

MINUTES

TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2026

Public Session: 6:00 p.m. – 7:49 p.m. | Private Session: 7:34 -7:49 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

(*denotes approval received to attend electronically)

BOARD

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

STUDENT TRUSTEES

William Connor

INDIGENOUS STUDENT TRUSTEE

Barrett Dockstator

ADMINISTRATION

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

RECORDING SECRETARY

Jennifer Reid

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Nate Burns, Lyka Yatco

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

Chair Baggott called the Regular Meeting of the Board to order at 6:00 p.m. and noted that Trustee Deanne MacIntosh was participating virtually. Student Trustee Jacklyn Saddler was absent. Trustee Lora Campbell was absent (approved leave).

3. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

B. SINGING OF ‘O CANADA’

The Board stood as ‘*O Canada*’ was performed by Power Glen Public School choir, via video.

C. REFLECTIVE READING

Indigenous Student Trustee Barrett Dockstator provided a reflective reading.

D. BUSINESS OF THE BOARD

1. Adoption of the Agenda

Moved by Helga Campbell

Seconded by Shannon Mitchell

“That the Agenda be adopted.”

CARRIED

2. APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES

Moved by Jonathan Fast

Seconded by Sue Barnett

“That the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the District School Board of Niagara dated February 24, 2026, be confirmed as submitted.”

CARRIED

3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

In response to a question about the Ministry of Education’s Student and Family Support Office initiative, Director Pisek indicated that a report will be presented at a future Program and Planning committee meeting.

E. EDUCATIONAL SHOWCASING OR PRESENTATIONS

1. Director’s Recognition and Highlights

a) Director’s Recognition for Extraordinary Contributions

Director Pisek recognized Adam Onclin and Victoria Leng-Marini, educators and representatives on the AI Steering Committee for their leadership and creating innovative tools to strengthen DSBN’s capacity to implement AI with integrity, equity, and impact – empowering educators and expanding opportunities for students.

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:

- Ramadan Celebrations
- DSBN Tech Skills Challenges
- Students in Action – DSBN STEM EXPO
- From Classroom Spark to Career Success - Spotlight on Aidan Hawkins, DSBN Planning Technician

2. EDUCATIONAL SHOWCASES

There was no educational showcase.

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 Finance Committee

Moved by Sue Barnett

Seconded by Nancy Beamer

“That the report of the Finance Committee dated March 10, 2026, be received.”

“That the Multi-Year Capital Plan be received, and staff be authorized to proceed with all identified projects up to and including the 2026-27 year, subject to confirmation of necessary Ministry of Education approvals.”

“That the Award of Contracts Summary Report for the period ending February 28, 2026, be received.”

“That the Niagara Student Transportation Services 2025-26 Annual Plan be received.”

CARRIED

Trustee Sue Barnett reported that the Multi-Year Capital Plan that outlines investments through 2026-2027 in school renewal, accessibility, program expansion, and major construction projects was received. The plan includes more than \$4M for accessibility and infrastructure repairs and projects total capital spending in 2026-2027 to exceed \$135M. In addition, the Award of Contracts Report for January and February 2026, and the 2025-2026 Niagara Student Transportation Services (NSTS) annual plan was shared with the committee.

2. Report of the Supervised Alternative Learning Committee

Moved by Helga Campbell

Seconded by Mike Brousseau

“That the report of the Supervised Alternative Learning Committee dated March 11, 2025, be received.”

CARRIED

Trustee Helga Campbell shared 10 new cases were presented and approved for SAL and five cases have been discontinued due to the students returning to their classroom.

3. Report of the Special Education Advisory Committee

Moved by Shannon Mitchell

Seconded by Elizabeth Klassen

“That the report of the Special Education Advisory Committee dated March 12, 2026, be received.”

CARRIED

Trustee Mitchell shared that the committee received information about the process to enhance the DSBN’s public website for accessibility, content, and streamline navigation as well as gather feedback from stakeholders. Members were asked to give feedback on the Special Education Parent Guide and approved drafting a letter to the Minister of Education regarding elected trustees. A video was presented featuring an Eden High School student with Down syndrome and their successful transition to high school through the Secondary School to Community program.

J. QUESTIONS ASKED OF AND BY BOARD MEMBERS

In response to a question, Associate Director Veld confirmed that accessibility is considered for all new school builds, and that all three new elementary schools will be accessible.

K. NEW BUSINESS

1. TRUSTEE VACANCY APPOINTMENT PROCESS REPORT

Moved by Mike Brousseau

Seconded by Nancy Beamer

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"That the Trustee seat representing Fort Erie/Port Colborne is declared vacant."

"That the District School Board of Niagara proceed to fill the Trustee Vacancy through the appointment of a qualified person."

"That staff be directed to contact the highest ranking unsuccessful trustee candidate from the 2022 municipal election in the vacated electoral area to determine if the candidate remains interested and remains a qualified person as defined under the *Education Act* and the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*."

"That should the said unsuccessful trustee candidate from the 2022 municipal election remain interested and provide proof of eligibility under the *Education Act* and the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* no later than April 8, 2026, the Board shall appoint them to fill the vacancy on the Board of Trustees at the Board meeting to be held on April 28, 2026."

"That should the highest ranking unsuccessful trustee candidate from the 2022 municipal election no longer remain interested or no longer meet the aforesaid eligibility requirement or fail to provide proof of eligibility by April 8, 2026, staff be directed to contact the next highest ranking unsuccessful candidate from the 2022 municipal election in the vacated electoral area to determine if the candidate remains interested and remains a qualified person as defined under the *Education Act* and the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*."

"That should the next highest ranking unsuccessful trustee candidate from the 2022 municipal election remain interested and provide proof of eligibility under the *Education Act* and the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* within two weeks from the date contacted, the Board shall appoint them to fill the vacancy on the Board of Trustees at the Board meeting to be held on April 28, 2026."

"That should neither unsuccessful trustee candidates from the 2022 municipal election remain interested or no longer meets the eligibility requirements or fail to provide proof of eligibility under the *Education Act* and the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* by the dates required above, staff be directed to immediately post a Call for Applicants requesting applications for the position of Public School Board Trustee from candidates that meet the eligibility requirements under the *Education Act* and *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* and be directed to schedule a Special Meeting on or before May 26, 2026 for the purpose of the consideration and determination of the successful candidate from the eligible candidates to be appointed the Public School Board Trustee."

CARRIED

Chair Baggott expressed gratitude for Susan Jovanovic's service as Trustee for this term.

General Counsel Jennifer Feren reminded the Board that the vacant seat must be filled within 90 days either by by-election or by appointment. If the Board proceeds by appointment, the Board may either select the next highest polling candidate (consistent with last year's practice) subject to confirmation of interest and ongoing eligibility or initiate an application process if required. She confirmed that staff are prepared to implement either process to meet the required timelines.

In response to a question, General Counsel Feren confirmed that the appointed trustee will fill the vacancy and assume the associated responsibilities for the remainder of the trustee term.

L. INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS

1. STAFF REPORTS

a) Determination and Distribution of Trustees – 2026

Moved by Helga Campbell

Seconded by Shannon Mitchell

"That the Report on the 2026 Determination and Distribution of District School Board of Niagara Trustees be received;

CARRIED

Moved by Deanne MacIntosh

Seconded by Shannon Mitchell

"That the District School Board of Niagara does not designate any municipality within the Board's area of jurisdiction as a low population municipality;

CARRIED

Moved by Jonathan Fast

Seconded by Mike Brousseau

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"That the distribution of District School Board of Niagara Trustees for the October 2026 elections be confirmed, as follows:

St. Catharines* / Niagara-on-the-Lake	4
Niagara Falls	2
Welland	1
Fort Erie* / Port Colborne	1
Grimsby* / Lincoln	1
Pelham* / Thorold	1
West Lincoln* / Wainfleet	1"

CARRIED

Associate Director Veld explained that based on the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) population data (electoral group population 304,742) and the electoral quotient calculations, DSBN will continue to have 11 trustees for the October 2026 election. She stated that all three options to distribute the 11 trustees align with population and geographic considerations, reasonably represent low-population areas, and electoral quotients as close to whole numbers as possible. The distribution options presented for consideration include the current status quo, an alternative option prepared by staff to better meet the principles, and a third option requested by Trustee Beamer that was shared with trustees.

Trustees discussed the options presented, weighing community and geographic alignment, and the fairness of representation across municipalities and rural communities. Consideration was given to the electoral quotient calculations and key principals for distribution of trustees for each option as well as Ministry of Education Guidelines to ensure that the selected configuration best supports student needs and effective representation.

2. TRUSTEE INFORMATION SESSIONS

There was no Trustee information session.

3. CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMUNICATION

There was no correspondence or communication.

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

Trustees shared information about celebrations and events within the DSBN.

Student Trustee Willam Connor noted that the next Student Senate meeting will be held on April 21, noted that the recipients for the Student Step-Up award for February were Kyla Sandy for her leadership in Indigenous student voice and Heidi Morris for her support of Muslim students and promoted the Student Senate Instagram account.

Indigenous Student Trustee Barrett Dockstator shared that during the fourth Indigenous Student Representative meeting, Senators focused on sharing stories and building leadership skills. Indigenous author Waubgeshig Rice, spoke about his upbringing and career path, highlighting Indigenous representation in media and the value of diverse post-secondary pathways and student reps participated in a discussion with teacher navigators to share their experiences and perspectives as Indigenous Student Representatives.

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

There was no Ontario Public School Boards' Association report.

6. Ontario Student Trustees' Association Report

There was no Ontario Student Trustees' Association report.

7. Future Meetings

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

Student Trustees left the meeting at 7:34 pm.

M. COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (PRIVATE SESSION)

Moved by Sue Barnett

Seconded by Shannon Mitchell

"That the Board do now enter Committee of the Whole."

CARRIED

Moved by Sue Barnett

Seconded by Shannon Mitchell

"That the Board return to Open meeting."

CARRIED

The Board returned to open meeting at 7:49 p.m.

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N. RATIFICATION OF BUSINESS CONDUCTED IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Moved by Mike Brousseau

Seconded by Shannon Mitchell

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

CARRIED

O. RATIFICATION OF BUSINESS CONDUCTED IN THIS REGULAR MEETING

Moved by Nancy Beamer

Seconded by Helga Campbell

“That the business transacted by the Board of Trustees at its meeting held on March 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 7:49 p.m.

KATE BAGGOTT

Chair

KELLY PISEK

Director of Education and Secretary