



Information Memo

To: Council-In-Committee Meeting
Date: September 09, 2025
Division: Community and Development
Department: Parks, Recreation and Culture
Ward: All Wards
Subject: Partnership to Preserve Local Educational History

Recommendation(s):

That the Information Memo CDS-25-016 regarding the transfer of archival records from the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board be received as information;

And that the Mayor and Clerk be authorized to execute the Transfer Agreement, and any other documents necessary to complete the transfer.

Background

This memo is to update Norfolk County Council on a potential partnership with the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board (BHNCDSD) to transfer archival records to the Norfolk County Archives in an effort to make the records more publicly available and to ensure the long-term preservation of the records.

For nearly two decades, a volunteer-run organization called the Friends of the Educational Archives provided support to the BHNCDSD in managing their archival records. Their mission was to recognize, document, preserve, share and promote the history of the schools of the Grand Erie District School Board and the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board and its predecessors. The Friends of the Educational Archives maintains an active board and has been a registered charity since 2016. The group has been actively cataloguing the records but there has never been a public space where these records could be made publicly available. For several years, the Friends of the Educational Archives along with the BHNCDSD have been looking for a new partnership that would allow these records to be publicly accessible.

Discussion:

The Norfolk County Archives' primary function is to act as the repository for all County records that have been designated for permanent archival retention. However, it is also within the Norfolk County Archives mandate to acquire and preserve archival records

from other significant regional corporate bodies that have had a major impact on Norfolk County's history and culture.

A significant yet often overlooked aspect of local history is the archives of our local educational institutions. The BHNCDSD has a rich collection of archival records that document the early history of schools in Norfolk County and the local area. Taking custody of these records would allow for the Norfolk County Archives to make the records accessible to the community for conducting research on family history or local schools more generally. Furthermore, under the custody of the Norfolk County Archives, the records could be more effectively catalogued and digitized meeting the Heritage & Culture department's strategic priority to expand digitization efforts.

Secondly, transferring these archival records to the Norfolk County Archives would allow for a new partnership with the BHNCDSD and the Friends of the Educational Archives. The partnership with the Friends of the Educational Archives would provide the Archives with new volunteers to assist with cataloguing and digitizing the school board archives. The partnership would also provide long-term funding for the collection as the organization has pledged to cover costs of moving the records and provide \$1,000 a year to cover any expenses related to supplies or digitization. Furthermore, the Friends of the Educational Archives, as a registered charity, have the opportunity to apply for grants to support ongoing work with the collection.

Finance Comments:

There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report as the organization is proposing to cover any costs of transferring the archival records.

In the Proposed 2026 Levy Operating Budget and future budgets, the County may start budgeting for an external recovery from the organization to offset the costs of any expenses in accordance with the Draft Transfer Agreement (Attachment A), ensuring there is no increase to the net levy requirement as a result of this increased level of service.

Attachment(s):

- Attachment A: Transfer Agreement

Conclusion:

The archival records held by the BHNCDSD encompass a wealth of information about the educational history, achievements, and challenges of the community. By integrating these archival records into the Norfolk County Archives collection, staff can ensure that these valuable historical records can be made more accessible and be preserved for future generations.

Approval:

Approved By:
Al Meneses, Chief Administrative Officer

Reviewed By:
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Melissa Collver, Director, Heritage & Culture

Prepared By:
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