



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

## **Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**

Durham Catholic District School Board

March 8, 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), A. Dressekie (Community Representative)

#### **Trustees Present:**

J. Oldman, J. McCafferty

#### **Staff Present:**

S. Lee-Fernandes (Superintendent of Education), S. Phoenix (Senior Manager, Social Work and Child Youth Counsellors/Chief Attendance Officer), C. Congrady, Francesca Mosier (Student Services Coordinators)

#### **SEAC Representatives:**

P. Sorhaitz (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 7:36 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-2022-03-08-01

Approval of Agenda

"That the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the agenda of the Tuesday, March 8, 2022 meeting, as printed."

Motion moved by J. McCafferty and motion seconded by S. Casola.  
CARRIED

1.6. Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting

**Motion:**

SS-2022-03-08-02

Approval of the Minutes

"That the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the Minutes of the February 1, 2022 meeting as submitted."

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

1.7. Declarations of Interest

2. Items for Information/Decision

2.1. Announcements

None

2.2. Presentations

2.2.1. Special Education Review - Update #2 (Input/Feedback on Sub-Committee areas of focus) - Susie Lee-Fernandes

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes informed that the 2nd Special Education Review Committee meetings were cancelled due to supply shortages. In response to the current circumstances, each Sub-Committee will be extending the timeline into the 2022-2023 school year.

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes provided a broad overview of each Sub-Committee's areas of focus and shared a detailed breakdown of data that will be collected by each Sub-Committee.

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes answered questions as they arose.

2.3. Discussion Items

2.3.1. Letter in Support of ACSLP

**Motion:**

SS-2022-03-08-03

Letter in Support of ACSLP

“That the Special Education Advisory Committee approve the draft letter to the Deputy Minister of Education, of Health and of Children, Community and Social Services in support of Health Support Services in School Settings”.

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

#### 2.3.2. Review of Director's Annual Report

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes shared the 2020-2021 Director's Annual Report webpage which highlights the DCDSB's achievements and successes during the Year of Love. She provided a brief tour of the site and invited the Committee to check out the webpage.

#### 2.3.3. Review of IEP Process

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes shared the Student Services and Special Education webpage. The Individual Education Plan (IEP) process is outlined on the Special Education Plan webpage (Standard 2.9) – [direct link](#). The School Team Meeting is a central part of the IEP process and information is available for the community on the webpage titled: A Parent/Guardian Guide to Special Educaiton – [direct link](#).

#### 2.4. Business arising from previous meeting

None

#### 2.5. Staff Reports

##### 2.5.1. Coordinator's Report - Francesca Mosier

Christine Congrady reported the following on behalf of Francesca Mosier:

- During the month of February, the new PST Mentoring sessions continued with a drop-in session for mentees to connect with Student Services Coordinators and answer any questions or concerns.
- The EA Allocation process for 2022-23 has begun with Student Services Coordinators visiting schools and reviewing preliminary information on student needs.
- 139 additional PST Chromebooks have been delivered to PSTs

- 42 staff members have participated in the Geneva Centre's Sonderly online courses. The Ministry granted \$20,000 to DCDSB for ABA learning.
- Sharing of Excellence Series included the following presentations during February:  
Principles of ABA – 2-part series

#### 2.5.2. Mental Health Leader's Report - Shelley Phoenix

Last month, Secondary schools received their Self-Regulation kits, which were researched and put together by two of our Behaviour Support Specialists. Each kit includes several tools for calming to help dysregulated students return to an optimal state for learning.

Yesterday, the third annual Black Mental Health Day in Ontario was recognized with an evening event, **I Think, Therefore I Am**, featuring keynote speaker Natalie Haynes. All Saints Arts and Media Program provided a riveting student performance and a Pereyma student wrote and recited the prayer. The session was well-attended by students, staff and parents/ caregivers, along with several staff members from other school boards across Ontario. Overall, it was a successful event.

Durham Youth Drug Awareness Committee (DYDAC) classroom modules **update** is a set of two 60-minute modules for grade 6 to 12 classrooms. It is a collaborative effort by the DYDAC members, (i.e., representatives from Pinewood Centre of Lakeridge Health, Carea Community Health Centre, Durham District and Durham Catholic District School Boards). The focus of the modules is on alcohol, cannabis, vaping - and the connection between substance use and mental health, with presenters from the agencies mentioned. To date, 40 DCDSB educators have requested access to the modules. Several follow-up classroom activities were also provided to the educators. We will be seeking feedback on their experience with the modules in the spring.

#### **Professional development:**

- On the February 18 Secondary PA Day, all secondary educators received an in-service on substance use and were introduced to the new Educator's Guide: Understanding Substance Use, Stigma and Cannabis Vaping.

- The Behaviour Resource Team (BRT) just completed their three-part Professional Learning Series. This series is offered three times per year to staff who have students in their classroom who are involved with the team. Three staff members per school are invited to attend, and the focus is on functional behavioural assessment and intervention, collaborative problem solving, self-regulation, communication and self-care for educators.
- The Supporting Minds Mental Health (3-part) Literacy series is once again being offered during the month of March.
- Staff Wellness initiatives in February focused on physical health, with a pre-recorded “Mind, Body Soul” session released on Feb 24 and a walking challenge last week. In the coming months, in addition to a monthly fitness session, spiritual offerings, a mindfulness session and an Indigenous walk will be included.
- Finally, preparations for Children’s Mental Health Week/ Catholic Education Week are underway. Details to follow in next month’s report.

### 2.5.3. Superintendent's Report - Susie Lee-Fernandes

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes informed that the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) just released its report on the Right to Read Public Inquiry on February 28, 2022. The OHRC launched the public inquiry into human rights issues facing students with reading disabilities in Ontario’s education system. This in-depth inquiry selected eight school boards to assess whether school boards use scientific evidence-based approaches to meet students’ right to read.

The OHRC assessed school boards against five benchmarks that are part of an effective systematic approach to teaching all students to read, including:

- Universal design for learning (UDL),
- Mandatory early screening,
- Reading intervention programs,
- Effective accommodation,
- Psycho-educational assessments (if required).

The inquiry found that Ontario is not fulfilling its obligations to meet students' right to read.

The Right to Read report includes recommendations to the Ministry of Education, school boards and faculties of education on how to address systemic issues that affect the right to learn to read, which include;

1. Curriculum and instruction
2. Early screening
3. Reading interventions and accommodations
4. Professional assessments
5. Systemic issues

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes highlighted some of the work that is already taking place in the DCDSB. A Right to Read Committee has been established where both Academic and Student Services are collaborating with goals around building awareness and capacity building. A Steering Committee is also in the works to look at assessment and structured literacy practices.

Superintendent Lee-Fernandes affirmed that the DCDSB is taking steps to ensure that all staff are aware and that there is a plan in place to support changes in the classroom.

The Superintendent answered questions as they arose.

**Motion:**

SS-2022-03-08-04

Approval of the March 8, 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 February 1, 2022 meeting.”

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

2.6. Association Reports

**Learning Disability Association Durham Region - J. Sorhaitz**

Events:

**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).

- Friday, March 25th

ONBIDA – The Right to Read Symposium register [here](#)

We will investigate and unpack the recommendations proposed by the Ontario Human Rights Commission's Right to Read Inquiry. During this full-day professional learning opportunity, we will be joined by leading international experts. They will discuss the Inquiry's key recommendations, why each is important, and how educators and policy-makers can begin to work together to implement these necessary changes.

### **April 2022**

- Thursday, April 7th – May 19th

CADDAC – Interactive ADHD Parenting Course register [here](#)

This five-part interactive course has been designed for parents starting the ADHD journey with their child and for those striving to understand their child's impairments and needs. It will cover the things you need to know about ADHD: what it really is; how it impacts learning, behaviour, and emotional regulation; treatment options, and how to implement home and school strategies. This course is geared to parents of children between 4 and 12 years of age and will be approximately 12 hours in total, divided into 5 sessions. There is a cost associated with this course.

- 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](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](http://www.caddac.ca)

- Sagonaska School YouTube channel  
[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0\\_Hza9fH6-UtxV7ooxaRnA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0_Hza9fH6-UtxV7ooxaRnA)

Videos about various aspects of learning disabilities



## 2.7. Correspondence

### 2.7.1. Letter from Renfrew County Catholic DSB dated January 13, 2022

The letter, addressed to the Honourable Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education from Pat O'Grady, Chair of SEAC, Renfrew County Catholic District School Board writing in support of Online Learning Supports and Universal Design for Learning on provincial online learning resources and the platforms used to access these resources. The letter asks the Minister to commit to ensuring that all online learning courses be consistently maintained with enabled links and resources that meet accessibility standards.

The Committee agreed that no further action was needed as the letter in support of Online Learning Supports had been drafted.

### 2.7.2. Letter from Renfrew County Catholic DSB dated February 11, 2022

The letter, addressed to the Honourable Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education from Pat O'Grady, Chair of SEAC, Renfrew County Catholic District School Board writing in support of nursing shortages. The letter requests that the government makes it top priority to develop a solution that allows all children the access to learning they require and deserve.

It was recommended that the letter be received.

## 3. Other Business

### 3.1. Board Communications

None

### 3.2. Motion to Adjourn

#### **Motion:**

SS-2022-03-08-05

Motion to Adjourn

“THAT the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting of March 8, 2022 adjourn.”

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

#### 3.2.1. The next meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee will be held on Tuesday, April 5, 2022 @ 7:30 pm

### 3.3. Closing Prayer

Closing prayer was offered by J. Oldman

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

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Valerie Adamo  
Chair, Special Education Advisory Committee

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Susie Lee-Fernandes  
Superintendent of Education

Recording Secretary: Delfina Pinto