



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

Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Durham Catholic District School Board

October 4, 2022 at 7:30 PM

Virtual Meeting

Members Present:

V. Adamo (Chair, VOICE for the Hearing Impaired), W. Heeney (Durham Down Syndrome Association), C. Nosseir (Grandview Kids), S. Casola (Autism Ontario), J. Sorhaitz (Learning Disabilities Ontario), A. Massis (Community Representative)

Trustees Present:

J. Oldman, J. McCafferty

Staff Present:

S. Lee-Fernandes (Superintendent of Education), Y. Fisher-Brown (Mental Health Leader), C. Congrady (Student Services Coordinator), F. Pileggi (Communications)

SEAC Representatives:

D. Allen (CPCO Representative), B. Larson (APSSP Representative), L. Jemmott (OECTA Representative)

1. Opening
 - 1.1. Land Acknowledgements
 - 1.2. Memorials and Prayer
 - 1.3. Roll Call and Apologies
 - 1.4. Call to Order

Chair Adamo called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

- 1.5. Approval of the Agenda

Motion:

SS-2022-10-04-01

Approval of Agenda

"That the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the agenda of the Tuesday, October 4, 2022 meeting, as printed."

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

CARRIED

1.6. Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting

Motion:

SS-2022-10-04-02

Approval of the Minutes

"That the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the minutes of the Tuesday, September 13, 2022 meeting, as printed."

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

CARRIED

1.7. Declarations of Interest

None

2. Items for Information/Decision

2.1. Announcements

None

2.2. Presentations

2.2.1. Equity Learning Plan – What does racism have to do with me?

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes shared the Human Rights and Equity Learning Plan developed for the Durham Catholic DSB. The plan focuses on using key resource documents from School Mental Health Ontario (SMHO) to support the mental health and well-being of Black and racialized students.

The objective of the learning plan is to enhance educator awareness through professional development sessions to build capacity in culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy.

2.3. Discussion Items

2.3.1. Review Accessibility Plan

Deferred

2.3.2. Virtual or in-person meetings?

The committee agreed to continue with the virtual meetings until further guidelines from the Ministry of Education are received.

2.4. Business arising from previous meeting

Correspondence was received on October 2, 2022, from the Sawubona Association, formerly Black Parents Support Group (BPSG), appointing

Candace Julien, to replace Akilah Dressekie. Candace will attend the next SEAC meeting.

Motion:

SS-2022-10-04-03

Changes in representation

“THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the appointment of Candace Julien as a community representative .”

Motion moved by J. McCafferty and motion seconded by C. Nosseir.

CARRIED

The committee members offered various presentations to add to the SEAC calendar. Any future presentations should be submitted Chair Adamo, Superintendent Lee-Fernandes or Delfina Pinto by February 2023.

2.5. Staff Reports

2.5.1. Student Service Report - Christine Congrady, Yulan Fisher-Brown, Susie Lee-Fernandes

C. Congrady shared the following updates:

- The Student Services Coordinators are currently visiting all schools across the system to review special education needs.
- On October 18, 2022, both Elementary Term 1 and Secondary Semester 1 IEPs will go home
- The new PST Mentoring Program resumes October 27, 2022
- October Sharing of Excellence Series: Two-part series – Principles of ABA: Reinforcements
- Accessibility Services at post-secondary destinations – Student Services staff will be available during each secondary school's College or University Fair

Autism:

- Sonderly funding for Geneva Centre online courses has been continued this year, with some new course offerings. A numbered memo will come out in November for participation. All educators will be eligible to take the courses.

- Social skills programs resume this month in both in-person and virtual delivery models. Programs offerings include PEERS, Friendship Lab, and Secret Agent Society.
- DCART and BSS staff will be attending the Geneva Centre Symposium through online learning, November 2-4, 2022.

Assistive Technology:

- The 500 Lexia subscriptions (reading intervention program) licenses were renewed again this school year
- Two Lexia refresher workshops took place last week for PSTs that used Lexia previously. These workshops highlighted new features and resources available.
- Lexia training for new Program Support Teachers occurs this week

Y. Fisher-Brown, Mental Health Lead shared the following Mental Health report:

- As mentioned last month, the teacher information session for the Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban: A Cognitive Behavioural Therapy Novel Study for Intermediate Students took place on September 13th and 19th. Currently, 13 teachers signed up to participate in the study.
- On the September 23rd PD day, Student Services offered a SafeTALK session, with the target audience being EAs- 17 attended.
- Tomorrow, the TAMI teacher training will be offered for the staff of 10 schools that will have the program run in their intermediate classes. The program is available to secondary schools at their request.
- The Roots of Empathy program will begin to run in several schools. We are on the hunt for families with babies younger than 4 months old who would like to volunteer for the program.
- The public-facing Mental Health website is currently being revamped to make it more accessible.

Upcoming:

- ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training)- October 13 & 14
- SafeTALK- October 18- two sessions

S. Lee-Fernandes, Superintendent of Education provided an in-depth overview of the Special Education Review.

The Durham Catholic District School Board embraces a philosophy of inclusion. Students with special education needs are supported within Catholic school communities, by teams who collaborate and maintain continuous communication, to ensure that the diverse needs of each student are met within an inclusive environment.

The purpose of the Special Education Review is to:

- Ensure that all community members have a shared vision and understanding of the Board's special education plan
- Intentional work to recognize and remove systemic barriers
- Transparent oversight and accountability for timely and effective accommodations and modifications to programming and services
- Build capacity in special education knowledge and consistency in the implementation of effective programs and/or services for students with special education needs

Approximately 50 staff and community members are represented in the Special Education Review team from:

- All employee groups;
- Unions and affiliations;
- Board departments; and
- Senior Administration and Senior Managers

Motion:

SS-2022-10-04-04

Approval of the October 4, 2022, verbal Coordinator, Mental Health Leader and Superintendent Reports

“THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee accept the verbal Coordinator, Mental Health Leader and Superintendent Reports of the October 4, 2022 meeting.”

Motion moved by W. Heeney and motion seconded by A. Massis
CARRIED

2.6. Association Reports

Learning Disability Association Durham Region - J. Sorhaitz

LD Awareness Presentation on October 18th at 7:30pm – to 8:30pm

How Families Can Use “Right to Read” Recommendations at Home:

A brief presentation on answers to common questions families have asked about “Right To Read” recommendations such as how to choose a tutor that follows structured literacy instruction and using decodable books at home (where to find them and how to use them). Throughout October, the Learning Disabilities Associations of Ontario will be marking LD Awareness month. Raising awareness and reducing stigma to allow people to get the supports they need to reach their potential.

2.7. Correspondence

None

3. Other Business

3.1. Board Communications

3.2. Motion to Adjourn

Motion:

SS-2022-10-04-05

Motion to Adjourn

“THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting of October 4, 2022 adjourn.”

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

CARRIED

3.2.1. The next meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee will be held on Tuesday, November 8, 2022 @ 7:30 pm

3.3. Closing Prayer

Closing prayer was offered by C. Nossier.

The meeting adjourned at 8:56 p.m.

Valerie Adamo

Chair, Special Education Advisory Committee

Susie Lee-Fernandes

Superintendent of Education

Recording Secretary: Delfina Pinto