



Northeastern Catholic District School Board

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

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

Wednesday, May 20, 2015

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
Kim Bordignon, Children's Treatment Centre
Beth Nowak, Cochrane District Social Services Administration Board
William (Bill) Russell, The Lord's Kitchen
Billie Richer, VOICE for Hearing Impaired
Elizabeth King, NCDSB Trustee
Fred Salvador, NCDSB Vice-Chair
Daphne Brumwell, Superintendent of Education
Catherine Hoven, Special Assignment Teacher
Judy Piché, Administrative Assistant / Recorder

EXCUSED: Mark Lionello, Canadian Mental Health Association
Amanda Wessman, Community Living Timmins
Natalie Parnell, Timmins Family Counselling Centre

1. Welcome and Prayer

Kay Gaffney welcomed everyone and led the group in prayer.

2. Approval of Agenda

MOVED BY: F. Salvador

SECONDED BY: B. Nowak

THAT the agenda be approved as presented.

CARRIED.

3. Approval of Minutes

MOVED BY: K. Bordignon
SECONDED BY: J. McCartney

THAT the minutes of April 16, 2015 be approved as presented.
CARRIED.

4. Updates on Projects

4.1 FNMI Oral Language: Tutors in the Classroom were hired to provide 1 hour of support to at-risk students daily. Staff will engage students in a follow-up Oral Language assessment that will include a second language sample. We look forward to seeing the results of the final assessment so that we can consider what strategies to continue with and how we might begin to spread this to other schools. Results will be shared with the members in September.

4.2 Learning for All – Grade 4 Mathematics: Teachers continue to work with students in small groups using the results of the All About Numbers and Key Math Assessments to guide instruction. All participating classrooms will engage students in completing a post All About Numbers assessment to gauge progress. We will be asking participants for feedback about what they felt was most helpful for them and their students. Combined with the data from the pre and post assessment, we should have some rich information to work with in planning for next year.

4.3 Touch Technology Project: This project has been a huge success. We are continuing to expand our work in the 5 schools (O’Gorman Intermediate, St. Paul, St. Jerome, ECCS & St. Patrick, Cobalt) by working directly with 2 classroom teachers who have students working with this technology. We are in the process of purchasing iPads for all RTs so that we can continue to build capacity with this group of professionals and are identifying 2 classrooms for next year to work directly with in helping staff and students understand how this technology can be used to support our students with special needs.

4.4 Next Steps: We are in the process of making some decisions about what projects will best support our students in 2015-2016. We will likely see a continuation of the Oral Language and Math projects, with funding for both likely coming from First Nations, Métis and Inuit. However, we are considering a large-scale roll-out of something around Learning Disabilities that will support both teachers and students. We continue to see a lack of understanding of how best to support these students, particularly as they move up into the higher grades.

5. Psychological Services - Summary of Services / Plans for 2015-2016

We are exploring ways to extend our ability to provide psychological assessments to our students. In consultation with our board-contracted psychologist, we are considering the possibility of training one of our own staff to administer the WISC. Under his guidance, our staff would be able to complete much of the assessment, with the psychologist being responsible only for reviewing results, the report and signing off. This approach would allow us to complete a greater number of

assessments each year for a fraction of the cost, as well as provide a more comprehensive approach to assessments. Should this not work out, we must begin to look at finding another board-contracted psychologist who would be willing to share the load with Tom. We are also hoping to move from using the Woodcock Johnson Achievement Test (WJ-III) to the Weschler Achievement Test (WIAT) for the 2015-2016 school year. We have had much feedback about the difficulty in converting WJ-II results when an assessor is using the WISC for the intelligence portion. This will be a one-time purchase that will have to include training for all resource teachers.

6. Special Equipment Amount 2014-2015

Catherine Hoven reported that \$34,927 was spent on claims-based equipment and \$39,619 on technology. The list of equipment purchased includes laptops, iPads, customized orders, Claroread site license – a text-to-speech software in French, and a full-day training course. We are looking at purchasing additional iPads within the next month for resource teachers to support SEA.

7. Understanding and Managing Aggressive Behaviour

Training for UMAB training has been completed for this school year. All educational assistants and some early childhood educators have received the first day of training. Day One of the training emphasizes de-escalation strategies. We hope to offer the same training or a portion of it to both principals and teachers in the 2015-2016 school year. In nearly every school, at least 2 educational assistants have received the full UMAB certification. Recertification will be planned for next spring to ensure all certified staff maintain their credentials.

8. Summer Learning Program

We are in the final planning stages for the Summer Learning Programs in both New Liskeard and Timmins. As soon as we have confirmed the number of participants, we will be moving forward with hiring our staff. We hope to run one class in New Liskeard and 2 in Timmins. We anticipate having 2 teachers and 2 Tutors in the Classroom in the New Liskeard region and 3 teachers and 4 Tutors in the Classroom in the Timmins Region. Classes will offer intervention in both language and mathematics. Recreation will help divide up the day but must be outside of the required 180 minutes of instruction. Students will be provided with a collection of resources at the end of the program as they have each year.

9. Revisions to Special Education Plan

Daphne Brumwell provided the members with a list of revisions to the Special Education Plan. The Plan is due to the Ministry of Education by July 15, 2015. Members were asked to look at the Plan and offer any ideas or changes.

10. Special Education Budget 2015-2016

We are in the beginning stages of finalizing draft budget for next year. Our funding through the Ministry has decreased by nearly \$300,000 this year. As such we must look carefully at staffing allotments by school, contractual services and other special education expenses to see where adjustments might be able to be made without sacrificing important services to students.

11. Agency Reports

Beth Nowak mentioned that the Chickadee Childcare and Learning Centre continues to run the preschool program at St. Paul School. They are also running an Introduction to School Program with 19 students enrolled in the program. It runs 4 days a week for 6 weeks and there is no fee for the parents. A subsidy through the aboriginal planning funding helps to support the program. The goal is to get more aboriginal children into the school.

Kim Bordignon attended the SEAC Provincial Conference in Toronto on May 2nd. She stated that members of other boards' Special Education Advisory Committees are significantly involved in the planning stages of their schools. She added that it's evident that most committees have parent representatives. Daphne Brumwell mentioned that she is hopeful that our members have a voice and value the recommendations provided by the members.

The Lord's Kitchen served an average of 1800 servings since the last meeting.

Kay Gaffney reported that the barbecue at North Eastern Ontario Family and Children's Services on May 6th was excellent. She recommended that the members drop in for lunch next year. Proceeds of the barbecue help support a child's university expenses.

12. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday, June 16th at 11:45 a.m. at the Catholic Education Centre or via video conference.

13. Other Business

13.1 Letters from Upper Grand District School Board and from Thames Valley District School Board were distributed.

14. Adjournment

MOVED BY: J. McCartney
THAT the meeting be adjourned at 1:10 p.m.
CARRIED.