

THE MINUTES OF THE FAITH AND EQUITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING held on Thursday, February 22, 2024 6:30 p.m. in-person at the Catholic Education Centre or virtually using: <https://meet.google.com/bcg-phfh-zdg>

PRESENT:

Trustees/Members: Loretta Durst (Trustee/Chair) Mary Ann Martin (Trustee/Vice-Chairperson), Jennifer Angelo, Tenesia Benjamin, Jeff Hockett, Julianne Charette, Jessica Devlin, Bart Scollard, Shawn Panio, Lindsay Bowen, Jennifer Koch, Jacqueline Gorveatt, Wendy Tedford, Father Paul Massel

Administration: Julie Selby

Recorder: Shannon Carr

Absent/Regrets: Madelyn Gaskell, Alexa Purves, Nora Shaughnessy, Kim Fletcher, Stephanie Dahl, Angela Clarke, Christine Haffie, Emily Lukasik, Branden Fonovic

A. Call to Order:

1. Welcome and Introductions

Loretta welcomed everyone attending the meeting in person or virtually.

2. Land Acknowledgment - Julie Selby

Loretta asked Julie to lead with the Land Acknowledgement.

3. Opening Prayer - Lindsay Bowen

Loretta asked Lindsay to lead with Opening Prayer.

4. Additions to the Agenda

None.

5. Approval of Agenda

MOTION: Moved by Mary Ann Martin, seconded by Lindsay Bowen, that the Agenda be approved.

Carried

6. Declarations of Conflicts of Interest

None.

7. Approval of the [Minutes](#) of the Meeting on Thursday, October 12, 2023

MOTION: Moved by Jennifer Koch, seconded by Jennifer Angelo, that the Minutes be approved as presented.

Carried

8. Business Arising from the Minutes
None.

B. Discussion/Presentations:

1. Equity Action Plan Update and Professional Learning - Benjamin

Benjamin reminded the committee of the four key priority areas that comprise the Equity Action Plan which are Governance, Inclusive & Responsive Education, Climate and Prevention of Discrimination & Harassment and Religious Accommodation. Each key priority has multiple actionable items attached to it with its own clear monitoring framework tied to the anticipated outcomes.

Benjamin reviewed PVNC Catholic's progress with the Equity Action Plan and outlined the next steps. Currently, the board has been analyzing public consultation results since November 27, 2023 and will continue to review results until the end of February 2024. The Equity Action Plan will be finalized in June 2024 and will be implemented beginning September 2024.

2. Black Excellence Opening Ceremony - Benjamin

On Friday, January 19, 2024 PVNC Catholic celebrated Black Excellence Day. Black Excellence Day commemorates the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (birthday is January 15), and invites us to join the conversation about racial justice and equity. On this day, millions of people remembered the influence of this civil rights leader's work on racial equality. Age appropriate selected resources were shared to schools for both Elementary and Secondary students.

On Thursday, February 1, 2024 PVNC Catholic hosted their first Black History Month Opening Ceremony. The ceremony brought together key partners to stimulate dialogue, honour Black Canadian pioneers and change makers and celebrate their role in shaping our communities. The ceremony was PVNC Catholic's continued effort to canvas actionable techniques and approaches to alleviate anti-Black racism and improve future outcomes in a range of settings, including work and education. Guest speakers included Senator Bernadette Clement, Dwayne Morgan (The godfather of spoken word), Tony Baptiste and Nadine Williams. "Ours to Tell" was the theme of the ceremony which was a huge success attracting approximately 240 guests in attendance. Guests included trustees, senior team, principals, vice principals, Equity Leads, Black Employee Network (BEN), staff, students from Black Students Association, parents, community partners and invited dignitaries.

An open discussion took place amongst the committee members that attended the ceremony. Members that attended the ceremony voiced their positive experiences and felt the ceremony was very inspiring to themselves and others that attended.

3. Faith Ambassador and Chaplain Roles - Jennifer Koch & Father Paul

Each secondary school within PVNC Catholic has their own Chaplaincy Leader. The Chaplain plays a crucial role in pastoral leadership and coordinating the Pastoral Plan. Chaplains organize retreats for students and staff, prepare class masses, engage in daily prayer service and scripture reading, support peer meditation, and provide Eucharistic ministry among many other roles. Chaplains are also the lead on coordinating faith in action programs for secondary students which include Service to Seniors, local missions, Share Lent, youth shelters, Development and Peace and St. Vincent de Paul Society. Additionally, Chaplains are consistently liaising with parish and diocesan staff, Board chaplain, other Chaplaincy Team Leaders, parent councils and Board committees as required. They act as a member of the school crisis intervention team and accompany students to the When Faith Meets Pedagogy Youth Forum.

This year Chaplain Meetings have taken place in different parishes within our board in order to build further connections between schools and parishes. Each meeting begins with Mass celebrated by the priest designated to support the secondary school within that area. Additionally, the Catholic Women's League (CWL) has been generous enough to provide lunches to staff during their meetings.

Each of our elementary schools has a Faith Ambassador; some bigger schools may have more than one. A Faith Ambassador's role is to help support the PVNC Pastoral Plan and Religious Education & Family Life programming within their respective school. By doing so, Faith Ambassadors will attend central professional development sessions and share the learning and information with the other staff within their school. Ambassadors will provide guidance, resources and will help support meaningful faith community-building activities throughout the year. They will also provide opportunities for faith development, support school liturgies and work in collaboration with the school's respective parish.

Professional learning that Faith Ambassadors have engaged include: faith sharing, eye of cross and bridges projects, christian meditation, synodal prayer, adult faith formation, faith day planning, wise practice sharing and relationship building with family of schools and secondary school chaplains.

Deacon Shawn Panio shared with the committee his own experience as being the Chaplain at St. Stephen Catholic Secondary School in Bowmanville.

Deacon Shawn provided a “day at a glance” glimpse into a school chaplain and how they support staff and students.

Trustee Durst requested to have the Faith Ambassador and Chaplaincy Lead Roles presentation presented to the Board of Trustees.

C. Information Items:

1. Committee Member Updates

Jessica Devlin - Jessica shared a link to the video series called [Our Neighbourhood Video Series](#). Three of the people featured in the videos are high school students in Peterborough, one of them being a student at St. Peter Catholic Secondary School. The New Canadian Centre (NCC) has put in their next proposal to the Federal Government. The NCC is asking the Federal Government for a worker to be placed in Lindsay and if granted, would expand their program and continue to partner with PVNC Catholic in this area, as well as partner with Trillium Lakelands DSB. Jessica expressed her appreciation to PVNC Catholic MLL teachers from the board and all the teachers working so well with the new Canadian students.

Wendy Tedford - Wendy shared that members of the Catholic Women's League (CWL) are not in the schools as often as they were pre-covid, as the Rosary Prayer Program is not running in as many schools as it once did. CWL did try to work with students on the rosary program through Zoom meetings, however, it was not very effective. CWL is getting ready for their upcoming convention in May which will include a guest speaker and Bishop Miehm celebrating with an opening mass followed by a workshop.

Jeff Hockett - Since October, the PVNC Catholic Special Education (Spec Ed) department has had three days of professional development for Special Education Resource Teachers (SERT), curriculum chairs of special education and other support staff. The Spec Ed department is continuing to look at reading and interpreting data from Acadience with each school SERT. The Spec Ed central team is continuing to ensure SERT's are keeping up to date and following the correct process on SRT's and IPRC to ensure things are not missed. Central staff are continuing to work with school resource teams to look at student needs, how are we meeting those needs and once we identify the needs, how are we supporting the students.

Julianne Charette - Principals are busy finishing up Black History Month activities and beginning activities for Lent. Principals are really working hard to incorporate student voice. Julianne has found more elementary schools are forming committees of students who are passionate about equitable opportunities for all.

Lindsay Bowen - PVNC Catholic Literacy focuses on the Right to Read which

is driven from equity and ensuring students are not left behind. The purpose of the screener is to catch learning delays as quickly as possible, and to implement timely, focused interventions rooted in structured literacy.

MLL has two major priorities, the first priority is MLL itinerant teachers are working with school teachers to review student profiles. This is beneficial to do at the start of the semester as opposed to the end of the semester so the classroom teacher can incorporate specific feedback into the classroom. The second priority is implementing the “Step Wheel for Language Proficiency” and making it more accessible to parents. This strategy would be similar to the french immersion wheel but would incorporate multiple languages.

Jennifer Angelo - Throughout January students engaged in classroom christian meditation. Central staff created teacher resources as some teachers find confidence in leading the meditation with physical resources in hand.

The Ministry of Education has required all students in Grades 7 and 8 to receive the Mental Health Literacy Modules. Each module has a Catholic component attached to it within the curriculum. Last year the course was offered to Durham region only however, this year it has been expanded provincially and educators across Ontario can sign up. PVNC Catholic principals have really promoted it as it is a valuable resource. Jennifer acknowledged that some topics being discussed are more triggering then others so the mental health team is ensuring that social workers are on hand to provide support to students.

Work with “The Third Path” is well under way. Currently 19 schools (and 54 staff) are participating and have had 4 sessions thus far. Part A of the training is “trauma informed classrooms”. Currently the team is on Part B of the training which involves teachings about restorative practices, led by Vice-Principal of Holy Trinity Catholic Secondary School, Laura Di Ianni.

Bart Scollard - Bart along with his colleague Andy continue to visit each of PVNC Catholic’s 36 schools throughout the course of the school year. OECTA Provincial has three dates in a row scheduled with the Province for bargaining next week (week of January 26). Bart is hopeful this is a positive sign that they are close to settling, especially since the other unions have settled on an agreement. Next week is the 80th anniversary of OECTA which will be celebrated with mass and their general meeting.

Jacqueline Gorveatt - One of the current focuses of the Indigenous Education department is the creation of Administrative Procedure (AP) 705 - Indigenous Education. The AP is currently on PVNC Catholic’s engagement platform to collect feedback from various stakeholders. Stakeholders can fill out the survey on the platform during the consultation period between February 28 to March

17, 2024.

The Indigenous Education Team was invited to an equity speaker series at Trent University to speak with their teacher candidates. The teacher candidates were looking to hear from the team's experience in education about how to decolonize. Jacqueline felt it was a great experience for all involved and the team spent a fair time talking about medicine wheel pedagogy, the importance of taking care of yourself and the specific practices within PVNC catholic.

The Indigenous Education Team continues to encourage and support indigenous education student ally groups. St. John Catholic Elementary School has created a student ally group and Jacqueline is hopeful that this inspires other elementary schools to create one as well.

The Indigenous Education Team provided all secondary schools with a resource called "This Place" which reflects indigenous voices. This resource, which supports the NBE 3C and 3U courses, also came with a teacher's guide to help guide the conversation with students. The team picked a resource that would have a balanced perspective between First Nation, Métis and Inuit perspectives.

D. Next Committee Meeting:

1. Next meeting is Thursday, May 9, 2024 (Large Boardroom from 6:30 - 8:30pm)
2. Agenda items for next meeting, please contact Shannon Carr
3. Selection of committee member for Land Acknowledgement
 - a. Julianne Charette
4. Selection of committee member for Opening Prayer
 - a. Father Paul Massel
5. Selection of committee member for Closing Prayer
 - a. Julie Selby

E. Conclusion:

1. Closing Prayer – Julianne Charette
Loretta asked Julianne to lead with Closing Prayer.
2. Adjournment
MOTION: Moved by Mary Ann Martin, seconded by Lindsay Bowen
The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 p.m.