



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

Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Durham Catholic District School Board

February 1, 2022 at 7:30 PM

Virtual Meeting

Members Present:

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

Trustees Present:

J. Oldman, J. McCafferty

Regrets:

A. Dressekie (Community Representative)

Staff Present:

S. Lee-Fernandes (Superintendent of Education), H. Ibrahim J. Abrams (Senior Manager, Psychological and Speech-Language Services/Chief Psychologist), C. Congrady (Student Services Coordinator)

SEAC Representatives:

D. Assenza (CPCO Representative), T. Robertson (APSSP Representative), L. Jemmott (OECTA Representative), M. Cope (CUPE Representative)

1. Opening
 - 1.1. Land Acknowledgements
 - 1.2. Memorials and Prayer

Chair Adamo called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m., offered the opening prayer, and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

- 1.3. Roll Call and Apologies
- 1.4. Call to Order
- 1.5. Approval of the Agenda

Motion:

SS-2022-02-01-01

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, February 1, 2022 meeting, as printed."

CARRIED

1.6. Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting

Motion:

SS-2022-02-01-02

Approval of the Minutes

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

"That the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the Minutes of the January 4, 2022 meeting as submitted."

CARRIED

1.7. Declarations of Interest

None

2. Items for Information/Decision

2.1. Announcements

None

2.2. Presentations

2.2.1. School Year Calendar for 2022-2023 – Superintendent Hader Ibrahim

Superintendent Ibrahim provided a brief overview of what the calendar for the next school year would look like. He presented two calendar options for the 2022-2023 school year that included the dates Christmas and March breaks would fall on. He suggested the Committee discuss and provide their consensus on which calendar they would prefer so that it could be brought back to Admin Counsel for consideration.

The majority of the Committee opted for the 2nd calendar in which the Christmas break would commence on December 26, 2022, the return to school date would be January 9, 2023, and the March break would start on March 10, 2023.

2.2.2. Special Education Review - Update #1 (Input/Feedback on Sub-Committee areas of focus) - Susie Lee-Fernandes

Superintendent Susie Lee-Fernandes provided an update on the 1st set of Special Education Review leadership sub-committee meetings. The sub-committees are composed of 4 committees, each of which involves Board level staff as well as representation from different groups working in schools.

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes informed that due to supply shortage challenges, the 2nd set of meetings may have to be canceled and in response to the current circumstances, each sub-committee has narrowed its areas of focus and structures for the current school year.

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes provided a detailed summary of the 1st set of sub-committee meetings and answered questions as they arose.

2.3. Discussion Items

None

2.4. Business arising from previous meeting

2.4.1. Feedback from Committee re: Draft Letter to Ministry in Support of Online Learning Supports and Universal Design for Learning

Motion:

SS-2022-02-01-03

Approval of letter as drafted

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

“That the special Education Advisory Committee approve the letter to the Minister of Education in support of Online Learning Supports and Universal Design for Learning as drafted.”

CARRIED

2.4.2. Feedback from Committee re: Letter in Support of ACSLP

- Item Deferred
- Claudia Nosseir, Grandview Kids, requested that her withdrawal from this item, be noted in the minutes. She clarified she was not able to support any advancement of the request to support the Association of Chief Speech-Language Pathologists’ proposed letter.

2.5. Staff Reports

2.5.1. Coordinator's Report - Christine Congrady

Christine reported the following:

- Elementary Term 2 IEPs will be going home with report cards on February 7th
- Secondary Quad 2 Report Cards will go home on February 7th as well.
- New PST Mentoring continued in January with an Ask Your Student Services Coordinator drop-in session
- The Friendship Lab – 10-week winter session began January 10th
- Sharing of Excellence Series in January included the training on the Principles of ABA: Individualized Programming

2.5.2. Mental Health Leader's Report - Shelley Phoenix

Dr. Jessica Abrams reported on behalf of Shelley Phoenix.

Over 100 DCDSB staff members attended the staff wellness information sessions to learn more about two virtual mental health programs: Bounce Back and MindBeacon. Both of these programs are for adults and older adolescents. Presentations were recorded for staff who were unable to attend.

On January 26 many schools participated in the Bell Let's Talk Day to raise awareness about mental health and help reduce the stigma associated with mental illness.

The Mental Health First Aid - Supporting Youth virtual session which was scheduled for January and the SafeTALK session in February had to be canceled due to staff shortages and Covid-19 restrictions. The Board hopes to be able to offer these sessions again in the upcoming months.

Planning for the evening event for Black Mental Health Day which falls on March 7th is underway. A keynote speaker and some student talent to take part. More details; including promotional material is forthcoming.

The Durham Youth Drug Awareness Committee (DYDAC) which DCDSB is represented on, is in the process of creating two modules for grade 6 to 12 classrooms in lieu of the Annual Secondary Student Conference. The focus is on alcohol, cannabis, vaping and

the connection between substance abuse and mental health with speakers from Pinewood Centre of Lakeridge Health, Carea Community Health Centre, Durham District, and Durham Catholic District School Boards. The modules are expected to be ready for educators in mid-February.

In February the Staff Wellness Committee is hosting a Virtual Yoga class, a Winter Walk Day challenge, and a Christian Meditation session for staff with a focus on mind, body, and spirit.

2.5.3. Superintendent's Report - Susie Lee-Fernandes

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes informed that Anti-Black Racism and Anti-Discrimination training was provided for the Elementary School Administrative Assistants on January 21st. The central staff will receive this training on March 9th.

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes communicated that Chevoy Hickey, an additional Coach/Advocate for Black Students started on January 31st. This is a temporary position until June 2022. Kamille Morgan, Psychometrist in Psychological Services has also joined the Student Services Team.

Motion:

SS-2022-02-01-04

Approval of the February 1, 2022 verbal Coordinator, Mental Health Leader and Superintendent Reports

Motion moved by S. Casola and motion seconded by J. Sorhaitz.

“THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee accept the verbal Coordinator, Mental Health Leader and Superintendent Reports of the February 1, 2022 meeting.” Motion moved by S. Casola and seconded by J. Sorhaitz.

CARRIED

2.6. Association Reports

Grandview Kids - S. Casola

Grandview Kids will be offering the Stepping Stones to School program for parents and caregivers of children registered with the Ontario Autism Program this February. This program is intended to help families prepare their children who are entering school for the first time.

Registration is open on GrandviewKids.ca under “I want to... register on My Community Hub.”

The program reviews:

- Creating a vision and building relationships
- Participating in school meetings
- Developing Individual Education Plans
- School-Based Rehabilitation
- Parent Advocacy
- Guest Speakers will discuss their roles within the school boards and as caregivers

Grandview Kids Vaccine Clinic: The Paediatric Vaccine Clinic will be open on Saturdays in February. First and second doses of the COVID-19 vaccine are available for children (ages 5 to 11 years) and youth (12 to 17 years). Children do not need to be a client of Grandview Kids to attend, but registration is required. To register, families can visit GrandviewKids.ca. This clinic provides a safe, welcoming environment for all children, including those who may need a bit of extra time to receive their vaccines.

Learning Disability Association Durham Region - Julie Sorhaitz

Events:

February 2022

- Thursday, February 10th

Integra - Executive Functioning and Emotion Regulation webinar

This workshop provides participants with an understanding of the nature of executive functioning (higher-order thinking skills including planning, organization, and flexibility) for children with LDs in this area. Practical strategies to support the development of executive functioning skills and self-regulation will be shared.

- Thursday, February 24th

Integra – The Social Impact of Learning Disabilities webinar

In this workshop, we will discuss why children with LDs are at risk for experiencing social challenges with their peers. Participants

will explore what skills are needed in order to be socially competent in everyday life. Strategies on how to understand and support social competence will be shared.

March 2022

- Thursday, March 10th

Integra – Understanding Memory and Learning Disabilities webinar

This experiential workshop is designed to give participants a better understanding of the different types of memory challenges (verbal, visual, and working memory). We will look at the impact memory challenges have on everyday life for children and youth with LDs (socially, emotionally, and behaviourally).

- Open date

- ONBIDA Project Read Online Webinar Courses “Framing Your Thoughts”

The Framing Your Thoughts® program is centered on a sequential and systematic method of instruction designed to help students write and arrange accurate and creative sentences and paragraphs. This sequential and multisensory program is part of the Project Read® curriculum, a research-based language arts program. ONBIDA is pleased to offer these programs at a special discount for Canadian educators.

- CADDAC 2020 PREP (Parent Readiness Education Program) Recordings CADDAC Webinars

PREP, CADDAC’s Parent Readiness Education Program, is a comprehensive 10-part series of filmed, online presentations. Each presentation is approximately 1.25 hours in length and presented by Heidi Bernhardt. Fee applies.

- CADDAC Spring 2020 ADHD Workshops Livestream Recordings CADDAC Webinars

Recorded in April 2020, the recording includes access to 7 workshops geared to parents of children with ADHD, adults with ADHD and their families.

Resources:

- LDAO LD@Home <https://www.ldathome.ca>

- LDAO LD@School <https://www.ldatschool.ca>

- YouTube channel:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCHEA_To2NoyMMKitLII-JQw/videos

NEW “What is an LD? An Introduction to Learning Disabilities”

- Ontario Branch of International Dyslexia Association (ONBIDA) YouTube channel

- <https://www.youtube.com/user/DyslexiaAssociation>

A variety of videos from ONBIDA's webinars **NEW** "Race, Class and Reading: Disrupting the Pedagogy of Low Expectations"

- International Dyslexia Association (IDA) YouTube channel
<https://www.youtube.com/c/InternationalDyslexiaAssociation>

A variety of videos from IDA's various webinars and conferences **NEW** "The Dual Needs for Decodable and Informational Texts for Beginning Readers"

- Bytesized PD - DDSB YouTube channel

- <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCEh8CGhc-2zSY-mC61dMT3g/videos>

Short videos on many aspects of education technology, including assistive technology how-to videos

- Centre for ADHD Awareness Canada (CADDAC) YouTube channel
<https://www.youtube.com/c/adhdvid/videos>

This youtube channel features video and audio that deals with an often misunderstood disorder... ADHD.

The channel is a presentation of CADDAC (Centre For ADHD Awareness, Canada) www.caddac.ca

- Sagonaska School YouTube channel

- https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0_Hza9fH6-UtxV7ooxaRnA

Videos about various aspects of learning disabilities

2.7. Correspondence

2.7.1. Letter from Waterloo Region DSB dated December 3, 2021

The letter, addressed to the Honourable Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education from Sara Penny, Chair of SEAC, Waterloo Region District School Board writing in support of Bill 172, An Act in Relation to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. The letter asks the Minister to acknowledge their support for Bill 172 and support and promote its important message to his colleagues.

The Committee agreed that no further action was needed as the letter in support of Bill 172 had been drafted.

2.7.2. Letter from District School Board of Niagara dated December 20, 2021

The letter, addressed to the Honourable Christine Elliott, Minister of Health, and to Honourable Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education from Linda Morrice, Chair of SEAC, District School Board of Niagara requesting that the issue of nursing shortage be a top priority for this government and that an immediate and accessible solution be developed to allow all children access to the learning they require and deserve.

The Committee agreed to defer this matter and bring it back to the next meeting for discussion.

3. Other Business

3.1. Board Communications

3.2. Motion to Adjourn

Motion:

SS-2022-02-01-05

Motion to Adjourn

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

“THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting of February 1, 2022 adjourn.”

CARRIED

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

3.3. Closing Prayer

Closing prayer was offered by J. McCafferty

The meeting adjourned at 8:27 p.m.

Valerie Adamo
Chair, Special Education Advisory Committee

Susie Lee-Fernandes
Superintendent of Education

Recording Secretary: Delfina Pinto