



NIAGARA CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

MINUTES OF THE SAINT MICHAEL CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING

February 26, 2025
SAINT MICHAEL CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Saint Michael Catholic School Council, held on February 26, 2025 at

6:00 pm. The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm by Mary Karagiannis.

A. ROUTINE MATTERS

1. Opening Prayer and Land Acknowledgement

Led by Mrs. Brannigan.

2. Roll Call

CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP		Present	Excused	Absent
Principal/Vice-Principal	Lou Stranges (P) Monique Mastroianni (VP)	*	*	
Secretary	Gabriella Griffiths	*		
Chair	Mary Karagiannis	*		
Co-Chair(s)	Nancy Gauthier		*	
Teacher Representative	Mark Casburn	*		
Non-Teaching Representative	Dahlia Brannigan	*		
Student Representative	Paulina Labarta Immanuel Emaryeo	* *		
Parish Representative	Anna Racine	*		
OAPCE Representative	Stephanie Wybrew	*		
PARENT/GUARDIAN MEMBERS				
Donna Lucisano			*	
Aaron Dobbie		*		
Rebekah Donovan		*		
Peter Plaschka				*
Nicole Jones				*
Laura Thomas		*		
Antoinette Bordin		*		
Feng Shi				*
Miya Huang				*
Judy Wambulwa				*
Charles Wambulwa				*

Veronica Lambarta	*		
Pedro Lambarta	*		
Dr. Ese Oriaifo			*
Denise Porter			*
Jeremy Porter			*

3. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by Gabriella Griffiths

Seconded by Laura Thomas

THAT the Saint Michael Catholic School Council approve the Agenda of the Saint Michael Catholic High School Catholic School Council Meeting of February 26, 2025.

CARRIED

4. Disclosure of Conflict Interest

No disclosures of conflict of interest were declared with any items on the agenda.

5. Approval of Minutes

Moved by Laura Thomas

Seconded by Antoinette Bordin

THAT Saint Michael Catholic High School Catholic School Council approve the Minutes of the Saint Michael Catholic High School Catholic School Council Meeting of Wednesday, November 27, 2024 as presented.

CARRIED

B. PRESENTATIONS (Dahlia Brannigan)

Chaplain's Report

- We've been trying for some time to have a priest celebrate Mass with us. On the last Wednesday of each month we have an open invitation to all staff and students to gather from 7:30 to 8:00 for Mass. Today was our first and a student volunteered to be a reader and did a fantastic job.
- Ash Wednesday Prayer Service will be held next Friday on a P2 assembly schedule. Two Masses back to back to accommodate our whole school community
- A Chaplain's Corner has been created which offers resources to help our school community while on their faith journey. It has ways to celebrate our faith, links to daily devotions, inspirational music and news of upcoming faith events. It can be accessed through our student and staff NCVLE and on posters with a QR code in P1 classes, Chaplain's Office and Student Services.
- Link - <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1OhjAsYJtmMNUApBbVUESpe-tD1dZAdNkmDaZ0Mw5KVQ/edit?tab=t.0>

Black History Month Activities 2024 - 2025

- Chaplain has resources compiled for the staff to use as needed
- Each morning music featuring mostly black Canadian content. Morning and afternoon prayers focused on black resilience, acceptance and unity for all peoples.
- Mini bio of blacks who have made a difference locally, nationally and in North America

- In person dance workshop by Dance and Culture - teaching a dance from the African diaspora during both lunch periods. (Thomas Cioffi)
- We created "Tree Of Unity" with the help of our art students and Chaplain's Crew based on the quote by Marcus Garvey "a people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots." Paper leaves were given to Period 1 students to place their thoughts on black individuals that they admire or have been inspired by, words of kindness and thoughts of unity among all people.
- The tree has just under 2000 leaves with beautiful messages showing the unity and kindness that exists within our school community.
- Our Staff have submitted 3 songs that will be played each morning and the students must try to match the list to the person who submitted it. The student who has the most correct answers wins a prize at the end of the week.
- Thursday the pictures of black individuals and saints to be displayed with their bio's and contributions to society and on Friday the Kids Helping Kids Club will run a Kahoot during both lunches with questions from information given during the week. The winner will receive a small prize.
- Key Club and Chaplain's Crew will be selling cookies. Proceeds to go to the Future Black Female Organization located in St. Catharines. This organization creates access across Canada and the globe to social, political and economic opportunities for Black girls and young women (16-22 years)

C. POLICIES FOR VETTING-FEEDBACK None to report.

D. REPORTS

Student Report (Paulina Labarta and Immanuel Emaryeo)

Christmas events went very well. MRC Christmas countdown: Each day of December we gave away a free gift to MRC members (Tim's, pizza); games and activities (Hot Chocolate Bar, musical chairs); annual Christmas Assembly included student band and teacher band, student performances and fun competitions. Recently purchased a Foosball table for lunchtime.

Open House was held on January 15th. Future Mustangs given glimpse of student life, courses and clubs.

Valentine's Day Match-o-matics survey where students could find a compatible friend or crush; Crush for your crush sales.

April will have Student Council elections for 2025/2026. Leadership Symposium where council members get to talk to other councils from other schools, participate in activities, listen to speakers and have Student Senate election.

May will include Colour Wars, friendly competitions, dress in colours, for points. Something different this year, dress up to represent different generations: grade 9s, children; 10s, teens; 11s, adults; 12s, senior citizens.

June will include STM Stampede: food trucks, band, activities.

NCPIC Report (Laura Thomas)

- Met on January 9th, 2025
- Excitement about Open Houses
- Presentation from SEAC committee. Guest speaker was Michel Jacques. NCDSB graduate, author, former Special Olympics athlete, overcame several learning challenges and diagnosed with autism. He is now a well respected speaker.
- Watched videos submitted for Pilgrims of Hope competition. St. Mary's Elementary and Notre Dame Secondary were winners.
- Next meeting is March 5th.

Parish Report (Anna Racine)

- We had a Valentine's Dinner Dance last weekend, which was sold out!
- End of March there will be St. Joseph/St. Patrick dinner
- The next youth event is a games night being held on Friday night (includes 25-30 members)
- 2025 is Jubilee Year-having special evangelization series Wednesday nights over lent; listen to podcast and discussion groups afterwards
- St. Thomas More had to purchase a new furnace

Staff Report (Mark Casburn)

Athletics

- Spring sports are getting underway: Soccer, Badminton and Flag Football have started.
- Winter Sports are wrapping up. Some highlights include:
- Junior and Senior Boys basketball NCAA Semi Finalists
- Junior Girls volleyball NCAA Finalists
- Senior Girls volleyball NCAA Semi Finalists
- Varsity Girls Hockey and Varsity Boys Hockey in playoffs
- Curling NCAA champs
- Cheerleading team ongoing
- Swimming OFSAA to take place

Current/ongoing Clubs/Activities

- School Reach tournaments finishing up
- Technovation Girls Club continue to meet
- Grad Photos currently taking place
- Mock Trial Team
- Waterloo Math contest sign ups have occurred. To be written soon
- Lord of the Flies theatre production in the Spring
- Key Club continues to hold activities and events in and outside of the school
- Choir/House Band are busy
- Art Club: Sticker Making workshop Feb 25th
- Peer Tutoring happens in P3
- Semi Formal took place Feb 13th at Club Italia. Participants had a great time even with the weather
- Wellness Club: very active club with lunch activities and school initiatives
- Chess Club meets regularly
- Arts and Culture SHSM Activities including pathways and programs
- New club: Hooked on Helping, a crochet club has started

Principal's Report (Mr. Stranges)

It has certainly been a long, cold winter and we are all eagerly awaiting the spring weather. March Break is around the corner already. Our very own Mustangs will be touring the beautiful country of Italy during the March Break. Mrs. Mastroianni will be chaperoning a group of students visiting the iconic cities and landmarks in Rome, Venice and Florence. Students will be departing on March 8th and returning on March 17th.

On January 15, 2025, STM hosted the Gr. 8 Open House. Despite the cold and wintery weather, the Open House was very well attended and the feedback was positive from our future Mustang families. Our student services team pre-registered over 100 students from outside our family of schools. Our Vice Principals and guidance staff will continue to register future Gr. 9 students over the next several months! Based on preliminary numbers, we are expecting over 300 Gr. 9 students for the 2025-26 school year. The new registrations continue to come in daily. At the start of semester 2, the school received 2 new portables to offset pressures for our growing school enrolment. In addition, we have been approved for 65 new lockers for September 2025.

Over the last couple weeks, Saint Michael students and staff participated in many activities supporting Kids Helping Kids. The culmination of the STM activities was Jersey Day on Fri. Feb. 21st – a total of \$950 was raised and will be donated to the Kids Helping Kids fund.

This is the time of year that we begin the planning process for the upcoming school year. Our student services department has been very busy in providing course and program information to all our current students as well as our future Gr. 8 students. Students have been meeting with our guidance counsellors for specific pathway information and students are now able to access the course selection information through MyBlueprint. Course selection for the 2025-26 school year will need to be completed by March 2, 2025. It is always a good idea to make contact with your child's guidance counsellor if you have any questions about diploma requirements or pathways as there are always changes filtering down from the Ministry of Education. For example, there is a mandate that all students must complete a minimum of 2 elearning courses during their high school experience. Having said this, there is an Opt-out form that is available on our school's website for those families who wish to waive this requirement.

On March 18th, we are lucky to have Paul Davis speak our students on online safety. Paul is a renowned speaker and educator on online safety and social networking. Since January 2012, he has reached an impressive audience, speaking to 895,000 students in person and 98,000 students virtually across grade schools, high schools, and universities. Paul Davis covers critical topics such as cyberbullying, digital trails, sexting, online security, and the responsible use of social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok. His key message, "The internet never forgets," emphasizes the lasting impact of online behaviour.

Semester 1 Final Reports have been uploaded on the Parent Portal for the last couple weeks. Teachers have already begun entering marks for semester 2 classes. Semester 2 Midterm Reports will be available on the Parent Portal starting April 23rd and our Parent-Teacher Conferences are scheduled for April 24th as well.

Graduation activities have been set and we will be rolling the planned activities to the graduating class at an assembly next week. The Graduation Retreats will be held on May 21st – May 23rd and the Graduation Prom scheduled for May 30th at John Michaels. The Graduation Mass and Luncheon will be held on June 11th. At the conclusion of the Mass, we will announce the Valedictorian and Salutatorian for the Class of 2024. The Graduation Ceremony is scheduled for Wednesday, June 25th at the Central Community Center on York Road in St. Davids. The Graduation fee for families is set for \$110, which can be paid on school cash online by April 11, 2025.

We are working with the facilities department at the board level to improve the congestion into the school property and help offset some of the traffic on McLeod Road. We will be opening up 2 kiss n ride lanes through the perimeter of the building. Lane paving and signage will be installed to support communication and flow of traffic. We hope to have this completed as soon as possible.

E. OAPCE REPORTS (Stephanie Wybrew)

- Meetings are online for the whole province. There are recordings for those who wish to listen on their own time.
- Niagara has a new Representative.
- Newsletter every month on their website
- Survey for parents about catholic education in the province; results will be forwarded to the Minister of Education

- Annual conference is Saturday, May 24th at St. Michael Catholic High School; waiting for details about registration; open to all parents; students can volunteer to get hours

F. AGENDA ITEMS-DISCUSSION FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

- Parent Engagement Funds/Speaker Update: both people Laura reached out to are unavailable
- Mr. Stranges has reached out to Paul Davis for availability; possibly for evening on same day he's speaking to students
- Anna mentioned how she does presentations as well
- Laura will ask for suggestions at the next NCPIC meeting

G. NEXT MEETING

- Wednesday May 7, 2025 @ 6:00 pm

H. CLOSING PRAYER (Mr. Stranges)

I. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Gabriella Griffiths

Seconded by Anna Racine

THAT the February 26, 2025 meeting of the Saint Michael Catholic School Council be adjourned.

CARRIED

