

**Niagara Poverty Reduction Network (NPRN)**  
**January 24, 2018 9:00 am- 12pm Niagara Catholic District School Board**

**Present:** Glen Walker (Chair), Melenie Neamtz (Vice-Chair), Don Brown, Ruthann Brown, Laura Ciccone, Natalie Chaumont, Ashley Chiarello, Tamara Coleman-Lawrie, June Corman, Vicky Doidge, Carole Fuhrer, Julie Gregory, Ann Harrison, Amber Hughes, Sara Johnston, Jenna Kirkwood, Lori Kleinsmith, Samantha Messier, Sandy Rempel, Chrissy Sadowski, Jennifer Sauvé, Greg Shupe, Krystal Snider, Nicole Sutherland, Carol Stewart-Kirkby, Marc Todd, Jen Trozzi, Barbara Van Der Heyden, Suzanne Veenstra, Francesca Vergalito, Ron Walker, Erin Walters, Ann Watters, Mary Wiley

Item	Discussion
<b>1. Welcome</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The meeting minutes for September 13, 2017 were approved as written.</li> <li>The agenda was approved as written</li> </ul>
<b>2. Coordinating Committee Report</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current bank account holds \$6,465.66</li> <li>Reminder to new members who have not yet signed the <a href="#">membership agreement</a> form can submit it to <a href="#">Natalie</a>. Members are also encouraged to recruit others who can contribute to the work of NPRN.</li> </ul>
<b>3. Task Group Updates</b>	<p><b>Health Equity:</b> By consensus, a <a href="#">letter written in collaboration with the HEART Project</a> was endorsed by NPRN members. Members are also encouraged to sign the petition individually at <a href="https://heart-program.com/petition/">https://heart-program.com/petition/</a>. The letter will be submitted to the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant (HNHB) Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) CEO and its sub-region anchor tables and includes the following two recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a pilot program offering dedicated triage in Niagara Health emergency departments with specialized services and peer support for patients with mental health concerns. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A dedicated triage and ‘wrap around’ services in the emergency department for mental health concerns has the potential to improve patient care while improving emergency department function, reducing admissions, facilitating earlier discharge, improving continuity of care within the community upon discharge, and reducing workload for staff.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Develop a comprehensive strategy that is aimed to improve interactions with people who are experiencing homelessness. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A comprehensive strategy, including cultural competency, sensitivity, and safety training specific to mental health, homelessness, and poverty, as well as incorporating human resources policy, could offer an effective means of improving healthcare experiences and outcomes for vulnerable community members.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Operations and Orientation:</b> By consensus, the policy <a href="#">6.0 Education Support Policy</a> and the <a href="#">Educational Support Request Form</a> were approved by NPRN members. The policy outlines NPRN’s use of funds for members to attend education opportunities with a goal to further the individual and network knowledge base.</p> <p><b>Marketing:</b> Focus continues on sitting MPPs and candidates. The NPRN infographic is currently on hold as we look for local data.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business cards were developed for members to help when networking and promoting NPRN. Contact <a href="#">Natalie</a> to request cards.</li> <li>Anyone interested in participating on a Video Task Group to help develop short educational videos can contact <a href="#">Natalie</a>.</li> </ul> <p><b>Business Engagement:</b> Survey for NPRN about members’ connection to local businesses is being developed. Also looking at recruiting more Living Wage certified employers.</p> <p><b>Affordable and Accessible Child Care:</b> Looking at the impact of minimum wage increase on child care and challenges related to non-licenses child care.</p> <p>Work and Wages: Presentation was made to Positive Living Niagara a newly certified Living Wage employer. Anyone interested in certifying can apply here: <a href="http://www.ontariolivingwage.ca/become_a_living_wage_employer">http://www.ontariolivingwage.ca/become_a_living_wage_employer</a></p> <p><b>Anti-Stigma:</b> The task group is working on submitting a seed grant to the Ontario Trillium Foundation</p>

Item	Discussion
<b>4. Roundtable Discussion – Provincial Election &amp; Youth Strategy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poverty Free Ontario signs from the last provincial election are available for use, contact <a href="#">Natalie</a> if interested in using them.</li> <li>• Anyone interested in participating in a task group to focus on the provincial election can contact <a href="#">Natalie</a>. The task group can use the existing position papers to develop talking points and question, meet with candidates and attend town hall meetings</li> <li>• This task group could evolve into a municipal election task group or a new task group could be formed</li> <li>• Feedback from the Brock Youth Summit included that faculty and schools could use support in connecting with local expertise on different issues to help support youth. A youth strategy task group will be struck with Deb Ogilvie as the lead. Please contact <a href="#">Natalie</a> if you are interested in participating.</li> </ul>
<b>5. Living Wage Presentation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mary Wiley, Executive Director of Niagara Connects presented the <a href="#">2017 Living in Niagara Report</a> and a <a href="#">video</a> presented during the report launch.</li> <li>• For a hardcopy of the report, contact <a href="#">Mary Wiley</a>.</li> </ul>
<b>6. Everyday Advocacy – Housing Position Paper</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Glen Walker <a href="#">presented the Housing Task Groups Position Paper</a>.</li> <li>• By consensus, the Housing – <a href="#">Rent Supplement Position Paper</a> was endorsed by NPRN members.</li> <li>• <a href="#">Rent Supplement Position Paper Background</a> is also available for more information</li> <li>• Discussion followed about how to proceed with the paper:</li> <li>• Recommended staying connected to the Niagara Aging Strategy in Thorold and others. Contact through <a href="#">Mary Wiley</a>.</li> <li>• Rent supplements are not always enough with rising rent costs</li> <li>• Quality of units can be poor – is there a standard?</li> <li>• The City of St. Catharines has an affordable housing plan and we should encourage other municipalities to do the same</li> <li>• Recommended presentations and delegation to Municipal and Regional Councils</li> <li>• Policy paper should be shared with front-line housing coordinators</li> </ul>
<b>7. Other</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Income Security Response from Niagara Poverty Reduction Network</a> to the province's <a href="#">Income Security: A Roadmap for Change</a> report</li> </ul>
<b>Next Meeting</b>	<p><b>Please mark your calendar for the next meeting date. All meetings are from 9:00am - 11:30am at the Niagara Catholic District School Board (427 Rice Road, Welland)</b></p> <p>January 24, 2018  March 21, 2018  May 23, 2018</p> <p>Transportation assistance is available, contact <a href="mailto:Natalie.chaumont@unitedwayniagara.org">Natalie.chaumont@unitedwayniagara.org</a> for information.</p>