

**GEORGES VANIER CATHOLIC SCHOOL**  
**CATHOLIC COMMUNITY CULTURE AND CARING ACTION TEAM MEETING**  
**[CCCCAT]**

Monday, November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024 @ 3:45pm  
Library

MINUTES

Attendees: Marta Baltazar (Teacher), Daniel Birkenbergs (Principal), Alexis Commander (Parent), Antonina Cornacchia (Teacher), Andrew Laporte (Teacher), Najma Mohamed (Peel Public Health Nurse)

Regrets: Nadia Pizzani (Teacher), Nicole Sunseri (CYW)

1. Welcome & Introductions

- D. Birkenbergs welcomed team and began with a prayer and land acknowledgement
- D. Birkenbergs invited round table introductions and welcomed all participants to the team
- D. Birkenbergs thanked individuals for their active participation throughout the meeting

2. Purpose of Committee and Committee Objectives

- D. Birkenbergs set context for committee; required under Safe Schools legislation
- Team to meet 3 times over the course of the school year
- Catholic values and faith at centre of committee; team to focus on safety, security, care and well-being of students
- Committee to determine areas of focus and discuss initiatives and action plans to address identified needs
- Committee to function as advisory to school administration; whole-school, solution-focused approach to identified needs

3. Safe Schools Review / CCCC Climate Survey / Bullying Prevention & Awareness Initiatives

- For context D. Birkenbergs briefly reviewed the context for the school in terms of what initiatives are in place and how the school will enhance the school plan moving forward
- Briefly referenced socio-economic context of school

4. Goal Setting

- Team asked to consider 3 areas of focus for 2024-2025 school year to improve the sense of community and belonging at Georges Vanier Catholic School
- Based on discussion and initiatives from previous years, 3 areas of focus emerged as priority for the team
  - i. Faith Focus: Plan an in-school half-day retreat during Lent for all grades across the school focused on our Faith, the theme of Catholic Education Week: Pilgrims of Hope and the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations (OCSGE)
    - Sub-committee to be formed within the school to plan for event in late January/early February 2025
    - Retreat will follow similar format to last school year; target date is March 7, 2025

- ii. Community & Belonging Focus: Explore opportunities to enhance students' feelings of a welcoming and caring community at Georges Vanier Catholic School
- Many initiatives already occurring within the school in this regard (e.g., Anti-Bullying lesson from ROP, Anti-Bullying Week initiatives, Virtues/OCSGE assemblies, BRAVE workshops)
  - School will continue to capitalize on various opportunities to build community and prevent bullying through various activities throughout the school year
  - Increased focus on equity across the school and working towards identifying dismantling barriers for students
  - Monthly focus to support anti-bullying practices school-wide and to engage students in ways to decrease bullying incidents within the school and the community; initiatives to start with provincial Bullying Prevention & Awareness Week (November 18-22)
  - PALS to continue at the school this year; led by S. Iannizzi
  - Seek ways to support restorative justice practices and to establish and promote positive relationships amongst students
  - Virtuous Vikings program launched last year is continuing; staff to discuss ways of enhancing engagement
  - Concerns expressed from staff regarding "othering" of peers by students; apparent shift in incidents being reported where intent is harmful to student character; discussion ensued on ways to address and approach behaviour trend with students
  - Essential component will be support of larger community including parents/guardians; currently parents/guardians focus heavily on actions of other students; need to focus on individual accountability of all students for their actions
  - Focus this year to include creation of villages/houses to build school community and focus on prosocial skills development; launch to occur in December 2024
- iii. Health & Wellness Focus: Student Mental & Physical Health
- School engaged in a variety of well-being activities last year which will continue this school year (e.g., Bell Let's Talk Day, Junior paint day, etc.)
  - Intermediate students participated in a board-wide Mental Health Leads training session in September 2024
  - School accesses and utilizes various resources to support student mental health (e.g., SMHO platform)
  - Seek ways to support personal resiliency amongst students to support strengthening student mental health
  - N. Pizzani continues to lead the Health Snacks program within the school to great success
  - N. Pizzani to once again spearhead the process to certify our school as an OPHEA Healthy School this year

## 5. Open Discussion

- N. Mohamed will shared resource for teachers (target age group: late Junior/Intermediate) to address vaping
- N. Mohamed to assist with planning for villages/houses initiatives to support community building
- N. Mohamed to facilitate Healthy Eating habits during Nutrition Month (March)
- N. Mohamed provides a PPH information blast with a variety of resources and activities for healthy well-being and active living; D. Birkenbergs will share with committee as received moving forward
- N. Sunseri continues to facilitate school-wide weekly wellness activities

### *Next Meeting*

- *February 2025 (exact date/time TBC)*