Pope Francis Catholic Elementary School

Parent Council Meeting Minutes

Date: October 21, 2026

1. Approval of Previous Minutes

- Minutes from the September 23, 2026, meeting were approved.

2. Principal's Report

School Updates

- Portables are now operational, with students moving into the classrooms on Friday, October 16.
- Current student enrolment is 375.
- Pizza Days will move to Tuesdays beginning in November.
- The Thanksgiving Food Drive was successful, collecting 295 lbs. of food.
- Christmas community outreach initiatives are being considered:
    - The school may bring back the *Tree of Warmth* initiative from last year.
    - Hats and mittens were suggested as practical donation items.
    - Donated items could also support families within the school community.

Grade 8 Trip & Fundraising

- The Grade 8 trip is planned for Brock University, with students staying in residence, likely two per room.
- Trip dates are being reviewed, as students cannot miss three school days.
- Grade 8 students will be fundraising through greenery sales.
    - Funds will be collected by staff and distributed equally among participating students.
- Toonie Treat Days have been well received and enjoyed by students.

Student Leadership Team

- The Leadership Team is organizing the upcoming Halloween celebrations.
- Pumpkins are expected to arrive Monday and will be decorated by Wednesday.

    - Donating the decorated pumpkins to the zoo is being considered.
- A school assembly will take place at the end of the month, featuring students selected for their Halloween costumes.

Child and Youth Worker (CYW) Initiatives

- The school's CYW is providing support across classrooms and during recess.
- A peer leadership initiative is being developed, with senior students trained to assist students in Grades 1–3 during outdoor recess.
    - The program will run several days per week.
    - The goal is to encourage positive behaviour, provide structured activities and keep students engaged.
- The CYW is also working with Grade 3 students through the SNAP program.

3. Student Learning & School Improvement

School Improvement Initiatives

- As a new school, Pope Francis has been designated a priority school and is receiving additional educational support.
- A consultant is working primarily with Grades 1 and 6 to strengthen mathematics, while also supporting other classrooms.
- Mathematics and literacy remain key areas of focus.
- Junior and intermediate grades are placing additional emphasis on mathematics.

Grade 3 EQAO Results

- **Reading:** Results exceeded both the Ontario and school board averages.
- **Writing:** Results have declined. Grammar, sentence structure and the potential impact of technology were discussed as areas requiring attention.
- **Mathematics:** Results were discussed; specific figures were not recorded.

Grade 6 EQAO Results

- **Reading:** Strong results, with 91% achievement.
- **Writing:** Results exceeded the average, with 94% achievement.
- **Mathematics:** Results were below average.

    - Ashley is providing additional support in this area.
    - Curriculum scope and sequence are being followed.
    - An action plan is being developed to support student achievement.

4. School Communication & Upcoming Dates

Online Communication

- Current communication methods will remain unchanged.
- The school will continue sharing updates and encouraging family involvement in upcoming activities.

Faith Development

- The October liturgy was successful, with strong student participation.
- Grade 8 Confirmation is scheduled for November 7.

Progress Reports & Parent-Teacher Interviews

- November 9 – Progress reports distributed.
- November 19–20 – Parent-teacher interviews.
- November 20 – Professional Development (PD) Day.

5. Treasurer's Report

Popcorn Fundraiser

- Current funds raised: **$684**.

Teacher Reimbursements

- Each teacher has been allocated $200 for classroom purchases.
- Teachers have been encouraged to use their allocations by the end of November.
- Unused allocations will remain earmarked for the respective teachers.
- Remaining balance in the teacher reimbursement fund: **$5,689.30**.

MacMillan's Fundraiser

- Approximately $200 had been raised at the time of the meeting, with additional orders anticipated closer to the deadline.
- The November 13 order deadline will be promoted in the school newsletter.

- Concerns were raised regarding dietary restrictions, particularly gluten-free options and nut allergies.
- Pickup was discussed for December 13, after 5:00 p.m.
- Additional promotional opportunities include:
    - Increasing awareness through social media.
    - Contacting the Chamber of Commerce to explore potential opportunities for promotion or involvement.

Chocolate Fundraiser

- The previous chocolate fundraiser generated approximately **$6,000**.
- Repeating the fundraiser around Easter is being considered.

Hot Lunch Program

- The program continues to be well received.

6. Upcoming Events & Fundraising Initiatives

Valentine's Dance-a-Thon

- Although the previous Dance-a-Thon was not a significant fundraiser, it was enjoyed by students and staff.
- A Valentine's Day theme is being considered for the next event.

Movie Night

- A movie night was discussed as an easy-to-organize family engagement event.
- Approval will be required before proceeding.

Christmas Cookies with Santa

- Proposed date: **Weekend in December (after further discussion via WhatsApp, thinking a Friday might be better)**
- Estimated capacity of the gym: Approximately 550 attendees.
- Cookies are estimated to cost $8 per dozen.
- Plans include:
    - A visit from Santa.

    - A photo booth or designated photo area.
    - A fireplace-themed backdrop.
- Photo booth arrangements and additional event details are still to be determined.

Food Safety

- It was noted that only one individual with the required food safety certification is needed for events involving food preparation or handling.

7. New Business

Parents Reaching Out (PRO) Grant

- The previous grant supported a guest speaker who presented on bullying.
- Council members were encouraged to begin considering ideas for the next application.
- Suggested topics included:
    - Parent engagement and strategies to support mathematics learning at home.
    - The importance of continuing Catholic education beyond elementary school.

Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) Grant

- The PIC Grant supports initiatives that strengthen parent engagement and involvement.
- Approximately **$660** is available for parent engagement initiatives.
- Council will consider opportunities to use these funds.

8. Next Meeting

Date: Wednesday, November 18, 2026
Time: 6:00 p.m.