



Durham Catholic District School Board

MINUTES of the **SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE** meeting of the Durham Catholic District School Board which was held in the North Board Room of the Catholic Education Centre, 650 Rossland Road West, in Oshawa on **Tuesday, September 15, 2015.**

Present

P. Pulla
V. Derby
L. Cook
K. LeFort
M. LePage
T. McGarry
J. McCafferty
E. Van de Klippe
T. Vetere

Staff

J. Bowyer
C. Baetz
D. Mullane
S. Phoenix
K. Remiz

With Regrets

V. Adamo
B. Cummins
M. Feeheley
L. McInnes
L. Smart
J. Vermulst

S.E.A.C. Representatives

B. Larson, APSSP
L. Wardle, Principal/Vice Principal Association
C. Colligan, OECTA

CALL TO ORDER

Item a.1 **Memorials and Prayer**

Vice-Chair P. Pulla called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m. and offered the opening prayer

Item a.2 **Roll Call and Apologies**

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Item b.1 **Changes to Printed Agenda:**

- f.3 Approval of Minutes of June 2, 2015
- f.4 Business arising from Minutes June 2, 2015
- f.5 Approval of Special Education Plan

Item b.2 **Approval of Agenda**

Motion No. SS-2015-09-15-01 Approval of Agenda

Moved by K. LeFort seconded by T. Vetere

“THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the agenda of the Tuesday, September 15, 2015 meeting as amended”

Carried

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Superintendent J. Bowyer introduced new Student Services staff member Kate Remiz, Assistive Technology Coordinator.

CONSIDERATIONS OF MOTIONS

None

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Item e.1 **Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

None

ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN

Item f.1 **Approval of minutes of the Special Education
Advisory Committee Meeting of May 5, 2015**

Motion No. SS-2015-09-15-02 Approval of May 5, 2015 Minutes

Moved by K. LeFort, seconded by M. LePage

“THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the Minutes of the May 5, 2015 meeting as submitted.”

Carried

Item f.2 **Business Arising from the Minutes of the Special Education
Advisory Committee May 5, 2015**

None

Item f.3 **Approval of minutes of the Special Education
Advisory Committee Meeting of June 2, 2015**

Motion No. SS-2015-09-15-03 Approval June 2, 2015 Minutes

Moved by J. McCafferty, seconded by L. Cook

“THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the Minutes of the June 2, 2015 meeting as submitted.”

Carried

Item f.4 **Business Arising from the Minutes of the Special Education
Advisory Committee June 2, 2015**

None

Item f.5 **Approval of the Special Education Plan 2015**

Motion No. SS-2015-09-15-04 Approval June 2, 2015 Minutes

Moved by T. Vetere, seconded by K. LeFort

“THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the Special Education Plan 2015 as submitted.”

Carried

PRESENTATIONS

Item g.1 **Summer Rays Program**

S. McKenna

Superintendent Bowyer introduced Sue McKenna, Teacher/Librarian at St. Bridget Catholic School and Coordinator of the Summer Rays program, who presented an overview of the program, which is Ministry funded and has just completed its second year at DCDSB.

The primary focus of Summer Rays is achievement in literacy and numeracy for students who have completed kindergarten and will be entering grade one. A pamphlet from this year’s program was shared with SEAC members.

DELEGATIONS

None

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

none.

STAFF REPORTS

Item k.1 Coordinator's Report – Kate Remiz

Mental Health Update

As per Ministry requirements, an updated Mental Health Action Plan has been created for 2015-2016. This year, we'll be expanding and deepening the work we've been doing.

In May, we started offering safeTALK, a suicide alertness training, appropriate for all staff. The two sessions have been well-received by staff thus far, and we will be offering at least six sessions this school year.

One of our goals this year is to increase student and parent involvement. We're including student and parent voice on our Mental Health and Addiction Steering Committee, and (new this year) we'll be hosting a parent Mental Health evening in February. As part of this event, parents will be invited to participate in various workshops, including a safeTALK training session.

Over the summer, we held one safeTALK and two Mental Health First Aid sessions, which were well-attended. For the first time, we opened up three spots to Community Liason Officers from Durham Regional Police Services. This was much appreciated by them, and they've asked to be included in future opportunities.

This summer, Diane Mullane visited the "Head Start" program at all seven sites to do a presentation for incoming grade 9 students on coping with stress. The Public Health Nurse assigned to each school also attended with Diane to share resources and reinforce the connection between physical and mental health. On the first day of school, all grade 9s (as well as 7s and 8s at Pereyema) received "Be Well" locker magnets, again, reinforcing this same message.

Student Services Coordinators' Update:

This summer, Tricia Dwyer-Kuntz, former Student Services Coordinator for Assistive Technology, and the team of AT Specialists ran Durham Catholic District School Board's Assistive Technology Camp. This day camp supports students in Grade 7 to 9 who use Assistive Technology. The camp facilitates relationships with other students who use Assistive Technology, as well as teaches students to be strong advocates for their learning needs. This camp was recently featured in the Oshawa This Week, with student voice prominently displayed. One camper stated, "I like learning more about my technology, learning little tricks and tips to make it easier to use."

This new year welcomes several new Program Support Teachers into our schools. To support the transition from Classroom Teacher to Program Support Teacher, Student Services will offer a mentoring program that pairs our new Program Support Teachers with seasoned Program Support Teachers. Under the guidance of Teresa Ezquerra, Coordinator of Student Services, the mentors and mentees will meet for 3-4 sessions throughout the school year. Mentors will also be a resource for our mentees on an "as-needed" basis throughout the year.

On September 23rd, we will have our first Program Support Teacher Meeting of the year, where PSTs and Principals will meet together. Topics presented will include presenting the new Speech and Language model, creating safe places, as well as presenting a common safety plan for schools across the system to use when programming for our students.

On November 3rd, Student Services will be presenting the 3rd annual ***Pathways to the Future... Looking Beyond Secondary School*** Carousels. Under the supervision of Lisa Coghlan, Student Services Coordinator, parents and DCDSB staff are invited to drop in to discover a carousel of agencies to learn more about post-secondary services and programs available for students with exceptional needs.

Item k.2 Superintendent's Report- J. Bowyer

Ontario Ministry Keys to Excellence in Education

Superintendent Bowyer presented the Ministry of Education priorities for the 2015-2016 school year.

DCDSB welcomes Jennifer Teefy to the Student Services Social Work Team.

Parents Reaching Out Grant – we are waiting for information regarding the funding for this grant and will be holding the Pathways event and Mental Health evening regardless.

Item k.2 Superintendent's Report- continued

Professional Development will be offered to our Life Skills teachers through several inservices throughout the 2015-2016 school year. The first, *Equals Math Training*, will be offered on October 5.

Durham Children and Youth Planning Network

Superintendent Bowyer updated members on the DCYPN and its subcommittee initiatives. Superintendent Bowyer is now representing all schools boards in Durham as the education representative on the Transition committee of the DCPYN.

Superintendent Bowyer invited Diane Mullane, Mental Health Leader, to provide an overview of her participation in the Community Mobilization for Suicide Prevention subcommittee. Diane provided information on several resources which have been shared with schools as part of World Suicide Prevention Day last Thursday, September 10, 2015. These include the BeSAFE phone app as well as posters, post cards, and a banner on the DCDSB webpage.

Safe and Caring Schools Week

September 21-25 is Safe and Caring Schools Week and resources have been shared with our schools under the theme: Witnessing Our Faith.

Each day has a theme for which prayers, announcements, and activities have been shared with the school community.

The themes for each day are:

Witness that Welcomes

Witness that Loves

Witness that Forgives

Witness that Lives the Gospel

Witness that Rejoices

On the final day, grade 7 to 12 teachers will share the BeSAFE app with students. Superintendent Bowyer recognized the work of the Safe Schools Steering Committee in preparing the materials and resources for this year's week of activities and support for students.

Sharing of Excellence Workshops

Superintendent Bowyer shared the 2015-2016 Sharing of Excellence Workshop flyer with SEAC members. This is the second year of the SOE program and the enthusiasm of staff for the previous year's workshops has illustrated the value of this learning opportunity. The number of workshops has been increased for this year and each inservice will be offered to a target group of staff members.

Superintendent Bowyer invited discussion among SEAC members in order to collaborate and submit any preferences in learning opportunities and/or presentations for future meetings.

Motion SS-2015-09-15-05

Approval of the September 15, 2015 Verbal
Coordinator and Superintendent Reports

Moved by K. LeFort seconded by J. McCafferty

“THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee accept the verbal
Coordinator and Superintendent Report at the September 15, 2015
Meeting.”

Carried

ASSOCIATION REPORTS

Autism Ontario – Durham Region – E. Van de Klippe

Healthy Living Initiative

October 17, 2015, 1- 4:30pm - All Saints Catholic Secondary School, 3001 Country Lane, Whitby, ON

Introducing the Healthy Living Initiative, a series of short workshops focused on helping individuals and families living with autism with motivation, self-regulation, nutrition and physical well-being. It is open to individuals with ASD of all ages, their families and caregivers, with a relaxed format and opportunities to connect with community partners and discover autism-related products. Tickets are \$4pp.

The Potential Program At a Glance 2014-15 Report is out and can be accessed at:

[http://www.autismontario.com/Client/ASO/AO.nsf/object/PotProgAtAGlance2014/\\$file/2015+at+a+glance+Final+may28.pdf](http://www.autismontario.com/Client/ASO/AO.nsf/object/PotProgAtAGlance2014/$file/2015+at+a+glance+Final+may28.pdf)

Transition to Life Program

We are excited to bring the Transition to Life Program to Durham Region. This is an exciting program offered by Integrated Autism Consulting for individuals with Asperger's Syndrome aged 18-28. It is a comprehensive 12 week course that will help young adults with ASD prepare for the demands and benefits of adult life, dealing with topics such as anxiety, safety, skill assessment, healthy relationships, employment and much more. The course will also entail community activities, social activities, personal coaching and work placements. Please read the flyer for more details and share with anyone you think may be interested. Space is limited to 10 participants. Applications are due September 11, 2015.

Grandview Children's Centre – V. Derby

Tape a Toonie event will take place in February 2016. More information to come, and all Durham schools are welcome to take part.

Community Representative– L. Cook

Shoreline Cleanup – Pickering Beach – Saturday September 25, 2015:

<http://www.shorelinecleanup.ca/en/cleanup/event/fall2013/rotary-park-pickering-beach>

ASSOCIATION REPORTS, continued

Community Representative– L. Cook, continued

Special Olympics Fall Programs include Learn to Skate and Speed Skating.

Cystic Fibrosis Canada – Durham Chapter – M. Lepage

Health Canada continues to approve new drugs, such as Kalydeco® which are having a miraculous effect as treatment for certain mutations of the Cystic Fibrosis gene.

The Durham Chapter held a very successful Golf Tournament in June to raise funds.

CORRESPONDENCE

- m.1 Upper Grand District School Board – May 25 (June Meeting)
- m.2 Brant Haldimand Norfolk CDSB – March 24
- m.3 Near North District School Board – May 21
- m.4 Durham District School Board – June 15
- m.5 Wellington Catholic DSB - June 17 (FASD)
- m.6 Wellington Catholic DSB – June 17 (Reg 274/12)

Motion SS-2015-09-15-06

Receive and File Correspondence

Moved by L. Cook seconded by T. Vetere

“THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee receive and file the correspondence at the September 15, 2015 Meeting.”

Carried

INQUIRIES AND MISCELLANEOUS

Letter to Ministry of Education

Committee members reviewed a draft of a letter from Chair Lynne Smart to the Minister of Education regarding Reg 274 and the impact on students with special education needs.

Motion SS-2015-09-015-07
Education

Approval to submit letter to Minister of

Moved by K. LeFort seconded by T. McGarry

“THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee submit a letter regarding Reg 274 to the Minister of Education.

Carried

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PENDING ITEMS

none

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Motion No. SS-2015-09-15-08 Adjournment

Moved by K. LeFort seconded by J. McCafferty

“THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting of
September 15, 2015 adjourn.”

Carried

CLOSING PRAYER

The closing prayer was offered by Vice Chair Pulla.

Paul Pulla
Vice-Chair, Special Education Advisory
Committee

Janine Bowyer
Superintendent of Education

Recording Secretary: Cynthia Mackey



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Chris N. Roehrig, Director of Education & Secretary



March 24, 2015

The Honourable Liz Sandals
Minister of Education
14th Floor, Mowat Block
900 Bay Street
Toronto, ON M7A 1L2

Dear Madame Minister

The SEAC of Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board is writing to support other SEACs across the Province regarding what we believe are unintended consequences of Regulation 274 and its impact on students, and specifically students with special education needs.

The BHNCDSB SEAC members agree that the method of hiring teachers heavily weighted by seniority is not always in the best interests of the students we serve. This is a significant factor for special needs students.

In-year staffing changes identify real challenges in ensuring appropriate staff are secured in a timely manner when subject to hiring under Reg. 274. If a teacher absence turns into a leave, occasional teacher(s) cover the time until a competition is completed. This practice can lead to a class of students having multiple teachers during one school year. This lack of continuity and consistency is disruptive and challenging for students of all ages and abilities.

We are aware of and encourage consideration of the challenges identified by Boards and Administration, and hope that the terms of this regulation will be reviewed to promote fair, consistent and student-focused hiring.

Sincerely,

Lisa Stockmans
Chair, Special Education Advisory Committee

c.c. BHNCDSB Board of Trustees
SEAC Chairs, Ontario School Boards



Near North

District School Board



The Honourable Liz Sandals
 Minister of Education
 14th Floor, Mowat Block
 900 Bay Street
 Toronto ON M7A 1L2

Office
 of the
 Director of
 Education

May 21, 2015

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 Web site:
www.nearnorthschools.ca

RE: Learning for All

Dear Minister Sandals,

Each school year, the Near North District School Board Special Education Advisory Committee undertakes a literature study in regards to Special Education. This past year, we have studied the "Learning for All" document as it relates to the students, teachers and administration in our board.

We were very impressed with the scope and positive ideas in "Learning for All". Our Board has adopted many of the assessment and instructional strategies contained in this document. As a SEAC, we fully support the view that what is beneficial for special needs students is beneficial for all.

We further recommend that "Learning for All" be the underlying focus of all courses in the new two year teacher education program. This could only further benefit education as a whole in Ontario.

In our opinion, the assessment strategies cited as best practices in the "Learning for All" document are at odds with the EQAO assessment practices. We believe that a review of the EQAO is needed to align the instructional and assessment strategies that our teachers are being encouraged to use with how the EQAO is administered.

We appreciate the opportunity to share our views with you.

Sincerely,

Sharon Walker, SEAC Chair
 Near North District School Board

Cc: SEAC Chairs Public and Separate



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Monday, June 15, 2015

Honourable Liz Sandals
 Minister of Education
 14th Floor, Mowat Block
 900 Bay Street
 Toronto, ON M7A 1L2

RE: Ontario Regulation 274/12 Hiring Practices

Dear Minister Sandals:

The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) of Durham District School Board (DDSB) is adding its support to the views expressed by many other school boards regarding the Ontario regulation 274/12 Hiring Practices.

The DDSB SEAC members are in agreement that the method of seniority based hiring may not be in the best interests of students with special needs.

In the *Ontario Regulation 274: Final Report* submitted by the Directions Evidence and Policy Research Group, LLP., suggests that input they received from Boards indicates, "We can't require additional experience or certificates beyond the requirements of Regulation 298 (for divisional and teachable qualifications, and Special Education or FSL where applicable)." Additionally, the report explains, "Regulation 274 may inadvertently contribute to the discontinuity of instruction that results when different teachers are assigned serially to the same group of students." There are clear indications that these shortfalls encumber the achievement and well-being of students, particularly those with special education needs.

In conclusion, the Durham District School Board SEAC members ask the Minister to consider revising the Regulation 274/12 to work towards supporting fair and transparent hiring practices that promote all students' achievement and well-being.

Sincerely,

Tara Culley
 Interim SEAC Chair
 Durham District School Board, SEAC

cc: Durham DSB, Board of Trustees
 ✓ SEAC Chairs, Ontario School Boards



@DurhamDSB



[https://www.facebook.com/pages/
 Durham-District-School-Board/447874875238636](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Durham-District-School-Board/447874875238636)



www.youtube.com/DurhamDSB



June 17, 2015

Honourable Liz Sandals
Minister of Education
22nd Floor, Mowat Block
900 Bay Street
Toronto, ON N7A 1L2

Dear Minister Sandals:

The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) of the Wellington Catholic District School Board would like to add its voice to the concerns expressed by other Ontario school boards and SEAC groups about the challenge schools face in meeting the needs of students with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). However, we feel strongly that rather than dedicated funding for students with FASD, Boards would be better served if the varied and challenging needs of students with FASD were considered in the allocation of special education funding for all students.

Conservative estimates suggest that 1 in 100 individuals are affected by FASD. However, far fewer numbers are actually diagnosed, as some of the criteria are difficult to confirm (e.g., prenatal alcohol exposure). Nonetheless, individuals with complex presentations and many of the secondary disabilities that occur with FASD are within our schools and have cognitive, social, emotional, and academic needs that exceed the capacity of regular student support. The resulting demand upon special education and student support resources makes it challenging to provide targeted, effective support with existing special education resources.

Further, for youth with FASD lack of clarity around the diagnosis and, subsequently, lack of access to treatment services, contribute to increasing difficulty at the intermediate and secondary level and into adulthood. As such, we fully support the Ontario School Boards' Association and membership in their appeal to raise awareness among educators about FASD, and ask that the Ministry of Education consider the needs of this often overlooked and underserved population in its allocation of funding for students with special needs.

These children and youth are valued members of our school community and, like all children in our system, deserve the specific accommodations they need to fully achieve their potential in their learning communities. Generally increasing funding for special education and student support, and acknowledging the very high needs of this often underserved population, will enable all schools to better achieve this goal.

Sincerely,


Gil Lavalley, Chair
Wellington Catholic District School Board Special Education Advisory Committee

Cc: Wellington Catholic District School Board of Trustees
Special Education Advisory Committee Chairs of Ontario District School Boards





June 17, 2015

Honourable Liz Sandals
Minister of Education
22nd Floor, Mowat Block
900 Bay Street
Toronto, ON M7A 1L2

Dear Minister Sandals:

Re: Ontario Regulation 274/12 Hiring Practices

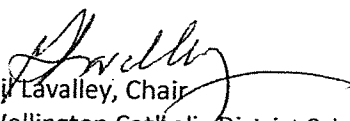
The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) of Wellington Catholic District School Board (WCDSB) is adding its support to the request from other district school boards to consider revisions to Ontario Regulation 274/12 Hiring Practices.

WCDSB's SEAC members agree that the method of hiring teachers heavily weighted by seniority is not always in the best interests of the students, particularly students with special needs. In addition, basing teacher hiring primarily on seniority does not allow school administration the ability to select the best candidate to meet the needs of students and the school.

Students who have special education needs have been identified as requiring both specialized individualized services and transition planning support. Therefore, minimizing changes to teaching staff in classrooms where measurable progress is being demonstrated by teachers whose personality, experience, attitudes, and education/qualifications are well suited to specific needs benefits the students. Hiring the best teacher for the job and not the teacher with the most seniority assists in ensuring those teachers with specialized skills are matched with students who can most benefit from those skills.

In conclusion, Wellington Catholic District School Board's SEAC members strongly urge you to consider revisions to the Regulation which would support and value the special skills required to achieve those goals.

Sincerely,


Gill Lavalley, Chair

Wellington Catholic District School Board Special Education Advisory Committee

Cc: Wellington Catholic District School Board of Trustees
Special Education Advisory Committee Chairs of Ontario District School Boards

