

Minutes of Catholic School Council

October 6, 2025 – 6:00 pm

Attendees:

Present: Vice Principal Vanessa Aquilina, Kim Bevington, Helen Biggs, Cathy Blanchard (early departure), Stacy-Ann Brown (late arrival), Debbie Cheretas, Christine Curtis, Diane Courchesne (early departure), Sheila DeSousa, Melanie Facca-Student Representative, Sunny Francis, Principal Mark Freeman, Danielle Good, Luke Lillicrop, Donna O'Connor, Marysia Papagianis, Alfredo Pulido, Elizabeth Stepanic, Julie Tippet, Reannah VandenBerg, Tiffany Young

Student Reps Present: Daniel Naguib and Isabel Yeboah from Student Council

Absent: Brian Aldwell, Vice-Principal Natalie Cook, Chaplin Dunn, Nada Rahma, Kristen Runciman-Bentivegna

1. Opening:

Principal Mark welcomed everyone including new Vice Principal, Vanessa Aquilina. Principal Mark opened with the reading of the land acknowledgment and a word of prayer. Principal Mark noted that we will have an in depth look at the finances at the next meeting. There is approximately \$13,000.00 available currently. Bylaws will be made available for reference at each meeting (page 16 pertains to this Council).

2. Introductions:

All Council members introduced themselves mentioning children they had at the ND and a small interesting tid-bit.

3. Elections:

- Sheila was nominated and elected Chair unanimously.
- Julie was nominated and elected for Fundraising Representative. Requested the support of the council again this year.
- Lisa was nominated and elected for Secretary.
- Sunny volunteered to be the St. Gabriel's Parish Representative
- Reannah volunteered to be the St. Paul's Parish Representative
- Cathy volunteered to be the Treasurer. There were no objections and so elected.
- Community Representative – is usually someone who does not have a child at the school. This role will be left open for now as no one fits the bill.
- Alfredo volunteered to be the OAPCE Representative. There were no objections and so elected.

The Catholic School Council Oath to be signed by all elected members after the meeting.

4. Reports:

STUDENT REPORTS:

Daniel and Isabel reported on behalf of Student Council and Shamrock Council (Shamrock brings the leaders of all the clubs together). The events planned are as follows:

September – grade 9 applications for student council reps received and planning the events for the year ahead.

October – Pep rally planned and Halloween Haunted House with a \$2.00 charge to walk through. Halloween Candy Grams also happening again this year. Bring in canned goods for Halloween for Hunger and a costume contest.

November – planning for a Cafe Fundraiser sometime in November and an “Enchanted Forest” school dance tentatively set for the 27th.

December – a number of spirit day are planned (cozy day, ugly sweater day, etc.). Spike ball Tournament or something similar. Candy Cane Grams again this year as well as the Christmas Talent Concert.

January – planning for a movie night around the 8th. Reps reaching out to students to see if having a lunch/opportunity(ies) for tips and tricks for successful exams would be helpful.

February - Candy Grams for Valentines Day. Match-a-Matics Friendship Tests Fundraiser.

March – Intramural Volleyball Tournament, with prizes available.

April - Easter bake sale, grade colour wars pep rally.

May - applications for new council members gets started and hoping to have a school competition with another school to promote school spirit.

June - is exams, and final Student Council meeting. Hoping to wrap up with a final movie night.

Council Response to Student Report

- Is physical cash being used? Yes, cash will be allowed in some cases for small sales, like the Toonie for the Haunted House. The Catholic School Board has also finalized the tap point of sale.
- In terms of spirit days there will be multiple opportunities to do civies days that are not themed or paid.
- Noted that a license to show a movie is need and teacher supervision and hiring security will likely be necessary. It would be similar to the school dance situation.

CHAPLIN'S REPORT

Principal Mark reported on behalf of Chaplin Dunn.

Opening Liturgy was held outside. The stands were packed and the band played, it was a great way to start the year. The next liturgy will be the Remembrance Day Liturgy.

Inside ND - follow ND on Instagram, 1700 followers last year and now over 3100 followers. Updates and information available here.

ND Live On You Tube – has all morning announcements which can be accessed by teachers or parents at any time after they occur.

Clubs – The Club Fair will be held on October 17th, 2025. If there is a club that is not in existence. Students are encouraged to start one up with approval from Principal Mark. Mr. Cychner has started up a chess club which is new this year.

Orange Shirt Day - for Indigenous Awareness was last week

Prayer Services – Deacon Shaw comes in every Thursday to lead prayer services. Last year he taught about the parts of the mass and the reason for them. Daily morning prayer available in the chapel at 8:05.

Irish Cares - is ND's in house charitable organization. Any money that is collect goes back to ND families in need. Proceeds from paid Civvies days also goes to Irish Cares.

Halloween for Hunger - Canned goods collection on October 31st.

Faith Day – this Friday for staff – joining with Corpus Christi starting with mass and then break out sessions. The Priest will also give a motivational speech.

Jubilee Cross – Thursday, November 6, 2025. ND will receive the Jubilee Cross, which is travelling to each school throughout the year. Sacred Heart is going to walk the cross halfway and ND will meeting them to transport it to the school. Then it will go to St. Tim's next.

Angel Campaign – donations from fundraisers held throughout the year are given to families in need at Christmas time.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Principal Mark went through the dates of the next meetings. Send any agenda items to Sheila. Please add your name and email address to the sign in sheet so that you can be added to the distribution list for future meetings.

Council of Chairs Meeting – October 22, 2025.

Evening with Bishop Crosby – date to be determined.

Construction Update – The facelift of the front entrance is almost complete. The funds were allocated from the board for this purpose. Picnic tables and more places for kids to sit have been added. The design of the front areas represents the Rose of Mary and the rocks represent a rosary. Landscaping classes are working on the areas by the green house. Flag poles went up today. Accessible walkway from the bus stop and a ramp also added. Inside renovations coming up will be in the Culinary and Cosmetology classrooms. The Board said yes to equipment requested by the teacher. Expecting this Upgrade to start in February.

Parent/Teacher Interviews - October 23, 2025

ND Show Case Night – October 29, 2025 – The Grade 8 Curriculum Night and the STEAM Information Night will be combined. ND has great academic programs and the trade and technology programs are best in the Board as well as manufacturing and landscaping. This event to be posted on social media.

Extra Curriculars – fall sports and many of the clubs have started up again

School Play – December 3, 4 and 5, 2025

5. Questions/New Business:

Bishop Crosby Dinner – do we want to purchase a table at \$1000.00 for this charity dinner? All proceeds go to the Catholic Childrens' Foundation. Principal Freeman to go ahead with securing a table once the date is determined and an email will go to the Council members to invite those who would like to attend. – ACTION REQUIRED

Cafeteria – has been closed due to the sprinkler head malfunction in the freezer. Cafeteria staff is diligently making sure that the work can proceed. Hoping to have it open on October 14, 2025. Free breakfast from Food for Thought available through the Social Justice Group. Suggested having pizza brought in again as well.

Grade 9 Take Your Kid to Work Day – November 5th, 2025. Grade 8 day happens on the same day.

Paid Civics Days Clarification – it was explained that paid civics days raise money for Irish Cares. The \$20.00 donation pays for the paid civics days. The wording was not clear on the last announcement and will be reworded next time so there is no confusion. The question was raised if this initiative excludes some students, which was agreed is possible. If there are any ideas about how to raise money for Irish Cares in a different manner please submit these we can also have a brain storm session as a collective at a future meeting.

Activity Fee - It is for the year book and locks etc. The possibility of having the 20 dollars donation and the \$65.00 activity fee at the same time. This is not feasible from an accounting point of view as they are separate line items. It was suggested that the financial clerk make sure that the line items on School Cash On-line indicate clearly what year the activity fees are for as this is confusing from year to year.

Fire Drills – The required drills; 6 fire drills total (3 in the Fall and 3 in the Spring) 2 bomb threat drills (one in the fall and one in the spring) and one lock down drill.

ND Student Population – currently 1015 students, this year is the largest incoming grade 9 class in the last 5 years at 273 students with 110 in the STEAM program

6. Next Meeting(s):

Monday, November 10, 2025 – 6 p.m.

Monday, December 8, 2025 – Christmas Social – 6 p.m.

Monday, February 2, 2026 – 6 p.m.

Monday, April 13, 2026 – 6 p.m.

Monday, June 8, 2026 – Year End Social – 6 p.m.

7. Closing

Motion to adjourn made by Christine and seconded by Luke. Motion carried. Principal Mark closed with prayer.