



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

Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Durham Catholic District School Board

March 2, 2021 at 7:30 PM EST

Virtual Meeting

Present:

K. Burke (Vice Chair, Learning Disabilities Ontario), J. McCafferty (Trustee), J. Oldman (Trustee), S. Casola (Autism Ontario), W. Heeney (Durham Down Syndrome Association), C. Nossier (Grandview Children's Centre)

Staff Present:

S. Lee-Fernandes (Superintendent of Education), D. Mullane (Mental Health Leader), J. Abrams (Chief Psychologist), C. Congrady, F. Mosier (Student Services Coordinators), A. Roffey (Communications)

SEAC Representatives:

P. Sorhaitz (Principal/Vice Principal Representative), T. Robertson, B. Larson (APSSP Representatives), K. Boyer-Miller (OECTA Representative), M. Cope (CUPE Representative)

1. Call to Order

- 1.1. Land Acknowledgement
- 1.2. Memorials and Prayer

Kari Burke called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m. and offered the opening prayer. She welcomed everyone to the meeting.

- 1.3. Roll Call and Apologies

2. Approval of Agenda

- 2.1. Changes to the printed Agenda
None
- 2.2. Approval of Agenda

Motion:

SS-2021-03-02-01

Approval of Agenda

Motion moved by J. McCafferty and motion seconded by J. Oldman.

"That the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the agenda of the Tuesday, March 2, 2021 meeting, as printed."

CARRIED

3. Announcements

None

4. Considerations of Motion

None

5. Declarations of Interest

5.1. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

None

6. Actions to be Taken

6.1. Approval of Minutes of the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting
Minutes of February 2, 2021

Motion:

SS-2021-03-02-02

Approval of Minutes

Motion moved by W. Heeney and motion seconded by S. Casola.

"That the special Education Advisory Committee approve the Minutes of the February 2, 2021 meeting as submitted"

CARRIED

6.2. Business arising from the Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting
of February 2, 2021

None

7. Presentations

7.1. Mid-year Review and Reflection on Supporting Learning-S. Lee-Fernandes

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes provided a summary of the current school year and highlighted the challenges around the increased mental health concerns of the students, families and staff; maintaining connection and relationships within school environments both in-person and virtual; the health and safety measures that are in place in the schools and supporting some students with understanding and complying with these expectations. She further added the challenge of adapting to the creation of a virtual elementary and secondary school and pivoting to online delivery of programs and services.

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes presented an overview of the adaptation and response to unique and individual situations and pointed out that the transitions have been very different and more frequent this year, recalling the entry to school after the closure period and summer break, the back and forth between virtual and home schools, the extended remote learning periods and the current transition planning for next school year.

In response to supporting mental health and well-being, Superintendent Lee-Fernandes shared that educators were provided with professional development resources, materials to support students and encouraged to engage in their own self-care.

Special attention has also been provided to support students with alternative curriculum and programming with on-going and continued training offered to staff who support these students.

Coordinator Congrady presented a detailed breakdown of the virtual learning supports that have been put in place and emphasized the progress that has been made since September. She also provided information regarding the Grade 8 to Grade 9 transitions support meetings that are currently proceeding in the schools.

Coordinator Congrady announced the newly launched Transitions and Pathways webpage on the DCDSB website and provided a broad tour of various categories. She also highlighted the wide variety of resources and links featured on the webpage to support students and families while honouring all post-secondary pathways.

8. Discussions Items

None

9. Delegations

None

10. Notices of Motions

None

11. Unfinished Business from Previous Meeting

None

12. Staff Reports

12.1. Coordinator's Report - C. Congrady

Quadmester 3 began February 1st and the second term IEP's went home February 5th. The elementary Term 2 began February 8th and Quadmester 3 IEPs went home February 23rd.

New PST mentoring series continued with a presentation on the PELI process.

Transitions and Pathways webpage has gone live. The Student Services staff provided Sharing of Excellence workshops on the following:

- Supporting Minds Mental Health Literacy Series: Attention Problems in classroom
- How to Develop Self-Management Systems
- Sensory Integration

320 Chromebooks were delivered to schools for Program Support Teacher use. The allocation of the devices was based on the student enrollment. Chromebooks will continue to be provided as budget and resources allow.

Last year, the DCDSB added a module to the IEP program, IEP Online (IOL) for the creation of electronic learning profiles with the expectation that a learning profile be completed for all students with an IEP and/or special considerations from grade 6 or 8 within the Board. This year, a learning profile will be completed for all students in all grades with an IEP and/or special considerations. The learning profiles will be completed jointly by PSTs and classroom/subject teachers.

Autism

The Ministry of Education provided funding for 6 Applied Behaviour Analysis online training courses. Course topics include:

- Two levels of ABA;
- Play-Based Learning;
- Functional Behaviour Assessment;
- Registered Behavioural Technician; and
- Charting Pathways in the Classroom

50 Staff members registered for the courses, including teachers, designated early childhood educators, and educational assistants. All funding was spent for the March 1st deadline.

12.2. Mental Health Leader's Report - D. Mullane

On Black Mental Health Day, March 1, 2021, the Equity and Mental Health departments hosted the online event, Blacked Out: The Impacts of Race on Mental Health, featuring keynote speaker Asante Haughton and student talent from Notre Dame and St. Mary Catholic Secondary Schools. 261 participants, including staff, parents and students, attended. The session was recorded and is posted on the board website:

<https://www.dcdsb.ca/en/programs-services/Mental-Health.aspx?mid=100217>.

Catholic Principals Council of Ontario (CPCO) and School Mental Health Ontario have been working on a series of leadership podcasts. Two principals from the Durham Catholic School Board, Jennifer Harvey and Kate Remiz, as practicing principals who have a strong mental health slant to their leadership, were asked to participate in the first podcast. Diane Mullane, Mental Health Leader, has been invited to participate on the panel for the second one that is focused on with noticing and listening to students who face mental health difficulties.

Professional development in February also included a mental health presentation to Special Education course participants on February 24th.

Earlier this month, SMHO held a learning session (Rising to the Challenge) for support staff, including Child and Youth Counsellors (CYC), across the province. The DCDSB was asked to highlight their implementation process for the universal social-emotional learning programs being delivered and/or supported by the CYC team. This presentation was very well received, and

their Manager, Shelley Phoenix has received a flood of requests from other boards for additional information.

School/Community Mental Health Pathways Committee is a provincial cross-sectorial initiative made up of representatives from the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, School Mental Health Ontario, the Lead Agency Consortium, Children's Mental Health Ontario and the Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental Health. The goal is to co-create a provincial framework for working together across multiple sectors. Part of the work is to define "who does what." The commitment is to co-develop a framework document and related tools for agencies, but also for families to better understand the pathways to service within communities. It is hoped that everything will be in place for a September launch in communities across the province.

Children's Mental Health Week (May 3 to 9, 2021) is the next big date on the calendar for mental health. As always, this falls on the same week as Catholic Education Week. The Board has decided on the theme of Gratitude this year, which aligns very well with the particular themes for Catholic Education Week. Diane Mullane and Katherine Mustachi, System Animator for Faith Formation, will work together on integrating the themes, and will then invite committee members to work on the specific activities for the week.

The Youth Suicide Prevention Action Group's community event: **It Takes a Village Creating a Suicide-Safer Community in Durham Region**, hosted as a Teams live event by DCDSB, had 163 community members registered.

The **Durham Youth Drug Awareness Committee's** Public Service Announcement (PSA) contest closed this month. Among the winners in the "Group" category at the Intermediate level was a submission from St. Joseph Catholic School, Oshawa. All participants will be acknowledged and winners will receive a prize.

In 2020, a new Bill, (Bill # 178) proclaimed the first Monday in March in each year as Black Mental Health Day in Ontario. This falls on March 1st, 2021. This is currently in the planning phase. Student Services plans to host a guest speaker for an evening event; to highlight black excellence in mental health by spotlighting staff members; and to highlight specific resources related to this topic.

12.3. Superintendent's Report - S. Lee-Fernandes

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes communicated the retirement of Janice Currie, Psychologist on February 15, 2021, Keeley Owens-Jaffray began as full-time permanent Psychometrist on March 1, 2021 and Liz Valero, Speech Language Pathologist is will be with the Board for the remainder of the school year.

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes shared Health and Safety updates and provided a breakdown of the new safety measures.

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes also shared the planning for the 2020-2021 school year and highlighted that the Ministry of Education has instructed boards to plan for a regular return to in school learning. Discussions are ongoing regarding the continuation of the virtual school option.

Motion:

No. SS-2021-03-02-03

Approval of March 2, 2021 Verbal Coordinator, Mental Health Leader and Superintendent Reports

Motion moved by J. McCafferty and motion seconded by J. Oldman

“That the Special Education Advisory Committee accept the verbal Coordinator, Mental Health Leader and Superintendent Reports at the March 2, 2021 meeting.”

CARRIED

13. Association Reports

Learning Disabilities Association – Durham Chapter – K. Burke

Meetings or Conferences:

March 3 Children and Adults with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD) webinar Your Next Steps: College and Career Prep for Young Adults with ADHD – An exploration of strategies to support key areas of independent living including social skills, goal setting, time management and effective communication.

March 5 & 6 LDAO Halton Hills Chapter 10th Solutions for Learning Conference online

March 11 Integra Understanding Memory and Learning Disabilities online

New Programs or Services:

LDADR is pleased to announce that this year we are able to offer paid attendance to 10 educators in the Durham Region to attend the LDAO Summer Institute online, August 16 and 17. Stay tuned for further details!

Autism Ontario - S. Casola

Upcoming Meetings or Conferences:

We have a number of excellent webinars available “on demand” on our website:

<https://www.autismontario.com/programs-services/webinars/recent-and-upcoming-webinars>

New Programs or Services:

We have a number of distance program offerings – primarily virtual workshops being offered in Durham Region – all can be found here:

https://www.autismontario.com/events?custom_325=Durham&event_type_id=All

March Break funding will not be offered in March due to the moving of March Break to April. Still pending update from MCCSS about if funds will be available during “April Break” – please check out www.autismontario.com for details soon.

Grandview Kids

New Programs or Services:

- Grandview Kids received funding to open a Complex Care Clinic for clients with complex medical needs.
- The clinic is set to open as early as April 2021, in partnership with Lakeridge Health, Sick Kids Hospital and the Central East LHIN.

Other Information:

- School-Based Rehab: We are continuing to connect with schools for students who were identified as having high needs, usually related to safety and/or equipment needs.
- Service is provided in person, in-centre, in-school or virtually.
- We continue to work with the SERTs and principals to coordinate for access to space in schools if it is safe to do so.
- COVID-19: Families/caregivers can request in-person services if they wish to receive care face-to-face. Therapists/clinicians will honour these requests.

- We have implemented extensive, evidence-based COVID-19 protocols to enable the delivery of safe, in-Centre care.
- New Build: Three RFP finalists were announced for our New Build, who are invited to submit their bid to design, build and finance the project. More information in our [Winter 2021 New Build update](#).
- The New Grandview Kids will support the seamless and coordinated provision of family-centred care for children and youth with physical, communication and developmental needs.
- It will be an open, welcoming and inclusive community-based paediatric facility, supporting an integrated mix of rehabilitation, medical and clinical services, as well as education and research activities.
- Our member association, Empowered Kids Ontario (EKO), recently launched its 2021 scholarship program. All the background information in terms of eligibility and application process are in the attached flyer.

14. Correspondence

None

15. Inquiries and Miscellaneous

None

16. Pending Items

None

17. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Motion:

No. SS-2020-03-02-04

Adjournment

Motion moved by J. McCafferty and motion seconded by W. Heeney.

“THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting of March 2, 2021 adjourn.”

CARRIED

- 17.1. The next meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee will be held on Tuesday, April 6, 2021 @ 7:30pm

18. Closing Prayer

The closing prayer was offered by K. Burke

Valerie Adamo
Chair, Special Education Advisory Committee

Susie Lee-Fernandes
Superintendent of Education

Recording Secretary: Delfina Pinto