

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, November 6, 2018.**

<b>Present</b>	<b>Staff</b>	<b>With Regrets</b>	<b>Absent</b>
V. Adamo (Vice-Chair)	J. Bowyer	K. LeFort	
K. Burke	H. Killoran	C. Pegler	
C. Nosseir	D. Lood	T. McGarry	
J. McCafferty (tele)	D. Mullane	L. McLellan	
M. LePage			

**S.E.A.C. Representatives**

B. Larson, APSSP  
L. Wardle, Principal/Vice Principal Association

**CALL TO ORDER**

**Item a.1 Land Acknowledgment**

**Item a.2 Memorials and Prayer**

Vice-Chair Adamo called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m. and offered the opening prayer. She welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**CONSIDERATIONS OF MOTIONS**

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

None

## **PRESENTATIONS**

### **Item g.1      Review of EQAO Data for Students with an IEP      C. Corso**

Christine Corso, Teaching and Learning Numeracy and Science Consultant, shared EQAO data that detailed the position of DCDSB's Students with Special Education needs relative to the province. She shared what areas of the testing may present challenges (e.g., application questions versus knowledge and understanding) to those students. Christine Corso detailed steps DCDSB has taken to assist those who require additional aids (e.g., scribes). She noted that DCDSB is typically in line with the province's EQAO scoring or slightly above. She also responded to questions from the Committee as they arose.

### **Item g.2      Review of Special Education Component of Board Improvement Plan      J. Bowyer**

Superintendent Bowyer provided a detailed overview of the Celebrating Inclusion component of the DCDSB Student Well-Being and Achievement Board Improvement Plan. She noted that there are 3 main priorities under this component; Universal Design for Learning with a focus on the Mental Health and Addictions Strategic Plan, Differentiated Practice with a focus on implementing effective strategies that meet the diverse needs of all students and Precise and Personalized Intervention with a focus on continued improvement of individual education plans. Superintendent Bowyer noted that an electronic copy of the document can be accessed on the Board's website.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **Item h.1      Service Animals**

Superintendent Bowyer shared that DCDSB currently has three service dogs in the school system; DCDSB has generally had two to three service dogs at any time over the last 10 years.

Superintendent Bowyer advised that DCDSB's Service Animals procedure falls under the Accessibility Policy (PO434) titled Use of Service Dogs in Schools by Students AP414-7. Superintendent Bowyer shared that this administrative procedure was written in April 2010, revised in October 2016 and will likely be revised again when the Ministry of Education completes its review of Service Animals in Ontario schools. Both the policy and procedure are available on the Board website.

Superintendent Bowyer stated that the current stance of DCDSB and Boards across the province is that service dogs are allowed into the school setting when it is deemed that the service dog is essential for the student to access the curriculum.

Superintendent Bowyer shared that there are steps that must be followed in terms of informing the community; steps the family must take in terms of getting a certified service animal from specific certified organizations; training for staff and students, and processes for dealing with the routines of a dog. She continued that it is a long process when it is the first time a dog is being brought into the school.

**DELEGATIONS**

None

**NOTICES OF MOTIONS**

None

**STAFF REPORTS****Item I.1      Coordinator's Report – H. Killoran**

Helen Killoran, Autism Services Consultant advised that an expression of interest for the Registered Behaviour Technician (RBT) training was sent to the Educational Assistants in October. The posting closed on Friday, Nov. 2. Ten participants will be chosen by lottery, for this term. The training will take place at OMAC for 10 full day sessions, with supply coverage provided. Geneva Centre offers the course as an online certificate. Professional Learning Community sessions are facilitated by the BCBA and Project Coordinator. Program Support Teachers are participating school will also be receiving an overview of the training, with support for how to incorporate this new learning into their students' IEPs.

Helen Killoran shared that DCDSB has received funding from the Ministry of Education to offer an afterschool program focused on the development of social skills for students with an autism spectrum disorder. Two programs that are currently being offered are PEERS and the Robotics Social Club. 24 students began the PEERS social skills program for adolescence on the spectrum, at Arch. Denis O'Connor C.S.S. last week. The course runs over 16 weeks for 1.5 hours a week. Two classes are being offered on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. The Robotics Social Club program is being offered to students in grades 4 – 6 who participated in the Friendship Lab. The program will continue to create opportunities for participants to learn social skills, make friends and socialize with peers over a common interest and enhance their session of engagement and belonging. The Club will meet on Tuesday evenings for four weeks beginning November 13<sup>th</sup>.

Helen Killoran also shared that 20 staff members from student services and program support attended the Geneva Centre Symposium 3-day conference on October 24-26<sup>th</sup>. Some of the topics included ASD and mental health, how to support inclusion in the schools, ABA, sensory processing, mindfulness, CBT, challenging behaviour, social skills development, new technology and transitions into post-secondary and beyond.

Helen Killoran advised that 13 members of student services and one of the EIC teams were trained in PEAK at the end of September, in Kingston. The PEAK Relational Training System is an evaluation and curriculum guide for teaching basic and advanced language skills from a contemporary behavior analytic approach. Participants from student services, including BCBA's and SLPs are collaborating to offer a pilot program to facilitate the program in the EIC classrooms.

Helen Killoran shared that Pathways to the Future...Looking Beyond Secondary School (Nov 6) Today had 21 various community agencies represented at a Pathways to the Future...Looking Beyond Secondary School event. Parents, students, educators and Program Support teachers dropped in between 2-4 and 6-8 at the Pope Francis Centre to learn more about post-secondary services and recreational and employment opportunities.

**Item I.1**      **Coordinator's Report – H. Killoran (cont'd)****Durham Catholic District School Board Learning Profile**

Helen Killoran provided more detail regarding the DCDSB Learning Profile. She noted that since February 2018, a committed group of Program Support Teachers, lead by Student Services Coordinator, Corrie Plommer, have been working diligently to create a Learning Profile that will be used system-wide for all students with Individual Education Plans at the elementary and secondary levels.

This Learning Profile Working Group has researched what the “Benefits of Knowing Students as Learners” looks like, as well as identifying the 5 important dimensions of learning. These dimensions of learning include:

- Biological traits
- Cultural and Societal Factors
- Emotional and Social Influences
- Academic Performance
- Learning Preferences

Helen continued that the final stages of creating the template are underway and will be ready for classroom and program support teachers to access through the IEP Online program toward the end of this school year with a focus on students in grade 8 who are transitioning to grade 9.

**Item I.2**      **Mental Health Report – D. Mullane**

Diane Mullane, Mental Health Leader shared that a number of capacity-building sessions for staff took place during the month of October, including Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST), safeTALK and Mental Health First Aid.

Diane Mullane also shared that the parent conference took place on October 17. Unfortunately, Dr. Jean Clinton had to cancel again, but fortunately Diane Mullane found Dr. Brenda Smith-Chant from Trent University, who seamlessly filled in with very short notice and did a fantastic job. The feedback was extremely positive and the event was a great success.

Diane Mullane noted that on October 19, Social Work and Psychological Services staff participated in a professional learning opportunity on the topic of Non-Suicidal Self-Injury with Dr. Stephen Lewis from University of Guelph. Feedback was positive and the training will help develop some board guidelines for dealing with students who self-injure.

Diane Mullane shared that October was also a busy month for student conferences, including the Talking About Mental Illness (TAMI) Secondary Summit on October 23 and the Durham Youth Drug Awareness Committee (DYDAC) conference on October 29. Both of these events were well attended by our high schools.

Diane Mullane advised that in November, DCDSB is offering two MindUp café's (Nov 6 and 13) to share this program with elementary educators as one option that they might consider for bringing mindfulness to their classrooms. Supporting Minds: Mental Health Literacy Series over three evenings will also be running.

Diane Mullane also advised that a safeTALK session is open to all staff on November 20. Diane Mullane will also be co-facilitating a safeTALK session to a group of parents and community members as part of our involvement on the community Youth Suicide Prevention Action Group.

**Item I.2**      **Mental Health Report – D. Mullane (cont'd)**

Diane Mullane shared that on November 8 & 9, DCDSB will be very visible at the Canadian Educators Conference on Mental Health (CECMH). Herself and Pam Garant (All Saints teacher) will be co-facilitating a workshop titled Engaging Youth in Anti-Stigma Activities. In addition, an All Saints student will be doing a testimonial, and Anne O'Brien, Director will be participating on a Directors Panel and will also share the board's experience with the Elephant in the Room Campaign.

Diane Mullane also shared an All Saints Catholic Secondary School video, showcasing their Stomping out Stigma initiatives for 2017-2018.

**Item I.3**      **Superintendent's Report - J. Bowyer**

Superintendent Bowyer congratulated Lisa Coghlan, and all of the coordinators and consultants for organizing today's Pathways to the Future event and shared that there was a wonderful turn out from parents and program support teachers.

Superintendent Bowyer shared that in two weeks it is Bullying Prevention and Intervention week – schools will be hosting a number of activities that week. As well, there will be a contest to create a new DCDSB pink shirt for the February Pink Shirt Day. It has been three years since the last t-shirt contest, so in keeping with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Board and the year of Joy, a good idea to do it again. This is also the year in which all schools of the Board are expected to do the School Climate Survey. All students in grade 4 to 12 are asked to complete the survey. Students with special education needs will be given support so that they too can participate in this survey as much as possible. All parents are invited to participate in the survey as well. Superintendent Bowyer noted that the link is on both the Board and school websites for the entire month of November.

Superintendent Bowyer advised that all of DCDSB's administrators and managers will be participating in training focused on the Ontario Human Rights Code tomorrow – specifically what it means in a school setting to ensure that we are removing barriers that prevent all DCDSB students from having an equitable access to education.

Superintendent Bowyer advised that the funding announcement of October 17, 2018 was a reiteration of the information received in August. The changes in the way in which the Ministry of Education is administering special education funding means that DCDSB a potential net loss of \$500 000 to their special education funds this year. The loss was on the proposed increase to the SIP (Special Incident Portion) allocation. Superintendent Bowyer noted that the Board would know better once the SIP application process is completed.

Superintendent Bowyer advised that the Board is sharing through twitter and our other social media programs the link to the Public Consultation sessions being offered by the Ministry of Education and encouraged all members of SEAC to participate in the consultation process where possible.

Posting for the Community Representative has gone out to the Board. Posting closes on November 30, 2018. Interviews will be held in December, to begin in the role in January 2019.

## **ASSOCIATION REPORTS**

### **Learning Disabilities Association – Durham Chapter – K. Burke**

Nov. 20 – Carving Your Own Path- Considerations for Students with Learning Disabilities in collaboration with DCDSB and local post secondary institutions. 6:30 to 8:30 PM Learning Commons Notre Dame High School

Nov. 29- Ready, Set, Go! Preparing for Post Secondary School. In collaboration with Trent University Durham. Craig Cameron Academic and Career Advisor will share his insider knowledge and personal stories of transitions, tribulations and triumphs and what you can do to ease the transition to post-secondary life. 7 to 9 PM Room 110 Trent University Durham

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

- n.1 **Correspondence from Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington Catholic District School Board dated October 4, 2018 re: “Ministry of Education: Ministry Funding and Oversight of School Boards” – Chapter 3 – Reports on Value for Money Audits.**
- n.2 **Correspondence from Upper Grand District School Board dated October 10, 2018 re: support of Bill 44 – “promoting awareness and understanding of permanent brain injury resulting for prenatal alcohol exposure”.**

## **INQUIRIES AND MISCELLANEOUS**

None

## **PENDING ITEMS**

None

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 9:09 p.m.

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

The closing prayer was offered by V. Adamo

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Valerie Adamo  
Vice-Chair, Special Education Advisory Committee

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Janine Bowyer  
Superintendent of Education

Recording Secretary: Candice Cavalier