



Northeastern Catholic District School Board

"Living our Catholic Faith to shape success for all of our learners"

SEAC Meeting **(Special Education Advisory Committee)**

Wednesday, April 20, 2016

11:45 a.m.

Catholic Education Centre

MINUTES

PRESENT: Kay Gaffney, North Eastern Ontario Family and Children's Services / Chair
Joel McCartney, Cochrane Temiskaming Resource Centre / Vice-Chair
Mark Lionello, Canadian Mental Health Association
Kim Bordignon, Children's Treatment Centre
Val Toner, Community Living Timmins
William (Bill) Russell, The Lord's Kitchen
Billie Richer, VOICE for Hearing Impaired
Colleen Landers, NCDSB Trustee (Alternate)
Fred Salvador, NCDSB Trustee
Daphne Brumwell, Superintendent of Education
Catherine Hoven, Special Assignment Teacher
Judy Piché, Education Services Officer / Recorder

EXCUSED: Beth Nowak, Cochrane District Social Services Administration Board
Natalie Parnell, Timmins Family Counselling Centre
Elizabeth King, NCDSB Trustee

1. Welcome and Prayer

Kay Gaffney welcomed everyone and led the group in prayer.

2. Approval of Agenda

MOVED BY: B. Russell
SECONDED BY: J. McCartney

THAT the agenda be approved as presented.
CARRIED.

3. Approval of Minutes

MOVED BY: B. Russell
SECONDED BY: F. Salvador

THAT the minutes of March 23, 2016 be approved as presented.
CARRIED.

4. English Language Learners / English as a Second Language Programs

English Language Learners (ELLs) are students in provincially funded English language schools whose first language is a language other than English, and who may require focused educational supports to assist them in attaining proficiency in English. Catherine Hoven reported that the number of ELL students is increasing in our schools. A brochure was distributed explaining the role of the school and the steps taken to ensure that these students acquire both the English skills and content knowledge they need to participate in learning activities equally with their peers and to meet the expectations of the Ontario curriculum.

When an ELL student registers at one of our schools, the school principal informs the superintendent and the special assignment teacher (SAT) for Student Services. The principal conducts a family interview with the support of the SAT. The SAT administers the STEP: Initial Assessment at the student's school in a one-on-one setting. The purpose of the initial assessment is to determine the student's English language proficiency and literacy development, the student's mathematical skill level, the appropriate programming supports, and the appropriate placement. A report is generated from the STEP: Initial Assessment and is shared with the school team, principal and parents. An ELL Plan is then created at the school level using a board template. The creation of this plan ensures that the required modifications and/or accommodations that the student requires are understood by all members of the school team, and this information is the benchmark for assessment. The plan is developed once the student has registered in our schools, and updated each term. It is then shared with parents and filed in the student's Ontario Student Record.

Funding is provided to school boards by the Ministry of Education to help with the implementation of the program. NCDSB has hired a tutor to assist with the transition of these students. Aboriginal students who are not self-identified don't qualify for the funding. However, the needs of these students are met with other pockets of money provided by the Ministry. Colleen Landers mentioned that the Board made a presentation years ago to the Ministry of Education regarding the number of students whose first language was Cree. She said that the Education Act specifies that funding was provided to students who are "immigrants" and recommended that the committee write a letter to the Minister of Education requesting that the wording in the definition be changed. It was also suggested to look into the possibility of sharing services with other school boards.

5. eLearning Community

Catherine Hoven is working on an online learning community where material would be stored and be accessible to the Board's special education community. Special Assignment Teacher – eLearning Contact, Andrew Swartz, is creating an eLearning page in order to be able to store information such as resources, forms, agency links, videos, calendars, IEP guide, ADHD guides, curriculum documents.

6. PPM 140 Survey Results / Resignation of ABA and Behaviour Specialist

Each year, school boards are required to submit information to the Ministry of Education about the implementation of applied behavior analysis (ABA) instructional methods. Principals were asked to share a survey with parents of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The results of this survey collected showed higher needs in creating a tracking system, correlation with students with ASD and special needs students, additional strategies to support these students, depending on the school.

Daphne Brumwell reported that Genevieve Lemieux, Behaviour and ASD Specialist, resigned from her position and will be working at Canadian Mental Health Association. The Board is looking at retaining someone in the role at the beginning of the next school year and will post as soon as possible.

7. Learning with Sandra Herbst

School staff had the opportunity to meet and work with internationally-known Canadian speaker, Sandra Herbst, earlier this month. Sandra Herbst is a noted system leader, author, speaker, coach, consultant, and educator with extensive experience in assessment, leadership, and adult learning. Her expertise is enhanced by her compassion and humour. She worked with principals, teachers, early childhood educators and educational assistants during the April 11th Professional Activity Day then spent two days demonstrating how to co-create success criteria. Daphne Brumwell mentioned that staff were inspired watching her at work and amazed at how she interacted with the students in the classrooms. Sandra will return in October 2016.

Kim Bordignon asked if an evening session could be scheduled in October for the public. Fred Salvador enquired about the possibility of speaking with school bus drivers on student behaviours. He added that Bus Buddies has funds to pay for her services. Daphne Brumwell said she will look into it but stated that her work is specific to helping with the assessment piece and assisting students on stages of independence.

8. March 31st Special Education Data

Daphne Brumwell provided a report outlining the number of identified students after the March 31, 2016 collection of data. The numbers, compared to the October 31st report, showed an increase of students with exceptionalities - the largest percentage in learning disabilities. We have more students considered at risk and many cases awaiting additional services through board of community agencies. She added that it is important to share the support provided specific to the goals of the Ministry of Education, in particular how to support students in mathematics. Funding for the *Renewed Mathematics Strategy* in 2016-17 is designed to provide additional supports with a focus on improving achievement in mathematics. Deliberate attention to students with learning disabilities will build upon the process outlined in the *Learning for All K-12* document. Complicated formulas are used to determine the funding for district school boards. It is important to have accurate numbers in March for projection purposes. It was suggested to write a letter to MPP Gilles Bisson outlining our concerns over the erosion of the special education funding and the effect on children.

9. Board Budget – Public Participation

Members who are interested in providing input to the board's budget process were encouraged to provide feedback and suggestions through an online feedback form by April 27th. The data collected will be used by Senior Administration to identify system priorities.

10. Submission of Special Education Plan

The submission of the Special Education Plan is due to the Ministry on July 31, 2016. Members were asked to look at the plan and bring suggestions at the next meeting.

11. Agency Reports

Bill Russell provided a list of places that the community food banks and soup kitchens will be held. Years ago, Our Place Warming Station was held at the King Edward Hotel. They are now looking for a permanent home. Bill will provide more information at the next meeting. The Lord's Kitchen will be closing for the summer months.

Val Toner reported that the agency is looking for parents to join a parent group committee. The parents will make suggestions for programs operated under Community Living and help the agency envision new ways to improve service delivery in the community. A brochure will be finalized shortly and provided at the next meeting. Daphne Brumwell told her to complete a Distribution of Material form prior to the next meeting and that she would distribute the brochures to the schools. Joel McCartney mentioned that parents might want to check out other parent groups in the community.

VOICE will be having a "Dress Loud" fundraiser at schools throughout the province. Students dress in bright colours and collect money to be donated to VOICE. VOICE is pleased to announce the 24th Annual Family Camp taking place August 19-21, 2016 at the Bark Lake Campground in Irondale. Registration closes June 10th.

Kay Gaffney showed the members a t-shirt promoting Autism Awareness Month. NEOFACS is holding a barbecue to kick off Mental Health Week at 12 pm on Tuesday, May 3rd at the agency. Tickets are \$10 per person and proceeds go towards older students who have mental health problems.

12. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday, May 25, 2016 at 11:45 a.m. at the Catholic Education Centre or via video conference.

13. Other Business - Nil

14. Adjournment

MOVED BY: B. Russell
THAT the meeting be adjourned at 1:10 p.m.
CARRIED.