

MINUTES

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2026

Public Session: 6:07 p.m. – 7:41 p.m.

Private Session: 5:35 p.m. – 5:59 p.m., cont'd: 8:00 p.m. – 9:13 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

(*denotes approval received to attend electronically)

BOARD

Kate Baggott (Chair), Sue Barnett, Nancy Beamer, Mike Brousseau, Helga Campbell, Jonathan Fast, Susan Jovanovic, Elizabeth Klassen (Vice Chair), *Deanne MacIntosh, Shannon Mitchell

STUDENT TRUSTEES

William Connor, Jacklyn Saddler

INDIGENOUS STUDENT TRUSTEE

Barrett Dockstator

ADMINISTRATION

Kelly Pisek (Director of Education), Karen Bellamy, Michael Burns, Sara De Divitiis, Jennifer Feren, Mary Anne Gage, Ann Gilmore, Simon Hancox, Mat Miller, Milica Petkovic, Breann Pyke, Melanie Sendzik, Neil Sheard, Jaime Sinnett, Teri Thompson, Stacy Veld (Associate Director)

RECORDING SECRETARY

Jennifer Reid

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Nate Burns, Ann Hamm

A. COMMENCEMENT OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD

1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL TERRITORY

Chair Baggott opened the meeting with an Acknowledgement of the Traditional Territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe peoples.

2. CALL TO ORDER AND NOTING OF MEMBERS ABSENT

Moved by Helga Campbell

Seconded by Sue Barnett

“That the absence of Trustee Lora Campbell be approved under section 228(1)(b) of the Education Act until May 31, 2026.”

CARRIED

Chair Baggott called the Regular Meeting of the Board to order at 6:07 p.m. and noted that Trustee Lora Campbell was absent and Trustee Deanne MacIntosh was participating virtually.

3. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

B. SINGING OF ‘O CANADA’

The Board stood as ‘*O Canada*’ was performed by Smithville Public School choir, via video and remained standing for a moment of silence to honour the passing of a DSBN student and staff member.

C. REFLECTIVE READING

Student Trustee William Connor provided a reflective reading.

D. BUSINESS OF THE BOARD

1. Adoption of the Agenda

Moved by Jonathan Fast

Seconded by Shannon Mitchell

“That the Agenda be adopted.”

CARRIED

2. APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES

Moved by Mike Brousseau

Seconded by Shannon Mitchell

“That the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the District School Board of Niagara dated January 27, 2026, be confirmed as submitted.”

CARRIED

3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There was no business arising from the minutes.

E. EDUCATIONAL SHOWCASING OR PRESENTATIONS

1. Director’s Recognition and Highlights

a) Director's Recognition for Extraordinary Contributions

Director Pisek recognized Maira Berzins and Wendy Campbell, Finance Clerks, for their genuine care in supporting DSBN schools and the extraordinary impact they have on day-to-day financial operations across the DSBN.

b) Director's Highlights

Director Pisek along with members of the system leadership team provided recent highlights from across the system which included information about:

- 15 Years of Dedicated Service – Trustee Sue Barnett Recognized at PES 2026
- Belonging Begins with Kindness
- Minister of Education Visits DSBN
- Black History Month
- Round Dance

2. EDUCATIONAL SHOWCASES

a) The Fabric of Our Being: Stories in Every Stitch

The Board received a presentation on the *Fabric of our Being* quilt project, an arts-based collaboration with local artist Nadine Williams, supported through a grant from the Ontario Arts Council, where students from Eden, St. Catharine's Collegiate, and West Niagara Secondary Schools, explored identity, heritage, and belonging. The student-created quilt symbolizes unity, resilience, inclusivity, and hope, and is a strong example of how creative expression can strengthen student voice and sense of belonging in schools.

F. STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT REPORTS

There were no student achievement reports.

G. DELEGATIONS

There were no delegations.

H. BOARD RECESS

There was no recess.

I. OLD BUSINESS

1. Report of the Parent Involvement Committee

Moved by Susan Jovanovic

Seconded by Shannon Mitchell

"That the report of the Parent Involvement Committee dated February 10, 2026, be received."

CARRIED

Trustee Susan Jovanovic shared that the committee discussed planning for future PIC events and recruitment. Information on the new Ministry of Education's police check requirements for volunteers, and the list of policies currently open for feedback were presented to the committee.

2. Report of the Policy Committee

Moved by Nancy Beamer

Seconded by Mike Brousseau

"That the report of the Policy Committee dated February 10, 2026, be received."

"That Policy G-24: Onsite/off-site Evacuation be approved as received and adopted."

"That Policy C-04: Community Planning and Facility Partnerships be approved as received and adopted."

"That Policy G-10: Use of Identification Badges be revoked."

"That Policy G-21: Advertising in Schools be approved as amended and adopted."

CARRIED

General Counsel Feren reported that a total of four policies were reviewed by the committee and highlighted the following changes, policy G-24: Onsite/Off-Site Evacuation and G-21: Advertising in Schools were presented with minimal changes, policy C-04: Community Planning and Facility Partnerships was presented with refined language to clarify that the scope of the policy is facility partnerships and to remove content that was operational, and policy G-10: Use of Identification Badges was presented with a recommendation to revoke. The final group of policies for this school year are open for feedback until April 1st.

3. Report of the Program and Planning Committee

Moved by Shannon Mitchell

Seconded by Sue Barnett

"That the report of the Program and Planning Committee dated February 10, 2026, be received."

"That the Elementary and Secondary School Year Calendars – 2026-2027 be received and approved for submission to the Ministry of Education."

CARRIED

Trustee Jovanovic shared that the committee reviewed the 2026-2027 Elementary and Secondary School Year Calendars. The committee also received updates on vaping prevention and detectors in secondary schools, the board's safe and ethical approach to generative AI in schools, and the system-wide Kindness Week Campaign. In addition, Special Education initiatives such as program reviews, improved learning spaces, and behaviour management training for administrators were presented.

4. Report of the Supervised Alternative Learning Committee

Moved by Helga Campbell

Seconded by Shannon Mitchell

"That the report of the Supervised Alternative Learning Committee dated February 11, 2026, be received."

CARRIED

Trustee Helga Campbell reported that a total of four new cases were presented and approved for SAL.

5. Report of the Special Education Advisory Committee

Moved by Elizabeth Klassen

Seconded by Shannon Mitchell

"That the report of the Special Education Advisory Committee dated February 12, 2026, be received."

CARRIED

Trustee Elizabeth Klassen shared that the committee received information from DSBN Deaf and Hard of Hearing Resource Department about staff training and support for students. An association presentation from VOICE about the programs and services offered to children who are deaf or hard of hearing, and the current list of policies open for vetting were presented. A video highlighting the success of a grade six student who uses a wireless assisted device from St. Davids Public School was presented.

J. QUESTIONS ASKED OF AND BY BOARD MEMBERS

Trustee Mike Brousseau requested consideration of an amendment to DSBN By-Laws and Rules of Order (item G-7) to extend agenda delivery timelines from 48 hours to five days prior to meetings. Chair Baggott referred the request to the Ad Hoc Governance Committee for consideration. Trustee Shannon Mitchell agreed to step aside from committee membership to allow for Trustee Brousseau's appointment to the Ad Hoc Governance Committee, which will meet at the call of the Chair.

K. NEW BUSINESS

L. INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS

1. STAFF REPORTS

There were no staff reports.

2. TRUSTEE INFORMATION SESSIONS

There was no Trustee information session.

3. CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMUNICATION

Trustees discussed the importance of advocating directly to the Premier, the Minister of Education, local MPPs, and the Ombudsman of Ontario regarding potential changes to school board governance, including concerns about the future role of elected trustees. Discussions highlighted concerns related to the lack of public consultation and the importance of trustees sending individualized communications. Chair Baggott clarified that trustees do not require permission from the Chair to contact their local representatives.

In response to a question regarding a complaint mechanism, Director Pisek advised that by the end of March, school boards are required to submit a report to the Ministry of Education outlining how the Student and Family Support Office will be established by September 2026.

4. TRUSTEE, STUDENT TRUSTEE, AND INDIGENOUS STUDENT TRUSTEE COMMUNICATIONS AND SCHOOL LIAISON

Trustees reported on several events across DSBN schools.

Student Trustees reported on the February Student Senate meeting where Senators focussed on ongoing inclusion and mental health initiatives, including social media campaigns and school-based activities promoting kindness week and positive well-being. The election process was reviewed in preparation for April's election, and the new Student Step-Up Awards project recognized students for their leadership and equity work in their schools. Indigenous Student Trustee Dockstator shared highlights from the recent Indigenous Student Representatives meeting where students participated in activities to engage in conversations about ways to make changes to create safer environments, how to advocate when faced with challenges, and increase Indigenous representation within schools.

5. Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) Report

There was no Ontario Public School Boards' Association report.

6. Ontario Student Trustees' Association Report

Highlights from the OSTA-AECO Education in Action conference were shared.

7. Future Meetings

- a) The March meeting calendar was provided.
- b) The March Days of Significance calendar was provided.

M. COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (PRIVATE SESSION)

Moved by Shannon Mitchell
Seconded by Nancy Beamer

“That the Board do now enter Committee of the Whole.”

CARRIED

The Board entered Committee of the Whole at 5:35 p.m.

Moved by Shannon Mitchell
Seconded by Sue Barnett

“That the Board return to Open meeting.”

CARRIED

The Board returned to open meeting at 5:59 p.m.

Moved by Sue Barnett
Seconded by Shannon Mitchell

“That the Board do now re-enter Committee of the Whole.”

CARRIED

The Board re-entered Committee of the Whole at 8:00 p.m.

Moved by Sue Barnett
Seconded by Shannon Mitchell

“That the Board return to Open meeting.”

CARRIED

Trustee Deanne MacIntosh left the meeting.

The Board returned to open meeting at 9:13 p.m.

N. RATIFICATION OF BUSINESS CONDUCTED IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Moved by Michael Brousseau

Seconded by Nancy Beamer

“That the business transacted in Committee of the Whole be now ratified by the Board.”

CARRIED

Recorded Vote:

Kate Baggott	In favour	Sue Barnett	In favour
Nancy Beamer	In favour	Michael Brousseau	In favour
Helga Campbell	In favour	Jonathan Fast	In favour
Susan Jovanovic	Opposed	Elizabeth Klassen	In favour
Shannon Mitchell	In favour		

O. RATIFICATION OF BUSINESS CONDUCTED IN THIS REGULAR MEETING

Moved by Helga Campbell

Seconded by Shannon Mitchell

“That the business transacted by the Board of Trustees at its meeting held on February 24, 2026, be now ratified by the Board.”

“That the Chair and proper officials of the District School Board of Niagara are hereby authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to the business as decided by the Board of Trustees this day.”

CARRIED

P. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:14 p.m.

KATE BAGGOTT

Chair

KELLY PISEK

Director of Education and Secretary