

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2025

Public Session: 6:00 pm

AGENDA

A. COMMENCEMENT OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD

1. Acknowledgement of Traditional Territory
2. Call to Order and Noting of Members Absent
3. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

B. O CANADA

C. REFLECTIVE READING

By Student Trustee Jacklyn Saddler

D. BUSINESS OF THE BOARD

1. Adoption of the Agenda

Recommended Motion:

"That the Agenda be adopted."

2. Approval of Board Minutes

Pages 4-8, 9-15

Recommended Motion:

"That the Minutes of the Organization Meeting of the District School Board of Niagara dated November 18, 2025, be confirmed as submitted."

"That the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the District School Board of Niagara dated November 18, 2025, be confirmed as submitted."

3. Business Arising from the Minutes

E. EDUCATIONAL SHOWCASING OR PRESENTATIONS

1. Director's Recognition and Highlights

K. Pisek – Pages 16-19

- a) Director's Recognition

- **Marian Reimer Friesen**, Superintendent of Student Achievement and Well-Being
- b) **Director's Highlights**

2. Educational Showcase

M. Reimer Friesen

- a) A Story Worth Telling: James Morden PS Food Drive

F. STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT REPORT

G. DELEGATIONS

H. BOARD RECESS (OPTIONAL)

I. OLD BUSINESS

1. Report of the Special Education Advisory Committee

E. Klassen / S. Mitchell – Pages 20-21

Recommended Motions:

“That the report of the Special Education Advisory Committee dated November 20, 2025, be received.”

J. QUESTIONS ASKED OF AND BY BOARD MEMBERS

K. NEW BUSINESS

L. INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS

- 1. Staff Reports**
- 2. Trustee Information Sessions**
- 3. Correspondence and Communications**
- 4. Trustee, Student Trustee and Indigenous Student Trustee Communications and School Liaison**
- 5. Ontario Public School Boards' Association Report**
- 6. Ontario Student Trustees' Association Report**
- 7. Future Meetings**
Pages 22-23
 - a) January Meeting Calendar
 - b) January Days of Significance Calendar

M. COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

No special meeting is required.

N. RATIFICATION OF BUSINESS CONDUCTED IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

n/a

O. RATIFICATION OF BUSINESS CONDUCTED IN THIS REGULAR MEETING

Recommended Motions:

“That the business transacted by the Board of Trustees at its meeting held on December 2, 2025, 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.”

P. ADJOURNMENT

ORGANIZATION MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2025

5:30 p.m. – 6:31 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

(*denotes approval received to attend electronically)

BOARD

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

STUDENT TRUSTEES

William Connor

INDIGENOUS STUDENT TRUSTEE

Barrett Dockstator

OFFICIALS

Kelly Pisek (Director of Education), Stacy Veld (Associate Director), Karen Bellamy, Jennifer Feren, Ann Gilmore, Simon Hancox, Milica Petkovic, Marian Reimer Friesen, Jaime Sinnett, Melanie Sendizk, Neil Sheard, Teri Thompson

RECORDING SECRETARY

Jennifer Reid

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Nate Burns, Ann Hamm

1. CALL TO ORDER AND NOTING MEMBERS ABSENT

Moved by Kate Baggott

Seconded by Helga Campbell

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

CARRIED

Director Pisek called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. followed by an Acknowledgement of Traditional Territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe peoples by General Counsel Jennifer Feren.

Director Pisek conducted the meeting until the election of the Chair.

ORGANIZATION MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2025



2. READING APPLICABLE BY-LAW PROCEDURES FOR THE ORGANIZATION MEETING

DSBN By-Law F-1 states that “The order of business for the Organization Meeting is to elect the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board and to pass the Signing Authority resolution and the Borrowing Authority resolution.”

3. APPOINTMENT OF SCRUTINEERS

Moved by Nancy Beamer

Seconded by Elizabeth Klassen

“That Lisa Osborne be appointed to serve as a third scrutineer for the election of Chair and Vice-Chair.”

CARRIED

In accordance with DSBN By-Law F-5, Director Pisek named Stacy Veld, Associate Director of Education, Corporate Services, and Jennifer Feren, General Counsel, as scrutineers for the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair.

In response to a public call for applications for an external community scrutineer, 16 applications were received. Lisa Osborne was selected and will serve as a third scrutineer for the election of Chair and Vice-Chair.

Scrutineers confirmed to maintain secrecy of the vote.

4. ELECTION OF CHAIR

The process for the election of a Chair was carried out in accordance with DSBN By-Law F-6.1 and F-6.2.

Director Pisek reported that Trustee Baggott, Trustee Barnett and Trustee Jovanovic were nominated and let their names stand for the position of Chair.

Trustee Baggott, Trustee Barnett and Trustee Jovanovic addressed the Board, after which, Trustee Jovanovic withdrew her nomination.

Trustees were provided with the opportunity to ask questions of the candidates.

Jennifer Feren provided trustees with a ballot for the position of Chair. Scrutineers collected the ballots and counted the votes.

Director Pisek announced Trustee Baggott was elected Chair for the District School Board of Niagara.

Chair Baggott chaired the remainder of the Organization Meeting of the Board.

5. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

ORGANIZATION MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2025



In accordance with DSBN By-Law F-7, Chair Baggott noted that election of the Vice-Chair shall proceed in the same manner as prescribed for the election of the Chair.

Chair Baggott reported that Trustee Klassen and Trustee Mitchell were nominated and let their names stand for the position of Vice-Chair.

Trustee Klassen and Trustee Mitchell were given the opportunity to address the Board.

Trustees were provided with the opportunity to ask questions of the candidates.

Jennifer Feren provided trustees with a ballot for the position of Vice-Chair. Scrutineers collected the ballots and counted the votes.

Chair Baggott announced that Trustee Klassen was elected to the position of Vice-Chair.

6. MOTION TO DESTROY THE BALLOTS

Moved by Sue Barnett

Seconded by Susan Jovanovic

"That the ballots be destroyed."

CARRIED

7. SIGNING AUTHORITY

In accordance with DSBN By-Laws B-2, B-3, and B-4:

Moved by Helga Campbell

Seconded by Mike Brousseau

"That the Chair or the Vice-Chair of the Board, and the Director of Education or the Treasurer of the Board, be the signing officers of the Board for matters concerning corporate governance."

"That the Chair or the Vice-Chair of the Board, and the Treasurer of the Board, be the signing officers of the Board for cheque signing."

"That the Director of Education or the Treasurer of the Board, be the signing officers of the Board for operational matters concerning the day-to-day management of the Board."

CARRIED

8. BORROWING AUTHORITY

A resolution authorizing the borrowing of money to meet current operating expenditures of the District School Board of Niagara (the Board).

ORGANIZATION MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2025



- A. In accordance with Subsection 243(1) of the Education Act (R.S.O. 1990) (the Act), the Board considers it necessary to borrow the amount of up to 45 million dollars (\$45,000,000) to meet, until current operating revenue is received, the current operating expenditures of the Board for the period commencing on January 1, 2026, ending on December 31, 2026 ('the Period').
- B. Pursuant to Subsection 243(3) of the Act, the total amount borrowed pursuant to this Resolution, together with the total of any similar borrowings and any accrued interest on those borrowings, is not to exceed the unreceived balance of the estimated revenues of the Board for the Period.
- C. The total amount previously borrowed by the Board pursuant to Section 243 that has not been repaid is \$0.
- D. The amount borrowed for current operating expenditures is within the Board's Debt and Financial Obligation Limit as established by the Ministry of Education from time to time.

Moved by Shannon Mitchell
Seconded by Mike Brousseau

1. "The Chair or Vice-Chair and the Secretary or Treasurer of the Board are authorized on behalf of the Board to borrow in accordance with Section 243 of the Education Act from time to time by way of promissory note, or overdraft, or bankers acceptance from the Bankers of the Board or from any other approved lender a sum or sums not exceeding in the aggregate 45 million dollars (\$45,000,000) to meet, until current operating revenue is collected, the current operating expenditures of the Board for the Period and to give to the Bankers of the Board or to any other approved lender promissory notes or bankers acceptances, as the case may be, sealed with the corporate seal of the Board and signed by any two of the Chair or Vice-Chair and the Secretary or Treasurer of the Board for the sums borrowed plus interest at a rate to be agreed upon from time to time with the Bankers of the Board or any other approved lender; and
2. The interest charged on all sums borrowed pursuant to this Resolution, plus any related charges, is not to exceed the interest that would be payable at the prime lending rate of the chartered banks listed in Schedule 1 of the Bank Act (Canada) on the date of borrowing; and
3. The Secretary or Treasurer of the Board is authorized and directed to apply in payment of all sums borrowed, plus interest, all of the moneys collected or received in respect of the current operating revenues of the Board."

CARRIED

9. RATIFICATION OF BUSINESS CONDUCTED IN THIS ORGANIZATION MEETING

Moved by Sue Barnett
Seconded by Nancy Beamer

"That the business transacted by the Board of Trustees at its Organization Meeting held on November 18, 2025, be now ratified by the Board."

ORGANIZATION MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2025



“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

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:21 p.m.

KATE BAGGOTT

Chair

KELLY PISEK

Director of Education and Secretary

MINUTES

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2025

Public Session: 6:31 p.m. – 7:41 p.m. | Private Session: 7:09 p.m. – 7:41 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, Jennifer Feren, Ann Gilmore, Simon Hancox, Milica Petkovic, Marian Reimer Friesen, 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 Nancy Beamer

Seconded by Helga Campbell

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

CARRIED

Chair Baggott called the Regular Meeting of the Board to order at 6:21 p.m.

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 John Brant Public School choir, via video.

C. REFLECTIVE READING

There was no reflective reading.

D. BUSINESS OF THE BOARD

1. Adoption of the Agenda

Moved by Shannon Mitchell

Seconded by Sue Barnett

"That the Agenda be adopted."

CARRIED

2. APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES

Moved by Mike Brousseau

Seconded by Shannon Mitchell

"That the Minutes of the Special Meeting of the District School Board of Niagara dated October 28, 2025, be confirmed as submitted."

"That the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the District School Board of Niagara dated October 28, 2025, 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 noted that the recognition for Martha Shaw, Administrative Assistant at DeWitt Carter Public School will come forward in January.

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:

- Take Me Outside Challenge
- Skilled Trades and Tech at DSBN
- Chairing with Confidence
- Treaties Recognition Week

2. EDUCATIONAL SHOWCASES

There were no educational showcases.

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 Helga Campbell

Seconded by Mike Brousseau

"That the report of the Finance Committee dated November 11, 2025, be received."

"That the Summary of Accounts paid for the month of September and October 2025, totaling \$68,600,981 be received."

"That the 2024-25 Year End Financial Report be received."

“That Borrowing Resolution 2025-04 authorizing the Board to borrow up to \$22,342,552 for the short-term financing of Ministry funded capital projects be approved”; and

“That Borrowing Resolution 2025-05 authorizing the Board to borrow up to \$5,643,476 for the short-term financing of Ministry funded capital projects be approved”; and

“That Borrowing Resolution 2025-06 authorizing the Board to borrow up to \$31,220,767 for the short-term financing of Ministry funded capital projects be approved”.

CARRIED

Associate Director Veld shared that the committee received the following reports: the Summary of Accounts Report summarizing the cash flow of expenditures paid for September and October, and the 2024-2025 Year End Financial Report. In addition, the committee received the Short-Term Financing of Ministry Funded Capital Projects Report, which confirmed that the Ministry of Education approved funding totalling \$59,206,795.

2. Report of the Audit Committee

Moved by Jonathan Fast

Seconded by Sue Barnett

“That the report of the Audit Committee dated November 11, 2025, be received.”

“That the 2024-25 Annual Report of the Audit Committee be approved for submission to the Ministry of Education.”

“That the Regional Internal Audit Status Report be received.”

CARRIED

Associate Director Veld reported that Trustee Sue Barnett was nominated and declared Chair of the audit committee for the 2025-2026 fiscal year. The 2024-2025 annual report for submission to the Ministry of Education was approved by the committee, and information about the audit teams training plan and mandate for the past year was presented by the Regional Internal Auditor manager.

3. Report of the Supervised Alternative Learning Committee

Moved by Nancy Beamer

Seconded by Mike Brousseau

“That the report of the Supervised Alternative Learning Committee dated November 12, 2025, be received.”

CARRIED

Superintendent Gilmore reported that the committee reviewed 11 new cases that were all approved for Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL).

4. Report of the Parent Involvement Committee

Moved by Shannon Mitchell

Seconded by Nancy Beamer

“That the report of the Parent Involvement Committee dated November 13, 2025, be received.”

CARRIED

Trustee Mitchell shared that the committee elected Ryan Morris as the new Co-Chair and was introduced to Mike Burns, the Acting Superintendent for PIC. The remaining budget for 2025-2026 was presented, and feedback from the Chairing with Confidence event discussed. Committee members reviewed models to reinvigorate the PIC conference planned for spring 2026, a sub-committee will be formed to begin planning.

J. QUESTIONS ASKED OF AND BY BOARD MEMBERS

In response to a question about social media, Director Pisek stated that DSBN follows the Ministry of Education’s mandate. In addition, superintendents are working on professional development for staff, and modules for students. A report will be submitted to a future Program and Planning Committee meeting.

Trustee Barnett inquired about funding from the provincial government for student nutrition programs. Associate Director Veld confirmed that she will follow up with the Niagara Nutrition program to enquire about funding.

K. NEW BUSINESS

L. INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS

1. STAFF REPORTS

a) 2024-2025 Director’s Annual Report

Director Pisek stated that the Education Act mandates that the Director of Education reports annually to the Board. The 2024-2025 Director’s Annual report aligns with the 2023-2028 Strategic Plan and highlights the successes of DSBN students, staff, and school communities. The report is accessible on the Board’s website.

2. TRUSTEE INFORMATION SESSIONS

There was no Trustee information session.

3. CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMUNICATION

There was no correspondence received.

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

Indigenous Student Trustee Dockstator shared highlights from two events hosted by Indigenous Student Representatives. The first event was a youth symposium at White Oaks where students from over 51 elementary schools attended and engaged in leadership games and cultural activities including traditional dances and storytelling. In addition, Indigenous Student Representative's had their first meeting where they welcomed a record attendance, heard a portion of the Creation Story, participated in a Smudging ceremony, and leadership games to foster connection and leadership among Indigenous students.

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

There was no Ontario Public School Boards' Association report.

6. Ontario Student Trustees' Association Report

Student Trustees and Indigenous Student Trustee provided highlights from the OSTA-AECO General Fall meeting in November.

6. Future Meetings

Chair Baggott noted that the next Board meeting is scheduled for December 2nd.

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

The Board took a short recess.

Student Trustee Saddler left the meeting.

M. COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (PRIVATE SESSION)

Moved by Mike Brousseau
Seconded by Helga Campbell

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

Moved by Nancy Beamer
Seconded by Sue Barnett

"That the Board return to Open meeting."
CARRIED

The Board returned to open meeting at 7:41 p.m.

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

Moved by Helga Campbell
Seconded by Shannon Mitchell

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

O. RATIFICATION OF BUSINESS CONDUCTED IN THIS REGULAR MEETING

Moved by Nancy Beamer
Seconded by Mike Brousseau

“That the business transacted by the Board of Trustees at its meeting held on November 18, 2025, 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 7:41 p.m.

KATE BAGGOTT
Chair

KELLY PISEK
Director of Education and Secretary

Director's Highlights

December 2025

DIRECTOR'S RECOGNITION

Marian Reimer Friesen | **Superintendent of Student Achievement and Well-Being**

Marian Reimer Friesen has devoted her career to education and her time at DSBN reflects the deep commitment, steady guidance and exceptional leadership that not only defines her work, but has shaped programs, schools and people across the system.

Her journey with DSBN began at Connaught, a school that has remained close to her heart as it not only marked the start of her teaching career, but also her leadership path. After teaching for seven years, Marian was appointed Vice-Principal Intern at Connaught and one year later, became Vice-Principal of Westdale Public School. She went on to serve as Principal at Westmount and then lead two schools - Colonel J. Butler and Virgil - simultaneously, navigating this dual role which culminated in the opening of Crossroads Public School, with remarkable integrity, empathy and skill.

During her tenure as an Elementary Area Superintendent, Marian excelled at driving improvement by helping schools focus on student achievement, remove barriers and celebrate small wins that build momentum and lead to sustainable success. In collaboration with instructional coaches, she created DSBN's first Math Scope and Sequence, a foundational system resource that brought clarity and confidence to instructional planning across the Board. She also consistently modelled excellence, helping administrators grow their leadership and sharpen their impact.

Kelly Dilorio, retired Principal and current NTIP Administrator, shared, "Marian has a magical quality - always knowing the right words to say and the best approach to take, all while making it seem so smooth and effortless. I truly marvel at her problem-solving abilities, and I know that many of the successes attributed to me can be traced directly back to her guidance."

In her more recent role as the Superintendent responsible for overseeing Curriculum Support Services (CSS), Marian transformed the team into a driving force for meaningful, evidence-based change. Under her leadership, DSBN achieved excellent Grade 3 and Grade 6 EQAO math results and teams aligned with the Ministry's Math Achievement Action Plan, supporting priority schools to realize significant gains. Marian is also a recognized and frequently sought-after leader in mathematics education province-wide.

She is equally known for cultivating opportunities for the Low German community in Niagara. She helped establish the ROUTES program at Crossroads Public School, supporting students with learning pathways designed specifically with their community in mind, respectful of the heritage and beliefs of Low German families.

While her achievements are significant, it is Marian's relationship-focused leadership that colleagues speak of most often. She invests deeply in people, mentoring countless administrators, empowering instructional coaches, and inspiring colleagues to lead with purpose. Brad Digweed, Curriculum Student Achievement Leader, who has worked with Marian since she was a Principal, shared: "What distinguishes her leadership above all is her rare ability to make every person feel genuinely seen, valued and safe to think aloud. Marian's intuition is remarkable and her leadership is consistently positive, asset-based and deeply anchored in service. Working alongside her has been one of the greatest privileges of my career."

Beyond her professional accomplishments, Marian is known for her warmth, humour, and signature phrases - "cheap and cheerful," "crappyhappy," and, of course, "It's going to be GREAT!" She takes tremendous pride in her family, loves Disney, exemplifies the art of being a super communicator and is highly respected across the system. Her positivity and political savvy have helped her navigate complex challenges with incredible poise and perspective and to many she is not only a leader and mentor, but a dear friend.

Jacob Beam Principal Jen Currie captured what many feel as Marian steps into retirement: "It's often said that, 'True leaders don't create followers; they create more leaders.' I am the leader I am today because of Marian's influence. She taught me the value of building strong relationships and showed me how to find great people and empower them to discover their own form of greatness. I will deeply miss Marian's leadership as a mentor, her guidance as a human and her kindness as a friend. Thank you for everything, Marian."

Kelly Pisek, DSBN Director of Education echoed this sentiment, sharing, "Marian has been a constant throughout my career at DSBN. Even as I transitioned into the role of Director, she remained the steady, collaborative and deeply thoughtful colleague I first had the joy of working with when we were appointed to Vice-Principals and Principals, together. Marian brings optimism to even the most complex work and has consistently strengthened the initiatives we advanced as a system. I am truly grateful for her guidance, partnership and the generous way she has supported me and countless others on our journey."

Congratulations, Marian on receiving the Director's Recognition Award. From teacher to Superintendent, your 30+ year career has left an enduring mark on DSBN. Your legacy is one of excellence, compassion, and unwavering dedication to student achievement and educator growth. As you step into retirement, we know one thing for certain: It's going to be GREAT!

YMCA Youth PEACE Medal Recipients

DSBN students shine as peacemakers in Niagara

As part of YMCA Peace Week (November 16-23), the YMCA recognizes remarkable individuals who embody the values of PEACE: *Participation, Empathy, Advocacy, Community and Empowerment*. This year, two of the three YMCA Youth PEACE Medal recipients in Niagara are DSBN students - an incredible achievement! Congratulations to Amblessed Ajomiwe from St. Catharines Collegiate and Mirah Roul from West Niagara Secondary School (WNSS).



Amblessed Ajomiwe
St. Catharines Collegiate

Amblessed embodies the qualities of a true peacemaker. As co-founder and President of the school’s first Black Student Alliance, he created a safe and empowering space for Black students to share experiences, find support and build community. An honour roll student and active member of DSBN Student Senate, the Interact Club and DSBN IDEAS, his leadership is rooted in collaboration and teamwork. Beyond school, he has contributed over 300 volunteer hours, supporting those experiencing homelessness, mentoring youth and serving through his church. His kindness, empathy and patience reflect genuine care for others and a deep commitment to making a positive difference wherever he goes.

Mirah Roul
West Niagara Secondary School

Mirah leads with empathy and a passion for service. At WNSS she is a positive and influential member of the WNSS Game Day Crew, Eco-Team and Science Club. A Girl Guide for more than 12 years, she mentors younger girls, promotes STEM and champions environmental initiatives such as tree planting and recycling programs. Mirah also organizes camps, facilitates workshops and leads annual events like World Thinking Day through her leadership role with Girl Guides. Next year, she will represent Canada at the 2026 Brave Space Leadership Conference in India, continuing her mission to empower youth and foster inclusive communities.



P E A C E

Participation, Empathy, Advocacy, Community and Empowerment

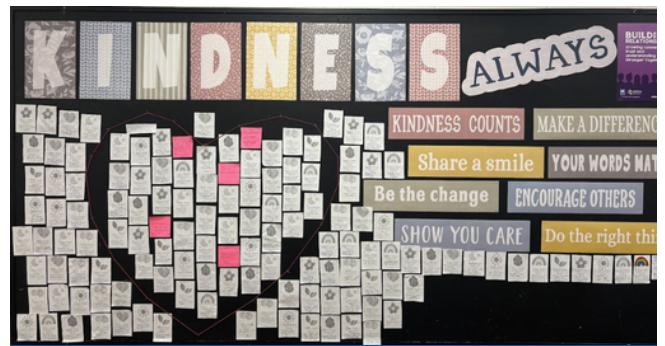
DSBN HIGHLIGHTS (con't)

Helping Every Student Thrive

Building Safe, Caring, and Inclusive Schools

Thriving, one of the five priorities of the DSBN Strategic Plan, focuses on helping all learners cultivate personal growth by nurturing well-being and connection. This priority guides the work we do together daily to ensure students and staff feel valued and supported.

Since September, three system-level Restorative Youth Counsellors (RYCs) have partnered with students in 15 schools to develop proactive, relationship-focused approaches to resolving conflict. At Parnall Public School, for example, students learned how to interrupt bullying and created “upstander bricks,” each with a message about championing kindness and restorative practices within their school.



Ontario Public School students participated in the “Fill Your Heart with Kindness” challenge, adding notes about kind gestures to a bulletin board.



Parnall Public School



Gordon Public School students displaying their DIY kindness buttons

More recently, World Kindness Day (November 13) and Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week (November 16-22), provided additional opportunities for schools to engage in activities that promote learning, reflection, and action. Elementary students and staff explored restorative practices, learned strategies for bullying prevention and carried out acts of kindness that made a difference in their school communities.

Across secondary schools, students participated through interactive and digital activities including daily announcements on what to do when witnessing bullying, an anti-bullying pledge, a kindness tag challenge on social media, and a student-led video campaign called “Kindness Changes Everything!”

These efforts demonstrate a shared commitment to creating safe, inclusive spaces where respect and empathy thrive. Thank you to all schools for your dedication to this important, and ongoing work.



Ferndale Public School students led a community-driven initiative, *Just Essentials for Jamaica*, to support families impacted by Hurricane Melissa. They collected necessities and created heartfelt cards filled with messages of hope.



At Central French Immersion Public School every student wrote a personalized message of kindness to another student, creating a vibrant wall of encouragement and friendship.



DSBN HIGHLIGHTS (con't)

Memories & Milestones

An evening to remember

The celebration was in full swing at Club Roma where DSBN staff gathered together for the annual Memories & Milestone event! This year, 72 employees reaching 25 years of service and 52 retired employees attended along with their special guests. Throughout the evening, attendees enjoyed a delicious meal, reunited with colleagues, and were recognized for their many contributions and long-standing commitment to the Board. Guests of honour were invited to write and post their favourite DSBN memories to a memory wall, with several read aloud during the celebration. Through an exciting collaboration with the SHSM Construction Programs at Eden High School, Laura Secord and West Niagara Secondary Schools, each retiree received a unique gift – a handmade charcuterie board created by DSBN students. Thank you to all who contributed to this memorable event in celebration of our very deserving staff!



THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2025

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

Committee Members Present

Linda Morrice (Chair)-Pathstone Mental Health, Mellisa Elliot-Bethesda, Flavia Orvitz-Autism Ontario, Catherine Hodson-Niagara Children's Centre School Authority, Patty Ferrie – Inclusion West Niagara, Katie McKay – Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Coalition, Tessa Alexander – VOICE for Children Who Are Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Administration/Resource

Simon Hancox-Superintendent of Student Achievement and Well-being, Terri Beck- Student Achievement Leader Special Education Elementary, Matt Ezrin – Student Achievement Leader Special Education Secondary, Elizabeth Klassen - Trustee, District School Board of Niagara, Kelly Pisek – Director of Education

Regrets

Shannon Mitchell - Trustee, District School Board of Niagara
Kathy Bell-Niagara Children's Centre

Recording Secretary

Jennifer McGugan – Safe Schools and Student Well-Being Coordinator

1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TERRITORY

Quorum was established and the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. Chair Morrice opened the meeting with the Acknowledgement of Traditional Territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe peoples.

2. WELCOME AND NEW AGENCY

Chair Morrice welcomed new SEAC member Patty Ferrie, representative from Inclusion West Niagara.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Tessa Alexander

Seconded by Katie McKay

"That the Agenda dated November 20, 2025, be approved as presented."

CARRIED

4. STUDENT VOICE

Matt Ezrin, Student Achievement Leader for Special Education - Secondary, shared a video of a successful ninth grader at Stamford Collegiate Secondary School in the Secondary School to Work program. A hands-on, creative learner, the student benefited from collaboration between her elementary and secondary schools during her transition to secondary school. She is thriving in music and art, with staff consistently supporting her needs.

5. SPECIAL EDUCATION REPORT

Superintendent Hancox emphasized the ongoing commitment to secondary supports and introduced Eastdale Secondary School's principal, Josh Connor, along with Jesse Winger, the Program Lead for the Secondary School to Community (SSTC) Program. Together, they described how the SSTC program serves a diverse range of students, particularly those with complex needs, by prioritizing continuous improvement, collaboration, and strong community engagement. Key features of the program include hands-on learning experiences, supportive environments and dedicated administrative leadership.

Colleen Fast, DSBN Outdoor Education Supervisor, and Andy Dermatis, a teacher, gave a presentation to the committee about their collaboration on the Special Education Day Outdoor Education Pilot. They worked with West Niagara and Thorold Secondary Schools to provide students with a day outdoors, offering activities such as guided walks, building habitats, scavenger hunts, and exploring the natural playground. The outdoor education staff designed and adapted these activities to support the needs of every student.

Superintendent Hancox stated that the DSBN successfully secured funding through the Ministry of Education's Removing Barriers Grant initiative. This grant will allow the special education department to implement targeted projects aimed at improving access to physical and outdoor education activities for students of all abilities.

6. SPECIAL EDUCATION PLAN AND PARENT GUIDE ACTIVITY FOLLOW-UP

Matt Ezrin, Student Achievement Leader for Special Education – Secondary, provided updates from the previous SEAC meeting and acknowledged the valuable contributions of the committee. He highlighted the strong collaborations between community partners and schools, noting key areas where the need for additional support has been identified, particularly regarding transitions into and out of services. He emphasized the importance of sustainable practices and shared that ongoing efforts will focus on developing structures and tools to ensure the continuity of these initiatives.

7. ASSOCIATION PRESENTATIONS AND UPDATES

Committee members shared information and updates from their respective associations and roles.

8. TRUSTEE UPDATE

Trustee Klassen provided an update on the November Board meeting.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

Chair Morrice shared that correspondence was received from the Durham District School Board to the Ministry of Education noting concerns about the timing of the release of core education funding documents to school boards.

10. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

There were no questions.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

Next Meeting: December 11, 2025 – Grimsby Lincoln Room (members attending virtually)

JAN 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					01	02
					03	
04	05	06	07	08	09	10
				SEAC 5:30 pm		
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
		Finance 5:30 pm	SAL 1:00 pm			
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
		Regular Board Meeting 6:00 pm				

JANUARY 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
Tamil Heritage Month						
				01 Kwanzaa Gantan-sai New Year New Year's Day	02	03 Mahayana-Buddhist New Year
04 National Ribbon Skirt Day	05 Twelfth Night	06 Feast of the Epiphany/Dia de los Reyes	07 Feast of the Nativity/Orthodox Christmas (Gregorian Calendar)	08	09	10
11 Baptism of Jesus	12	13 Lohri Maghi	14 Thai Pongal (Jan 14-17) Makar Sankranti New Year (Orthodox Calendar)	15	16 Isra Wal Miraj	17
18 World Religion Day	19 Martin Luther King Jr. Day	20 Birthday of Guru Gobind Singh Ji	21 Feast of the Wedding of Cana Lincoln Alexander Day	22	23 Vasanta Panchami	24 World Day for African and Afrodescendant Culture
25	26 International Holocaust Remembrance Day St. Sava Day	27	28	29 National Day of Remembrance of the Quebec City Mosque Attack and Action Against Islamophobia	30	31

NOTE: Days of Significance/Holy Days may vary a few days before or after the indicated date due to the observance of the lunar calendar for some cultures/faiths and time zones.

* Denotes Days of Significance/Holy Days that begin in **the evening before** the indicated time.