



**DURHAM CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**
Learning and Living in Faith

Minutes of the **Special Education Advisory Committee** of the Durham Catholic District School Board which was held in the North Boardroom of the Catholic Education Centre, 650 Rossland Road West, Oshawa, on Tuesday, February 4, 2020.

Present

V. Adamo
K. Burke
T. Chapman
J. McCafferty
S. Casola
H. Mendela

Staff

J. Bowyer
D. Mullane
S. Phoenix
J. Abrams

With Regrets

C. Nosseir
M. Cope
L. Wardle

Absent

C. Pegler
L. McLellan

SEAC Representatives

T. Robertson, APSSP Representative

A. Call to Order

a.1 Acknowledgement of Traditional Territory

a.2 Memorials and Prayer

Chair Adamo called the meeting to order at 7:36 p.m. and offered the opening prayer and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

B. Approval of Agenda

b.1 Changes to the Printed Agenda

None

b.2 Approval of Agenda

Motion No. SS-2020-02-04-01
Approval of Agenda

Moved by J. McCafferty, seconded by K. Burke

“THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the agenda of the Tuesday, February 4, 2020 meeting, as printed.”

CARRIED

C. Announcements

c.1 Superintendent Bowyer announced that Dr. Jessica Abrams was the successful candidate for the Manager, Psychological and Speech Language Services/Chief Psychologist role. Dr. Abrams was a Psychologist with DCDSB for the last 6 years.

c.2 Chair Adamo announced that following interviews for the Community Representative role on SEAC, Alex Massis was selected as the successful candidate to fill the vacancy. Alex comes to SEAC as a DCDSB parent with a significant interest in Catholic education and children with Special Education needs and will be a great addition to the committee.

D. Considerations of Motion

None

E. Declarations of Interest

e.1 Declaration of Conflict of Interest

None

F. Actions to be Taken

f.1 Approval of Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of January 7, 2020

Motion No. SS-2020-02-04-02
Approval of Minutes

Moved by T. Chapman, seconded by S. Casola

“THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the Minutes of the January 7, 2020 meeting, as submitted.”

CARRIED

f.2 Business Arising from the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of January 7, 2020

None

G. Presentations

g.2 PREVNet Toolkit – J. Bowyer

Superintendent Bowyer provided the Committee with an overview of the PREVNet Toolkit and its purpose. PREVNet, founded by Dr. Debra Peplar from York University and Dr. Wendy Craig from Queens University, is a tool used by the DCDSB in its bullying prevention and intervention efforts to strengthen the board's ability to prevent and respond to incidents of bullying. The idea behind the tool is to create a positive school environment by developing a sense of belonging and safety for all students within their school environment. The tool is research based and focuses on prosocial behaviours, relationship problems require relationship solutions.

Superintendent Bowyer presented a brief walk through of the tool to the Committee and responded to questions as they arose.

H. Review of Director's Annual Report – J. Bowyer

Superintendent Bowyer provided the committee with a copy of the Director's Annual Report. Superintendent Bowyer provided the Committee with time to review the report in partners. Superintendent Bowyer provided time for members to ask questions about the annual report and responded to questions as they arose.

I. Delegations

None

J. Notices of Motion

None

K. Unfinished Business from Previous Meetings

None

L. Staff Reports

I.1 Coordinator's Report – D. Mullane for F. Mosier

The 2nd annual, “Carving your Own Path – Considerations for Post-Secondary Learning for Students with Learning Disabilities” event held on January 22, 2020 at Notre Dame Catholic Secondary School was a huge success. Approximately 60 parents/guardians/students attended. The presentation by Marie McCarron from RARC was very informative and well received and the post-secondary institutions were available to answer questions.

Autism:

PEERS and Friendship Lab have concluded for Term 1. New sessions have begun for Friendship Lab last week at St. Francis de Sales and Sir Albert Love. Teacher packages have been sent out to help generalize the lessons in the school. PEERS will begin at Arch. Denis O'Connor and Fr. Leo Austin next week.

The Ministry funding for ABA Geneva Centre courses was spent on the Elementary P.A. Day. Educational Assistants were given the option to work on 1 of 5 available online courses. The response from interested participants exceeded our funding amount of \$24,000. More funds will be available in April.

I.2 Mental Health Report – D. Mullane

Over the past few months, DCDSB has been working on formalizing a partnership agreement with Pinewood Centre of Lakeridge Health. This is for a pilot project, involving addictions counsellors being available in two schools to support students who are struggling with problematic substance use and/or gaming. DCDSB is pleased to share that the agreement has been finalized, and that the two schools who will be receiving services are Notre Dame and St. Marys. This agreement will also include capacity-building for staff, students and parents. Currently, while the counsellors are just starting to build their caseloads, they have offered parent workshops to all schools across the system on a time-limited basis. As part of this, they provided a workshop on substance use and gaming to 50 Secondary Educational Assistants during the January exam period.

Bell Let's Talk Day was celebrated on January 29. Board office staff were engaged in an activity at the CEC Staff Meeting to promote awareness, and schools were provided with resources and tips for student and staff participation. This day was also used as an opportunity to highlight local supports and new School Mental Health Ontario resources on Twitter.

On January 31, twenty-six Secondary Educational Assistants participated in safeTALK training. This suicide alertness training aligns with DCDSB's efforts to create a suicide-safer community.

On Saturday February 8, DCPIC is hosting their parent conference with a mental health and well-being theme. The event is sold out. The keynote speaker is Dr. Patrick Carney, who will speak on Supporting Children's Mental Health with the 3 R's - Relationships, Responsibility and Resiliency. The following break-out sessions will be offered:

- Human Trafficking (Victim Services of Durham Region)
- Vaping and Cannabis ...What Parents Need to Know (Durham Region Health Dept)
- Game-Bling: When Gaming meets Gambling (YMCA Youth Gambling Awareness Program)
- Understanding and Supporting Your Worried Child (DCDSB)

I.3 Superintendent's Report – J. Bowyer

Superintendent Bowyer announced the new Chief Psychologist, Dr. Jessica Abrams. Jessica has been a psychologist with DCDSB for the last 6 years.

Psychology and Speech-Language Services:

Student Services bid farewell to Christine Munoz, Communicative Disorders Assistant with the Board for 30 years. Her dedication to students, her ability to share her wealth of knowledge with students, staff, and parents, and her positive disposition will be missed. She is wished all the best in her retirement. DCDSB is also pleased to welcome Donna Adams, Communicative Disorders Assistant. She comes to the board with years of experience working with students, schools, and families. Student Services is also delighted to announce that Dr. Amanda Fuentes, Psychologist, is expecting a baby girl in April. Student Services is in the process of hiring a full-time permanent Psychologist/Psychological Associate/Psychometrist position to fill the hole created by Dr. Jessica Abram's promotion and will be posting for Dr. Fuentes' maternity leave position soon.

DCDSB is pleased to be offering Special Education Part one, two and three in partnership with Ontario Tech. Student Services Coordinator Teresa Ezquerria is teaching Part One and Two, and Helen Killoran Consultant for Autism Services will be teaching Part Three. As part of the partnership with Ontario Tech, Superintendent Bowyer is often a guest speaker in these courses and she was fortunate to be able to present to the Part One and Two group last night and will present to the Part Threes in two weeks. Superintendent Bowyer does a component on thinking through your philosophy of education as it relates to students with special education needs and a component on the Ontario Human Rights Code associated with special education. Part One and Two students get a small sample of cases and a more in-depth examination takes place in Part Three.

The last Wednesday in February is Pink Shirt Day. The Board draws its attention to Bullying Prevention strategies that whole week. Last November a competition was held to create an image for the Report It site on the Board and School websites. The winning entry will be announced at the Board meeting at the end of the month.

As the board continues to work through the job action with teachers and DECEs, they have not been able to have or host any meetings or professional learning opportunities. DCDSB remains hopeful that this will be solved and continue to only postpone events one week at a time.

Today all schools were closed to students. Thursday, just the DECEs will be on strike (ETFO) so schools will be open, and DCDSB will be providing supervision to support the Kindergarten classrooms and are waiting to see what next week will look like.

Over the past few years, the demand for technology has been coming very close to the board's ability to purchase the number of devices required and is now at the point where it is surpassing DCDSB's funds. As such we undertook a study this fall to examine a number of alternatives. In the end, the only viable solution was to stop purchasing Macs as DCDSB's standard AT device. Once that decision was made, the board had to determine the best solution going forward and have decided that Chromebooks are the best solution going forward. The Chromebooks being purchased for the students are a better quality than the ones that have been purchased for school libraries. They come with all of the accessibility features available on the Mac and unlike the Chromebooks in libraries, they are not solely internet based, so programs and files can be saved to the hard drive (which is essential for some AT software). The library Chromebooks are in "kiosk" mode, and the AT computers will be designated to the individual student. The decision to move to Chromebooks allows DCDSB to get more AT in the hands of students. It is fiscally responsible and it is consistent with what the rest of the province is doing.

On Monday February 3, 2020 a number of DCDSB staff joined politicians and other dignitaries to support the official opening of the Grandview Children Centre Oshawa Campus at Monsignor Paul Dwyer Catholic High School. The 4 otherwise empty classrooms have been transformed into a beautiful meeting space for children, their therapists and families. DCDSB is very pleased that they have been able to support this fabulous opportunity that ensures that Grandview Children's Centre will continue to have a presence in Oshawa for years to come.

Motion No. SS-2020-02-04-03

Approval of the February 4, 2020 Verbal Coordinator, Mental Health Leader and Superintendent Reports

Moved by J. McCafferty, seconded by K Burke

"THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee accept the verbal Coordinator, Mental Health Leader and Superintendent Reports at the February 4, 2020 meeting."

CARRIED

M. Association Reports

LDADR – K. Burke

Feb. 27/20 – Right to Read Inquiry Workshop Whitby Library Central Branch 7-8:30 PM
LDADR staff will support individuals in their understanding of the inquiry and how to share experiences and opinions with the Human Rights inquiry

Autism Ontario – S. Casola

Durham Catholic District School Board Trustees - J. McCafferty

There was a Board meeting last week where there was a presentation on the Board's Long Term Accommodation Plan and an update on Indigenous Education. There will be a Policy meeting on Monday, February 10 – all are welcome

DDSA – L. McLellan

Sunday, February 9, 2020 from 3:30 to 6:30: South Oshawa Community Recreation Centre: Swim Day and Pizza Party; Free for members; \$5 for non-members. RSVP by Feb 6 to mastermail@ddsa.ca

Sunday, March 29 from 11 to 3: Free ROM admission for DDSA members and families to celebrate World Down Syndrome Day on March 21, courtesy of the Down Syndrome Association of Ontario. Contact mastermail@ddsa.ca for more info.

N. Correspondence

n.1 Correspondence from Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board dated December 11, 2019 re: concerns about class size and eLearning

n.2 Correspondence from Durham District School Board dated December 20, 2019 re: Minister's Advisory Committee on Special Education – inactive for 2 years.

O. Inquiries and Miscellaneous

None

P. Pending Items

None

Q. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Motion No. SS-2020-02-04-04
Adjournment

Moved by S. Casola, seconded by J. McCafferty

“THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting of February 4, 2020 adjourn.”

CARRIED

R. Closing Prayer

The closing prayer was offered by S. Casola

Valerie Adamo
Chair, Special Education
Advisory Committee

Janine Bowyer
Resource, Special Education
Advisory Committee

Recording Secretary: Candice Cavalier