



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 25, 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
Natalie Parnell, Timmins Family Counselling Centre
Billie Richer, VOICE for Hearing Impaired
Elizabeth King, NCDSB Trustee
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

1. Welcome and Prayer

Kay Gaffney welcomed everyone and led the group in prayer.

2. Approval of Agenda

MOVED BY: V. Toner

SECONDED BY: J. McCartney

THAT the agenda be approved as presented.

CARRIED.

3. Approval of Minutes

MOVED BY: V. Toner
SECONDED BY: K. Bordignon

THAT the minutes of April 20, 2016 be approved as presented.
CARRIED.

4. Summary of Psychological Services

Catherine Hoven reported that Dr. Tom Bonifero has completed 28 psychological assessments with another 8 yet to come. One of our goals this year was for Catherine to work beside Dr. Bonifero and train with him. Catherine has learned a lot and has a solid understanding of standardized testing. The intent for next year is to build up a number of cases that Catherine will take over and do assessments on her own. Dr. Bonifero will then sign off on them.

5. Understanding and Managing Aggressive Behaviour (UMAB)

We have completed the UMAB training for this year. All educational assistants and child and youth workers who have requested the training have been provided with the recertification. Most of this training was provided on Professional Activity days, reducing replacement costs and time away from the classroom. We anticipate using a similar model next year to reduce training costs. CUPE is open to this option.

6. Special Equipment Amount (SEA)

The Special Equipment Amount (SEA) provides funding to school boards to assist with the costs of equipment essential to support students with special education needs where the need for specific equipment is recommended by a qualified professional. This equipment is to provide students with accommodations that are directly required and essential to access the Ontario curriculum and/or a board-determined alternative program and/or course and/or to attend school. There are two components to SEA funding:

- **SEA Per Pupil Amount** for purchases of all computers, software, computing related devices and required supporting furniture identified for use by students with special education needs, as well all training and technician costs for all SEA equipment. Catherine Hoven explained that we struggle to spend this money and we're not allowed to move it to the other component. All left over money is returned to the Special Education reserve but can only be spent on technology. So far, during the 2015-2016 school year, we have spent approximately \$32,000.
- **SEA Claims-Based** funding for other non-computer based equipment to be utilized by students with special education needs including sensory support, hearing support, vision support, personal care support and physical assists support equipment which will cover the cost of an individual student's equipment needs in excess of \$800 in the year of purchase. Boards are responsible for the first \$800 in cost for any student per year. During the 2015-2016 school year, we have spent \$37,000 on equipment.

A discussion ensued about replacing old smart boards. Daphne Brumwell stated that we are going to need to do this over time as they become old, however, most of these units were purchased through school fundraising. As such, it would be the responsibility of individual schools to do this. We continue to purchase individual touch technology for our Special Education students. The Board did purchase iPads for resource teachers and will buy them for some classroom teachers next year and provide training to help them understand how they can be used to focus on mathematics with their learning disabled students.

7. Renewed Mathematics Strategy

The Ministry of Education has launched a new program to support mathematics achievement across the province. The Renewed Mathematics Strategy replaces 12 other funding envelopes we have had traditionally in the past. Though this will streamline our ability to offer support students and teachers will fewer reporting requirements, the downside is that we have lost just under \$90,000 in funding through this new program. Most of the funds lost are generally used to support teacher learning, so this will have an impact on our ability to provide release time for teachers to learn. We generally have upwards of at least 4 release days per teacher we can rely on each year; under this new strategy, we will only have a half day of release available per elementary teacher. There is a little more for secondary teachers. This new strategy has also grown to include the *Learning For All* funds we usually have to work with in Special Education.

In addition to support for teachers to learn, this renewed strategy will also provide us with a Math Facilitator in the South and in the Central region to coordinate and provide support to staff at all levels. We are just in the process of finalizing the hiring for these positions. We have also been provided with funds to support learning for one teacher per school for 5 days, as well as for school principals for 4 days.

8. Summer Learning Program

We will be offering two Summer Learning Programs again this year. A program will be offered at St. Patrick School in Kapuskasing and at St. Jerome School in Kirkland Lake. The Kirkland Lake program will be offered to students from both St. Jerome and Sacred Heart. We are excited to be able to offer this program outside of Timmins this year. This program is intended to support at-risk students between Kindergarten and Grade 5 in reading, writing and mathematics.

9. Revisions to the Special Education Plan

District school boards are required to revise their Special Education Plan annually and submit revisions to the Ministry. The members reviewed the Action Items in the 2015-2016 Plan.

Action Item on page 14 - Continue to build capacity and competency of principals, teachers and support staff in the development, implementation and monitoring of effective IEPs for students requiring modifications to individual programs. Conduct a review of IEPs from schools not done in the Spring of 2014. Some of the work was done, including supporting principals and teachers; however, we neglected to do an audit. Since there is no way to complete an audit in June, this action item will be deferred to the Fall of 2016.

Action Item on page 31 – Develop information items for all parents regarding the SEAC Committee and the role it plays in our system (i.e. Information on Board website regarding SEAC membership, informational brochure, and/or presentations at School Council Meetings. Ensure that parents are aware of who can support them when needed. This information will need to be updated annually. This was accomplished but we now have to decide on the format, print or electronic. We will look at the pieces over the summer, have it in place on our website and give hard copies to families.

Action Item on page 45 – Determine which schools have already begun to offer intervention in mathematics. Review the need for such programs across the district and begin implementation as soon as possible where needed. We are in the process of confirming who has explored the mathematics intervention this year. We have actively been engaging our resource teachers in professional learning related specifically to mathematics. The expectation will be that every resource teacher will do mathematics intervention in the 2016-2017 school year.

Kim Bordignon asked for the number of students who benefit from the purchase of speech language services. Daphne Brumwell responded that she will look at the overview of services, look at invoices, and follow up with that. Boards are required to provide language but not speech services. The Board has a student who has a speech language degree, hired to do oral language at St. Paul School.

Data recently received from John Stark – Contracted Speech/Language Pathologist

- 20 new referrals
- 17 students assessed , 3 of which were within normal limits and were closed
- Intervention to 44 students over the school year
- 153 intervention sessions provided in total to these students.
- closed 4 student files because they achieved therapy outcomes
- 72 children on the SLP caseload that qualified for services
- St. Anne school has no referrals
- Sacred Heart School Timmins and St. Joseph school did not have students receive intervention due to the low priority of those on the caseload

The forms in the Special Education Plan have been updated. Members were asked to submit any suggestions to Daphne Brumwell or Judy Piché and the Plan will be updated accordingly. A meeting will be held in June to accept the revisions to the Special Education Plan.

10. Special Education Budget 2016-2017

Daphne Brumwell stated that there will be an anticipated reduction of \$169,931 in Special Education funding for next year. Enrolment is down slightly and the funding model is changing as the Ministry attempts to even out funding to boards who were not as highly funded in the past. This also does not take into account the deficit we have been carrying for the last few years as we attempt to maintain high levels of service to our Special Education students. We need to work hard to bring out spending in line with our budget over the next couple of school years.

Daphne provided the Special Education budget of past years:

School Year 2013-2014 - \$4,421,125

School Year 2014-2015 - \$4,605,605

School Year 2015-2016 - \$4,458,256

Estimates for 2016-2017 - \$4,288,325

11. Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education: Special Education Update

A copy of the *Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education: Special Education Update February 2016* was distributed to the members. The document offers good information on improving student achievement for students with special education needs, on Special Education funding, and has a lot of information on mental health, and updates from other ministries. Daphne Brumwell mentioned that we will look at guidelines for students with exceptionalities, put in plan giftedness area and identify students who are gifted, and we need to be thinking about what differentiation can happen in the classrooms. Daphne added that there is a Mathematics class for gifted students in Toronto that will never be able to offer it here but we may be able to participate. There is also a gifted course through Stanford University for educators. Members were asked to read the document and provide feedback to Judy Piché by May 26th.

12. Agency Reports

Bill Russell mentioned that Christine Geddes and a group of individuals started *Our Place* many years ago. They are looking for a home to be able to provide meals, clothes and hygiene kits to people who need them the most. The Lord's Kitchen will help them with their search. Bill added that the agency served 460 servings last week to 275 people. Bill feels it is time to pass over the Chairman position to another person, unless the Board wants him back.

13. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday, June 14, 2016 at 11:45 a.m. at the Catholic Education Centre or via video conference.

14. Other Business

The members received a copy of a letter from Toronto Catholic District School Board.

15. Adjournment

MOVED BY: B. Russell
THAT the meeting be adjourned at 1:15 p.m.
CARRIED.