

## AGENDA

### Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting

Wednesday, December 4, 2019, 7:00 pm

Board Room, Catholic Education Centre

*Mission: Disciples of Christ, nurturing mind, body, and soul to the fullness of life.*

*Vision: Changing the world through Catholic education.*

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1. Part 1: Transitions to Secondary for Diverse Learners; Rosanna Commisso and Laura Pincente

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#### K. Future Meetings

January 15, 2020

February 12, 2020

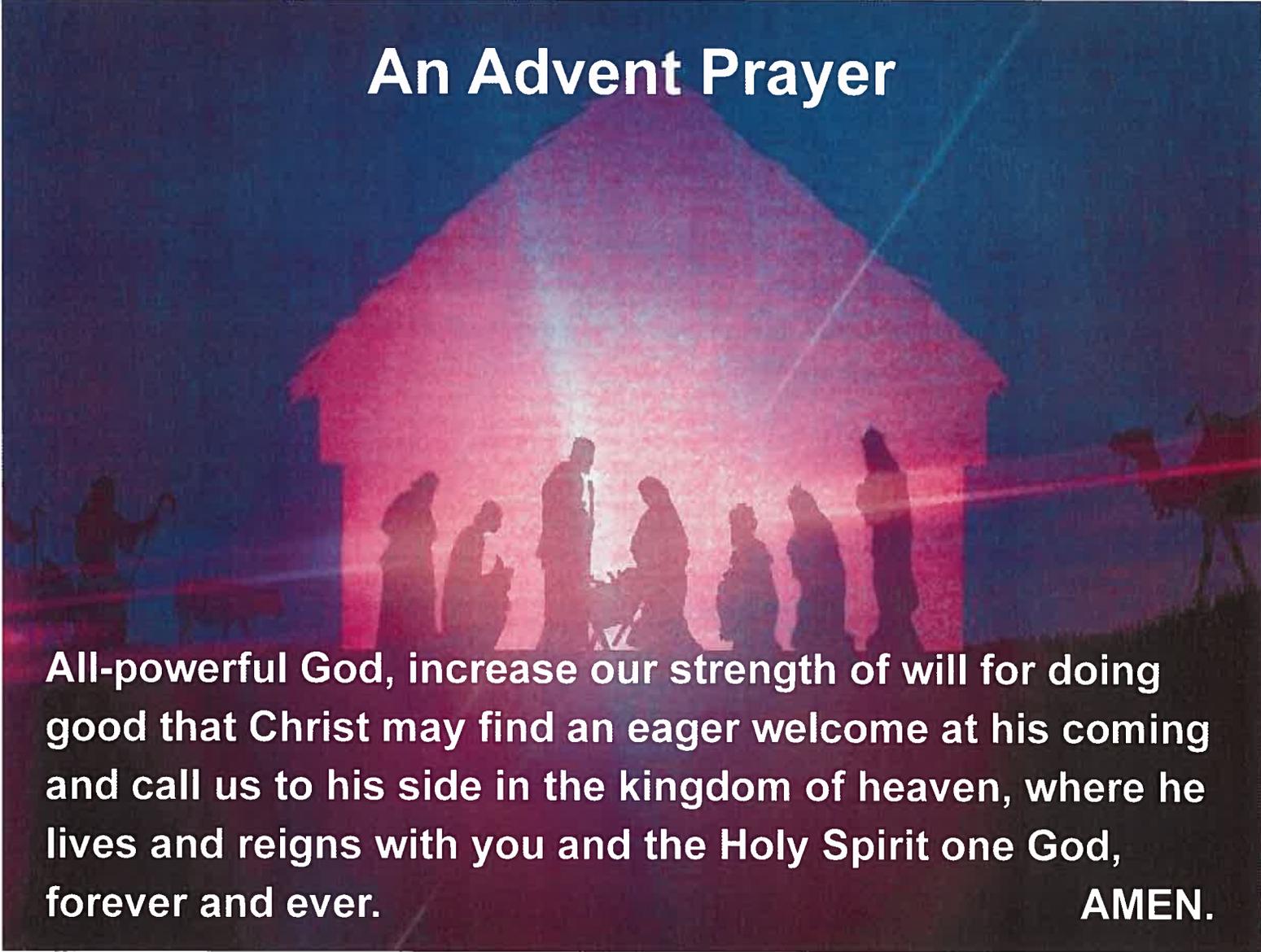
March 11, 2020

April 22, 2020

May 20, 2020

June 10, 2020

**L. Adjournment**



## An Advent Prayer

All-powerful God, increase our strength of will for doing good that Christ may find an eager welcome at his coming and call us to his side in the kingdom of heaven, where he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit one God, forever and ever. **AMEN.**

## MINUTES

### Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting

Memorial: St. Francis Xavier Cabrini

Wednesday, November 13, 2019, 7:00 p.m.

Board Room, Catholic Education Centre

Chair: Luz del Rosario  
Vice Chair: Leslie Silvestri  
Trustees: Luz del Rosario, Stefano Pascucci, Bruno Iannicca, Thomas Thomas  
Superintendent: Deb Finegan-Downey, Special Education and Learning Services

#### Committee Members:

Luz del Rosario, Trustee, Mississauga Wards 6 & 11  
Leslie Silvestri, Learning Disabilities Association of Peel Region  
Stefano Pascucci, Trustee, Mississauga Ward 4  
Bruno Iannicca, Trustee (Alternate), Mississauga Ward 7  
Thomas Thomas, Trustee (Alternate), Mississauga Ward 5  
Myra Del Rosario, ABC Association for Bright Children  
Nancy Vrbaneck, ABC Association for Bright Children (Alt.)  
Dely Farrace, Brampton Caledon Community Living  
Janice Hatton, Autism Ontario, Peel Chapter  
Airene Cunanan, Autism Ontario, Peel Chapter (Alt.)  
Lissette Gaylie, Easter Seals Ontario  
Caroline Huxtable, Epilepsy South Central Ontario  
Rose Casaccia, Canadian Mental Health Association/Peel  
Maria Demata, VOICE/Peel Parents for Hearing Impaired Children (Alt.)  
TBD, VOICE/Peel Parents for Hearing Impaired Children  
Christine Koczmar, Community Living Mississauga  
Heather Bialowas, Down Syndrome Association of Peel: Caring Network  
Celeste Encila, Down Syndrome Association of Peel: Caring Network (Alt.)  
Laurie-Anne Clark, CCCSC, Member at Large

Rosie Della-Spina, Recorder

#### Staff:

David Amaral  
Deb Finegan-Downey  
Cairine MacDonald  
Cathy Bova  
Sharon Chambers  
Frances Campese  
Jason Pratt  
Christiane Kyte  
Joanne Dean  
Kate Hann  
Yulanda Julien  
Debra Lean  
Rosanna Commisso  
Shannon Pompili Bosco  
Sabrina Baiana  
Tammie Cameron  
Laura Pincente  
Jacqui Toste  
Michael Schaus  
Lori Austin  
Kelly MacDougall  
Blair Patterson  
Laurie Eschli  
Cristine Pergotski  
Kellie Donaher

**REGRETS:** L. Silvestri, J. Hatton, C. Koczmar

**ABSENT:** N. Vrbaneck, A. Cunanan, C. Encila, M. Demata, R. Casaccia

**A. Routine Matters**

1. Call to Order and Attendance

Trustee, Stefano Pascucci, called the meeting to order at 7:10p.m. Attendance was taken, regrets noted and guests welcomed. Members and Staff changes were acknowledged.

2. Acknowledgement of First Nations Sacred Territory

Trustee Pascucci, acknowledged the sacred territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

3. Opening Prayer

Members were asked to keep the 2 boys who were killed this week in our prayers led by Trustee Stefano Pascucci.

4. Approval of Agenda November 13, 2019

**Moved by Dely Farrace**

**THAT THE AGENDA BE APPROVED.**

**CARRIED**

5. Approval of Minutes, SEAC Meeting October 9, 2019 Be Approved

**Moved by Heather Bialowas**

**THAT THE MINUTES OF SEAC MEETING, OCTOBER 9, 2019, BE APPROVED.**

**CARRIED**

6. Previous Business

NIL

**B. Presentations and Staff Reports**

1. Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board Multi-Year Strategic Plan, Learning and Achievement - Provincial Assessments; Max Vecchiarino, Superintendent, Policy, Strategy & Global Learning; Brad Kipfer, Researcher; Special Education Staff

Superintendent, Max Vecchiarino presented a slide show presentation and shared with members the *2019-2023 Multi-Year Strategic Plan*. The Mission and Vision have been changed to something more focused and direct. The Mission Statement defines Dufferin-Peel, its objectives and its approach to reach those objectives and the Vision describes the desired future position of Dufferin-Peel. *The Strategic System Plan 2014-2019* identified 7 principles that guided the work of the *Catholic Board Improvement Learning Cycle (CBILC)*. *The 2019-2023 Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP)* was finalized in the summer of 2019 and has a five-value framework that reflects: DPCDSB's identity as a Catholic institution and Ministry of Education foci on achievement, equity and inclusive education, well-being, and public confidence in publicly funded education. The five-value framework includes:

Believe, Excel, Respect, Thrive and Trust. Many of the goals of the 2018-2019 CBILC have been retained in the 2019-2020 CBILC, while additional ones have been added to expand the CBILC. The CBILC has been re-organized into the five value areas and lists action steps and all large scale and/or system-level data sources for monitoring progress. Superintendent Vecchiarino introduced Brad Kipfer to do his presentation and went on to mention that much of the research done by Brad helps with the development of the MYPSP.

Brad Kipfer and Shannon Pompili Bosco reviewed the 2018-2019 EQAO results for Diverse Learners. Shannon reviewed with members that the CBILC is rooted in human dignity and our shared beliefs as a Catholic School Community; The Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations guide our work; and the whole child is looked at when supporting students on their individual pathways. Information will be provided on current EQAO results and strategies, supports and next steps will be discussed as we move forward to improve student achievement and well-being. EQAO is one measurement tool of many which we look at. Through the Ministry's direction, EQAO is administered to students in age appropriate grades and does not allow for modifications to the assessment; accommodations can be provided as per Ministry specifications; The whole student is looked at, being mindful of the individual strengths, needs and goals when measuring success; measures include other academic assessments, teacher assessments and qualitative assessments. Brad reviewed the results of for Primary, Junior and Grade 9 students which are received in the fall of each year while the grade10 OSSLT results are received in early summer. Gifted students' performance over time meet the standard on EQAO junior assessments, Grade 9 academic mathematics and the Grade 10 OSSLT. Students with special needs were above the Province and there was notable success for students with a learning disability. Students with mild intelligent disability ranked higher on the OSSLT province-wide. Attitudinal data from student surveys is taken into consideration when analyzing EQAO data. Ongoing professional development opportunities for teachers in the areas of literacy and math; networking and professional learning opportunities to resource teachers/Academic Resource Department; opportunities through program department for mainstream teachers to experience professional learning opportunities; and opportunities provided to teachers to increase capacity in using technological tools to enhance curriculum access for students are some of the strategies to support diverse learners. We continue to emphasize the need for knowing the learner as our foundation. Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board and the Ministry of Education supports regular class with special education supports as the first placement consideration for all students where self-contained class with special education supports is an option for some students. Robotics and Coding is being introduced to Elementary Gifted Classes, ASD Classes, Communication Classes in both Elementary and Secondary and Elementary and Secondary Needs Moderate/Needs Severe Classes as an additional tool to support students through the use of technology. The Equals Math Program which is a new tool, supports the development of numeracy skills that is being introduced to support students in Elementary ASD Classes, Elementary and Secondary Communication Classes and Elementary and Secondary Needs Moderate/Needs Severe Classes. Questions were taken.

2. Financial Services Presentation; Julie Cherepacha, Executive Superintendent Finance, Chief Financial Officer & Treasurer; Brian Hester, Superintendent Financial Services; Guy Arangio, Budget Manager; Domenic Santucci, Grants Administrator

Executive Superintendent, Julie Cherepacha thanked SEAC Members for their input to the budget development process last spring. The last presentation from Financial Services was in April during the 2019-2020 Budget Process. Last March the Ministry of Education made an announcement regarding funding cuts and changes to education. The government was also announcing changes to the Ontario Autism Program. It was a significant challenge to develop the budget for this year due the announcement of over \$14M in funding cuts and required expenditure reductions over \$16M. Very difficult decisions brought forward to the Board of Trustees for approval. Local Priorities Funding (LPF) was not continued and therefore, almost 100 staff positions attached to this funding had to be cut. Specific to Special Education and Learning Services, the LPF supported 5 APSSP positions and 22 ERW positions, however a decision was made to try to keep some of the ERW positions rather than lose all of them. We were successful in submitting a balanced budget, however, Revised 2019-2020 Estimates are currently being worked on with updated information and are due to the Ministry in December. Due to lower enrollment than projected, this will affect funding which is heavily dependent on enrollment. The Team reviewed the detailed information of the Special Education funding for both elementary and secondary panels. Questions were taken.

3. Update: Planning for "Preparing Your Child with Differing Abilities for the Sacraments" and PRO Grants; Special Education Staff

Shannon Pompili Bosco gave an update on parent engagement evenings and apologized for the delay in getting information out to members but due to uncertainty of funding and possible labour issues. The flyer for the Information Session to Support the Transition of Students with Differing Abilities into school in September 2020 will be going out to schools and will be sent electronically to members by R. Della-Spina. The date for this session is January 29, 2020 and we hope that more parents will attend. We are also planning the session Preparing Your Child with Diverse Learning Needs for the Sacrament. Our flyers for this event will also be going out soon and a copy will be sent electronically. Unfortunately, we still have heard nothing from the Ministry regarding PRO Grants but feel both of these sessions are necessary to move forward with. Questions were taken.

**C. Budget**

NIL

**D. Reports from Trustees**

Trustee, Stefano Pascucci thanked members for giving up their time to attend SEAC meetings.

The government has changed the name and funding model for PRO grant, making it more difficult to get parents engaged.

There has been news regarding lead in our water. The author of the article did not take everything into consideration when article was written. Results were for Canada not Ontario. Rosie to send the link to members look under news on website and search water testing results. Dufferin-Peel is well below what provincial requirements are and most results were from older schools in Toronto. We are keeping within the regulations and we are keeping on top of it. Testing is done

through a third party. Questions were asked and Superintendent Mathew Thomas, Planning and Operations, who was present, answered questions and informed members.

Vaping in our schools is becoming a big problem in our schools. The Board is trying to stop this from happening in our schools and on property. We have signs put up on all board property.

New members to SEAC were welcomed by Trustee Pascucci.

**E. Information/Reports from Community Associations**

Lisette Gaylie of Easter Seals Ontario wanted to advise SEAC members of a survey that was sent by Provincial Parent Association Advisory Committee (PAAC). Superintendent Deborah Finegan-Downey told members that she just received this information and will need to look into the matter and speak to the Vice-Chair.

**F. Work Group**

NIL

**G. Information and Correspondence**

NIL

**H. Communication**

1. CCCSC Letter Regarding PRO Grant for SEAC Approval

Laurie-Anne Clark, Member At Large - CCCSC

The Central Committee for Catholic School Councils (CCCSC) drafted a letter on behalf of CCCSC and SEAC to the Minister of Education regarding the effect of funding which was significantly lower than previous years. Laurie-Anne Clarke spoke on behalf of CCCSC requesting SEAC members to review the letter and to forward their input. Superintendent Finegan-Downey suggested members forward their input to R. Della-Spina by Tuesday, November 19, 2019. SEAC has been promised \$15,000 for our Parent Engagement evenings.

**I. Questions Asked of, and by, Committee Members**

NIL

**J. Questions asked by Public**

Parent asked about the way we test our students and if there was a way to assess students instead of pen to paper testing. The parent put forth a challenge to change the way in which we assess and referred to universal design for learning. Concerns about what students know but have a difficult time expressing on paper. Superintendent Finegan-Downey responded to the question relaying that each student learns in different ways and many of our identified students are not going into self-contained because they are being accommodated in the main stream. There are accommodating activities at the end and sometimes working in groups as well as other multi ways of testing. We also have scribes for students that are non-verbal.

**K. Future Meetings**

December 4, 2019 (Advent Liturgy at 6:30 p.m.)

January 15, 2020

February 12, 2020

March 11, 2020

April 22, 2020

May 20, 2020

June 10, 2020

**L. Adjournment**

**Moved by** Dely Farrace

**THAT THE MEETING BE ADJOURNED AT 9:07 p.m. .**

**CARRIED**

November 7, 2019

**TO:** Denise Dwyer  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Indigenous Education and Well-Being Division  
Minister of Education  
Mowat Block  
Queen's Park  
Toronto, ON M7A 1L2

**From:** Chairperson CCCSC  
Central Committee for Catholic School Councils,  
Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board  
40 Matheson Boulevard West  
Mississauga, ON L5R 1C5

**DATE:** November 7, 2019.

**Subject:** Declaration from the Central Committee for Catholic School Councils,  
Special Education Advisory Committee, Board of Trustees  
Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board, Regarding Impact  
of Changes to the Parents Reaching Out Grants Funding.

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On October 1, 2019, the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board (DPCDSB) received an Ontario Transfer Payment Agreement and communication from the Ontario Ministry of Education pertaining to an update on 2019-2020 Priorities and Partnership Fund (PPF) funding that the DPCDSB will be receiving for the 2019-2020 school year, particularly as related to Parents Reaching Out Grants funding. We are responding to this development on behalf of the Central Committee for Catholic School Councils, Special Education Advisory Committee, and the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board of Trustees.

Central to our Declaration of Concerns is our concern about the inequity of the allocation provided through a Transfer Payment Agreement model and that barriers that are now created because of the changes, as opposed to “removal of barriers that prevent parents and families from participating and engaging fully in their children’s learning.” (*Ontario Ministry of Education, Parents Reaching Out Grants, Schedule “C”, Objective, page 22., October 1, 2019*)

The DPCDSB, its schools, classrooms and communities are adversely affected by the changes to the funding the Board will be receiving for the 2019-2020 school year. The DPCDSB will be granted a predetermined funding amount for parent engagement projects through a Transfer Payment Agreement. This change to the funding model creates inequities and barriers for all students, parents and staff within the DPCDSB. Some of our most vulnerable students with Special Education needs, English Language Learners, Immigrants who are new to Canada and

Indigenous students are just a few examples of those within our board who will be detrimentally affected by this funding cut.

It is imperative to note that the total PRO-Grant funding for this year is only \$46,174.00, which is a dramatic decrease from previous year amounts over \$93,000.00. In previous years, Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board schools had the opportunity to apply for \$1,000.00 PRO-Grant funding. In the 2018-2019 school year, 93 Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board schools submitted applications for \$1,000.00 (\$93,000.00 plus) in funding and Special Education Advisory Council also received \$13,000.00. Many of our PRO-Grants supported key Strategic Plan initiatives and Student Well-Being initiatives within our schools. Diverse student and community needs, as well as an equitable approach through the previous year's PRO-Grant funding enabled schools to offer keynote speakers, resources for classroom use and parent resources, to address critical issues, such as bullying, social media awareness, mental-health and well-being, parents engagement, and supporting community partnerships. The proposed funding for this school year, 2019-2020, is less than half of what Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board has received in years past.

DPCDSB has a long history of parent engagement and we can assure you that all of our parents are aware of these cuts and are extremely disappointed that the Ministry of Education would take away such an important component of schools, that is, parent engagement.

We are sending our Declaration of Concerns to you because this has adverse impacts on school life for our students, parents, staff and community partners. Our priority continues to be our students and providing the best possible education for all students to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. As evidenced in the Multi-Year Strategic Plan developed by the Board of Trustees in consultation with the larger community, DPCDSB has a high priority to promote positive health and well-being in all of its school communities.

As education partners, parents and community members, we want to ensure our students/youth have the opportunities to mature and develop to their full potential, in safe, healthy learning environments, which enable each student to achieve success. We work together to promote the importance of well-being, promoting high levels of student achievement, and equity of access while removing barriers that prevent parents and families from participating and engaging fully in their children's learning.

With the Transfer Payment Agreement funding now being \$46,174.99 for this school year, 2019-2020, there is no equity of access, particularly for our smaller schools and for our most at risk populations of students with special education needs. Our marginalized groups, Indigenous students and English Language Learners and parents who were previously engaged in the learning process through PRO Grant funding in excess of \$100,000.00 will now not have any of those tremendous opportunities because of these cuts. The new model proposes that the limited funding be shared between groups, which create barriers to learning, equity, well-being and inclusion.

With the limited funding provided through the new model for PRO Grants, the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, as they pertain to education, cannot be achieved. This is counter to the measures of the Canadian Federal Government. Specifically, Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action adversely affected by the new model of PRO Grant funding are as follows:

10. ii. Improving education attainment levels and success rates.

- 48.i. Institutions, policies, programs, and practices comply with the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- vi Enabling parents to fully participate in the education of their children.

(The above excerpts are taken from the Canadian Government, Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action.)

We believe the changes to the PRO Grant funding model create barriers for all students, parents, staff and community partners, particularly Indigenous students. It is important to note that within the DPCDSB, our self-identified Indigenous student population, number of students with special education needs, immigrants new to Canada and our English Language Learning population are increasing. With less PRO Grant funding and an inequitable approach to allocation of the funds creates barriers to achievement, well-being, social and emotional needs of our diverse population.

As educational partners, we are continuing to work in collaboration with the Ontario Ministry of Education to promote high levels of student achievement, student, parents and staff well-being and a focus on the whole child, mind, body and spirit. The Central Committee for Catholic School Councils, Special Education Advisory Committee and the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board of Trustees, recommendations include that the Ontario Ministry of Education establish working committees or tables with key school board stakeholders, such as our parent engagement members, to review adverse impacts on our school, students and learning communities, as a result of the changes to the funding model for PRO Grants.

In closing, the Central Committee for Catholic School Councils, Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board, believes that a review of the new funding model for PRO Grants be undertaken immediately.

Sincerely,

Central Committee for Catholic School Council

Special Education Advisory Committee

Board of Trustees