity is not equality. We are striving to ensure all students are recognized as children of God. Especially today, on Truth & Reconciliation Day, we need to address systemic barriers from historical groups that have felt excluded".* Chair Crowe stated that the 2025-2026 Inviting and Inclusive Schools Year Two Implementation Plan will be an Info Item later on the Board agenda. This work aligns with the Board's Multi-Year Strategic Plan and the equity goal.

Director De Faveri reminded those viewing and those present that, *"this Board made a strategic commitment to allow every student and staff to feel part of this School Board. It was a strategic move when we organized our Senior Team with a specific portfolio to guide with me and to look at every single person as brother and sister. The work we have done over the past year has moved us along that path. We do not want any distraction to be in our way. I certainly hope that the comments aired prior, are personal beliefs and don't reflect the Board of Trustees and Senior Staff who work together".*

2025:490 JOURNEY TOWARDS OUR VISION: NIL

2025:491 ACTION ITEM(S) (including Committee Reports)

a) APPROVAL OF REPORT NO. 2025:23 SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Vice-Chair Maria Iafrate presented, for approval, Report No. 2025:23 of the Special Committee of the Whole private session held on September 23, 2025.

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

(ii) CLASSIFIED:

<u>MOTION: Iafrate/DiMeo</u>

THAT the confidential action items from the Private Session held September 23, 2025, be approved as presented.

– MOTION CARRIED –

b) 2025-26 CAPITAL PRIORITIES PROGRAM (MINISTRY OF EDUCATION CALL FOR PROJECTS)

K. Elgharbawy, Superintendent of Facilities Services and Plant provided information regarding the Ministry's 2025-26 Capital Priorities Program, and sought direction from the Board regarding the 2025-26 submission of rebuilding St. Robert CHS.

Trustee Cotton asked that the minutes noted, *"that at a time when board budgets and expenses are certainly accepted as what we do in governance, in terms of building schools to provide spaces for students to learn, we are once again finding ourselves restricted to use cost escalations* *in our estimates. This is a very unrealistic expectation to put on school boards who are trying to be fiscally responsible. Boards are expected and encouraged to consult with architects as part of the process. There are costs involved, and those costs are not funded unless the project is approved".*

Chair Crowe expressed her concerns, specifically for the rebuilding of St. Robert CHS, whereby that community has worked very hard to advocate to rebuild their school. As a Board, being fiscally responsible and committed to limiting the deficit, how can any Board hire an architect to build a school and not spend that money on a gamble?

MOTION: Cotton/Wigston
THAT the Board authorize Administration to submit a Capital Priority request for a St. Robert Replacement School.

- MOTION CARRIED -

c) CHANGES TO OPERATIONAL BY-LAW NO. 1

E. Crowe, Chair of the Board shared changes to the Operational By-Law No. 1 that included, Legislative changes requiring Trustees to be physically present, moving a clause that was in the wrong section, changes to committee language to align with legislation and Terms of Reference and Changes to job titles.

MOTION: McNicol/Grella
THAT changes to Board By-Laws 3.1.2.2; 3.1.2.3; 3.1.2.4; 3.1.17; 4.1; 4.1.1; 4.1.2; 4.1.3; 4.1.4; 4.1.5; 4.1.6; 4.1.7; 4.1.14; 4.1.7.4; 4.2; 4.3; 4.3.1; 4.3.1.1; 4.3.1.2; 4.3.1.3; 4.3.1.4; 4.3.2; 4.3.2.1; 4.3.2.2; 4.3.2.3; 4.3.2.4; 4.3.3; 4.3.4; 4.3.5; 4.3.5.1; 4.3.5.2; 4.3.6; 4.3.7; 4.3.8; 4.3.9; 4.3.10; 4.3.11; 4.4; 4.4.1; 4.4.2; 4.4.3; 4.4.4; 4.5; 4.5.1 (b) (c); 4.5.2; 4.5.3; 4.5.4; 4.5.5; 7.1; 11.6; 12.1 be approved as presented at the September 30, 2025 Board Meeting.

- MOTION CARRIED -

d) RECEIPT OF REPORT NO. 2025:08 SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Committee Chair, A. Grella, presented for receipt, Report No. 2025:08 of the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting held on September 25, 2025.

MOTION: Grella/DiMeo
THAT Report No. 2025:08 of the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting held on September 25, 2025, be received as presented.

– MOTION CARRIED –

e) RECEIPT OF REPORT NO. 2025:05 YORK CATHOLIC PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

Committee Member E. Crowe, presented for receipt, Report No. 2025:05 of the York Catholic Parent Involvement Committee meeting held on September 22, 2025.

MOTION: Crowe/Wigston
THAT Report No. 2025:05 of the York Catholic Parent Involvement Committee meeting held on September 22, 2025, be received as presented.

– MOTION CARRIED –

Chair Crowe noted that a call for applications was sent to Catholic School Council members regarding the current openings on YCPIC. As well, efforts are underway to recruit two Community Members to join the committee.

f) 2025-26 ANNUAL AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

C. McNeil, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer of the Board shared reports summarizing the Audit Committee-related activities for 2024-25.

MOTION: Cotton/DiMeo
THAT the Board of Trustees receives the 2024-25 Annual Audit Committee Report to the Ministry of Education and the Board of Trustees.

- MOTION CARRIED -

g) RECEIPT OF REPORT NO. 2026:01 AUDIT COMMITTEE
Committee Chair, C. Cotton, presented for receipt, Report No. 2026:01 of the Audit Committee meeting held on September 29, 2025.

MOTION: Cotton/DiMeo
THAT Report No. 2026:01 of the Audit Committee meeting held on September 29, 2025, be received as presented.

– MOTION CARRIED –

2025:492 DISCUSSION ITEM(S):

a) TRUSTEE MOTION: MOTION TO REQUEST A REPORT ON EXPANDING INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM (A. Saggese)

Whereas *the York Catholic District School Board (YCDSB) has supported International Languages programming since the early 1980s'*
Whereas *the International Language Elementary (ILE) Extended Day Italian program provides students in Grades 1-8 with the opportunity to learn Italian language and culture during the instructional day;*
Whereas *in 2024, 5,882 students participated in ILE across 21 elementary schools within the YCDSB;*
Whereas *the Ministry of Education recognizes ILE as an official program, with the Extended Day delivery model shown to have higher participation rates than Saturday programming due to scheduling conflicts with extracurricular activities;*
Whereas *alternate funding sources have been received to help subsidize costs not fully covered by the Ministry's Heritage Fund for Italian Extended day model;*
Whereas *several families and school councils within YCDSB have requested the Extended Day Italian program be made available in their schools.*

LET IT BE RESOLVED
THAT *staff develop and present to the Board a process for determining school community interest in offering International Extended Day Italian programs, prioritizing schools where demand has been expressed, and report back with recommendations for implementation.*

Trustee Saggese presented her motion emphasizing the role of Trustees in advocating for constituents and provided a background on the funding history of the International Extended Day (ILE) program.

Alongside Trustee Iafrate, she explained that Trustees had been asked to explore alternative funding to sustain the program and, in their capacity as representatives of YCDSB-ItaliaLinguaCultura, successfully applied for funding from MAECI (the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and community partners.

Trustee Alexander voiced support for the program, highlighting its success, while Trustee Cotton echoed these sentiments, she requested more information with respect to a program expansion to move schools. Namely: a detailed financial report outlining the program's costs, timelines for staffing and transportation decisions, the receipt of funds from YCDSB-Italia-LinguaCultura, fiscal status, and a timeline for informing parents about the program's expansion into a new school.

Trustee Iafrate clarified that YCDSB-ItaliaLinguaCultura must apply for funding annually to the Italian Government, with the 2025–26 application already submitted by the October 15 deadline.

Trustee Grella inquired about the percentage of parental agreement required to open or close the program at a school and questioned whether the same threshold would apply when adding the program to other schools. She also expressed concern over the stability of the funding and whether the program could continue under different governance, reiterating her position that the ILE program must remain cost-neutral.

Trustee Wigston emphasized the importance of having financial reports in hand before making any decisions and raised concerns about potential impacts on itinerant teacher scheduling and related costs. She requested written confirmation of guaranteed funding and the date it would be confirmed.

Trustee Crowe sought clarification on whether a Ministry-funded program could charge fees and questioned if other languages such as Cantonese or Mandarin could be offered under similar external funding models, provided there is an external revenue source. Trustee Saggese agreed to amend her Motion to narrow expansion down to the Italian language at this time.

Trustee Crowe asked that the financials include the cost of an extra 0.5 hour for the lunch-time supervisor in the FDK classes of schools providing the extended day program. This cost should be included in the cost of the existing proposal as well as any expansion. She questions if it would be more cost effective if the program were offered in FDK. Trustee Saggese said that the Italian Government would be supportive of increasing financial support if the program was offered in FDK.

Trustee Iafrate concluded by calling the program a positive and promising initiative and expressed anticipation for the forthcoming staff report.

Trustees were invited to submit further questions to C. McNeil, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer of the Board.

This Motion will be an Action Item on the October 28, 2025 Regular Board Agenda.

2025:493 **INFORMATION ITEM(S):**

a) Trial of a Virtual Grade 8 Open House - St. Theresa of Lisieux CHS

J. Chiutsi, Superintendent of Education, presented a report regarding a trial initiative by St. Theresa of Lisieux Catholic High School to host a Grade 8 Virtual Open House in November 2025. The Board of Trustees expressed concerns, stating that a virtual Open House does not effectively engage students and is not aligned with how students interact or connect. Trustees emphasized the importance of continuing efforts to attract students from outside the Board to maintain enrollment numbers. As a result, the initiative will only be held at St. Theresa of Lisieux CHS.

b) Multi-Year Financial Recovery Plan (MYFRP) Update

C. McNeil, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer of the Board shared a monthly update to the Board. The report presented the latest year-end estimates for 2024-25.

c) 2025-26 Inviting and Inclusive Schools Year Two Implementation Plan

S. Wright, Superintendent of Inviting and Inclusive Schools shared a summary of work done thus far from the Office of Inviting and Inclusive Schools. The Board of Trustees were pleased with all the networking done by both Superintendents of Education, Joel Chiutsi and Siobhan Wright.

d) Ministry Enrolment Audits (Our Lady Queen of the World CA, St. Augustine CHS, St. Luke Catholic Learning Centre)

G. De Girolamo, Coordinating Manager of Planning & Operations provided a report that summarized the Ministry audits at St. Augustine CHS, Our Lady Queen of the World CA and St. Luke CLC. The Board will enhance staff training, introduce internal enrolment audits and adjust St. Luke's schedules to meet Ministry requirements.

e) Relocation of Students from St. Theresa of Lisieux CHS

G. De Girolamo, Coordinating Manager of Planning & Operations provided an update on the feasibility of relocation gFather Henri Nouwen CES students to a nearby school to accommodate the relocation of Grade 9 students from St. Theresa of Lisieux CHS. The proposed accommodation option, cannot be considered at this time.

f) Transportation Audit Report Questions (PIP)
J. Powers, Superintendent of Exceptional Learners and G. De Girolamo, Coordinating Manager of Planning & Operations provided information in response to questions that arose from the RIAT - Transportation Audit Report at the May 20, 2025 Audit (Public) Committee meeting.

g) October 2025 Calendar
The October 2025 calendar was provided with no changes.

h) Update on eScribe
S. Morrow, Chief Information Officer, provided a summary of the progress made in implementing eScribe. During the discussion, clarification was requested regarding the cost of licenses in relation to the number of users — specifically, whether reducing the number of users would result in a cost reduction. Trustees raised concerns in light of recent Ministry comments about potential changes to Trustee governance. These changes could impact the role of Trustees, including the possibility that they may no longer be responsible for approving the budget. As a result, there may be fewer committee meetings required.

Questions were raised about the Board's contractual commitment to eScribe — whether there is a multi-year agreement (e.g., five years), and if staff can discontinue use before the term ends. It was also noted that edits made in eScribe cannot currently be displayed in colour; instead, they are marked with an asterisk (*). Staff were asked to contact eScribe to explore the possibility of introducing colour-coded changes in the software.

This item will be brought back as an Information Item at the Corporate Services Meeting on October 21, 2025.

i) Community Use of Schools - Ministry Grant Expenditures
K. Elgharbawy, Superintendent of Facilities Services and Plant provided information on how the Ministry Community Use of Schools (CUS) grant was utilized in 2024-25 and presented the planned subsidy application for 2025-26.

j) Accessibility Funding and Implementation Plan
K. Elgharbawy, Superintendent of Facilities Services and Plant provided information on the 2025-26 Accessibility Renewal funding by the Ministry of Education.

RECESS AT 9:58 PM TO RECONVENE THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

RECONVENE THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING AT 10:47 PM

APPROVAL OF REPORT NO. 2025:24 COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
Vice-Chair Maria Iafrate presented, for approval, Report No. 2025:24 of the Committee of the Whole private session held on September 30, 2025.

(i) DECLASSIFIED (Action Items for Approval):
MOTION: Wigston/Alexander
THAT the Board approve Options 1a - Phased in Classification D3 Rates (60%, 80%, 100%) with 2% annual escalator;
THAT the Board authorize staff to proceed with the parameters of the chosen option and execute agreements with both St. Andre Bessette Catholic Parish and Blessed Fredrick Ozanam Catholic Parish for a five-year term ending August 31, 2030.

(ii) CLASSIFIED:
MOTION: Iafrate/Wigston
THAT the confidential action items from the Private Session held September 30, 2025, be approved as presented.

– MOTION CARRIED –

2025:494 NOTICES OF MOTION:

a) TRUSTEE MOTION: LEGAL COSTS (T. McNicol)

Whereas *the Board needs to be transparent with costs regarding:*
- Gillian Tuck, Bruce Best, Jennifer MacKenzie, McCarthy Tretrault, Michael Maynard the Integrity Commissioner, BLG, the Judicial Review
Covering all legal fees with one grand total;
Whereas *the Catholic ratepayers of York Region are demanding this information.*

LET IT BE RESOLVED
THAT *the YCDSB release the total cost spent on all these investigations to be accountable to the Catholic ratepayers.*

This Motion will be a Discussion Item on the October 28, 2025 Regular Board agenda.

2025:495 FUTURE AGENDA ITEM(S) / REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

2025:496 PRAYER TO ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL

2025:497 ADJOURNMENT – 10:50 pm
ON MOTION: Grella/Saggese and CARRIED

Secretary of the Board **Chair of the Board**