

# Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting

Wednesday, April 29, 2020

11:45 p.m.

## MINUTES

**PRESENT:** Joel McCartney, Cochrane Temiskaming Resource Centre / Chair  
Kim Bordignon, Cochrane Temiskaming Children's Treatment Centre / Vice-Chair  
Ron McInnis, NCDSB Trustee  
Ellen Renaud, North Eastern Ontario Family and Children's Services  
Billie Richer, VOICE for Hearing Impaired  
Stan Skalecki, NCDSB Trustee  
Daphne Brumwell, Superintendent of Education  
Catherine Hoven, Special Assignment Teacher  
Katie Mundle, Special Assignment Teacher  
Kim McEntee, Supervisor of Mental Health  
Jean Ethier, Education Services Officer / Recorder

**EXCUSED:** Heather Demers, The Lord's Kitchen  
Mark Lionello, Canadian Mental Health Association  
Mackenzie Carrier, Community Living Timmins

### 1. Welcome and Prayer

Joel McCartney welcomed everyone and led the group in prayer.

### 2. Approval of Agenda

MOVED BY: K. Bordignon

SECONDED BY: S, Skalecki

THAT the agenda be approved as presented.

CARRIED.

### 3. Approval of Minutes

MOVED BY: K. Bordignon

SECONDED BY: E. Renaud

THAT the minutes of February 26, 2020 approved as presented.

CARRIED.

## 4. Distance Learning

### 4.1 Share update from Ministry concerning Special Education Matters

Daphne reviewed the detailed memo provided by the Ministry last week. There are still lots of questions that have not been answered, or that are at the discretion of school boards. It is a challenging time, particularly for students with special education needs. We recognize the strain that distance learning is placing on parents/caregivers.

### 4.2 Technology Distribution & SEA Equipment

We were able to ensure that every NCDSB family who required technology were provided with at least one Chromebook for home use. These were distributed over the last 2 weeks. Where necessary, students with SEA chromebooks were also allowed to pick up theirs. Recently, we have decided to provide an internet stick to those families who are in a cellular area that will allow the stick to work, but who have not previously had internet services. There were about 50 families who indicated they did not have internet. Through this solution, we have been able to provide at least 25 with service. This means that even fewer students will not have access to the digital learning platforms that are being used by teachers. We feel strongly that this connection is very important.

Where requested, we have also been providing other SEA equipment to families.

### 4.3 John Stark's Services

As you might recall John Stark (Therapy Path) is the provider of our Speech and Language services in the board. He provides this service using both board-based funding and funding provided through the Northern Support Initiative. He has recently provided us with a summary of the services he has provided this year, as much of his work has ceased at this time. However, he will be reaching out to families to see who might be interested in connecting for therapy sessions virtually over the next 2 months. If the uptake is significant, he will enlist the help of his therapy assistant in the southern part of our board.

### 4.4 Role of Support Staff

One of the most challenging aspects of the current learning model is how best to use the support staff we have at our disposal to support students with special education needs. Presently, we have asked classroom teachers to ensure that any educational assistant who usually works in their classroom be included in the on-line learning platform. EAs have been asked to support students as best as they can by connecting through email and by phone where appropriate, and where parents are aware of this connection. For the time being, we are not encouraging the one-to-one connection with student over video. There are many privacy issues that exist that are not easily managed when video is being used. Our CYWs have been issued a protocol to use to connect with the students that principals have identified as most in need. Kim McEntee will speak to this when she joins us at 12:30.

### Mental Health & Well-being Updates provided by Kim McEntee

- Student Check-in Guidelines when Working Off-site were drafted, shared and reviewed with school teams (Child & Youth Worker, Mental Health Worker & Principals)
  - Guidelines are in place to staff with their remote work with students, ensuring safe practices for staff and students
- Off-site Learning Plan
  - School Support staff have taken a number of learning sessions
    - Trainings relate Mental Health Strategy, Indigenous Board Action and the overall Board Improvement Plan goals
    - Training examples to date: Trauma Informed Care, Supporting student mental health at school, Emotional Coaching for Schools, etc.
  - NCDSB Website
    - New page: Mental Health & Well-being
    - Resources added to for a variety of target audiences

## **5. EA Allocation Process for 2020-2021**

You might recall that we engaged in a discussion regarding the EA allocation process significantly last summer after we had the Special Education Audit. The process used last summer was completed without all the input from schools that we felt was necessary to ensuring the most accurate information was available for each student. As a result, we engage in a discussion with each school team in the fall. This year, we are expecting to have a more robust process that is to begin shortly. We have asked 3 schools to test our data collection tool and once we have their feedback and review the information provided, we will be able to share the tool out to the other schools. We expect to have the necessary information by the end of May so that decisions about staffing levels in each school can be available before the budget process is finalized for this year. We do expect there will be a need to follow up with some schools based on their data submitted, but we are not expecting the need in every case. We will share more about this process as it unfolds. We continue to advocate for supports to be provided to those students with physical, medical, safety or behavioural needs first. We also provide some support to each school to support students with Learning Disabilities, Intellectual delays and Autism who might not also have significant physical, medical, safety or behavioural needs.

## **6. Northern Support Initiative**

### **6.1 Update for 2019-2020**

The 2019-2020 school year is one for the record books, no doubt about it. Between CUPE job action at the beginning of the school year, OECTA job action late fall and early winter, and now the pandemic, the disruption to learning has been significant. This has meant that many of the initiatives we had planned for were not able to be implemented in any real way. Specifically, the self-regulation project with Dr. Stephane Beaulne has been on hold much of this year, with only one session taking place in October. We are now seeing a hold on Speech and Language services. We are very uncertain about what will happen with any summer learning programs. Our intervention services are also somewhat on hold, though anything that can logically happen through distance learning is continuing. We anticipate having significant funds left over that we are not sure we will have permission to roll over.

### **6.2 Plans for 2020-2021**

Discussions have already begun about Northern Support Initiative for the next school year. At the present time we have not had any confirmation about funding, however, we have a plan should the funding flow as hoped. Our plan is to continue with the services being provided by Therapy Path for speech and language. We are hoping to expand the services to include a third therapy assistant that will be placed in the south. We are also hoping to resume the consultancy and professional learning work around self-regulation with Dr. Beaulne. We will set aside funds to operate a summer program related to oral language. We also hope to expand intervention services to students in our most needy schools. We expect that these services will be more important (and needed) than ever after this last school year.

## 7. Special Education Plan 2020

Daphne discussed the Special Education action items and the status of the items. Below is a chart indicating each focus for 2019-2020. The Special Education 2019-2020 was emailed to all committee members on April 29, 2020.

Action Items	Review of Action
<p>Support the implementation of the new special education classrooms that have been created for the 2019-2020 school year. Two have a focus on essential skills for students with developmental disabilities and one will focus on communication skills for students on the Autism Spectrum. Reach out to Sudbury Catholic DSB as they have similar classroom structures in their board. Page - 5</p>	<p>Support was given in areas such as IEPs, use of resources and EAs, programming and assessment. In December 2019, a team of educators observed a Communication Classroom belonging to Sudbury Catholic DSB. This experience provided ideas for possible implementation and further examination of our own practices.</p>
<p>Create the documents that outline the various internal processes found in the special education department. Page 5</p>	<p>Two RTs worked on this task in the summer of 2019. Catherine and Katie are currently reviewing, editing and formatting these internal processes to be shared with RTs once completed.</p>
<p>Explore an online Referral Process that will allow both the Special Education and Mental Health departments to streamline this fairly intensive paper process. Page 6</p>	<p>This has been discussed with the Mental Health Department, and preliminary plans are in place. This will be a focus of 2020-2021.</p>
<p>Share the outcome of the focus group discussions that had been done through the Special Education Audit in June 2019. Page 8</p>	<p>The findings of the Special Education Audit was shared through a slideshow entitled <i>Supporting Students with Special Education Needs</i> with all school staff including teachers, EAs, CYWs, ECEs, RTs, and Principals in early September 2019. An additional recommendation from this audit was that we develop a more thorough process for allocating staff in schools based on specific student needs. This led to the development of High Needs Audit Meeting with all schools. This led to a shift in how our EAs and CYWs were assigned and used. These meetings took place in the fall of 2019.</p>
<p>Engage in focus group discussions with secondary school students regarding the use of technology to support learning. The goal will be to collect information from the students about how we can improve supports and services for our secondary students. Focus groups will be held in the fall of 2019, with a summary of information collected being shared with SEAC by January 2020. Page 8</p>	<p>Daphne, Catherine &amp; Jennifer engaged in discussions with the secondary students that have Learning Disabilities in the late fall of 2019. This was completed through small focussed discussions. The results were analyzed and plans were made to provide support in the areas of need in the winter of 2020. This did not happen due to job action.</p>

<p>Explore opportunities to engage parents and older students more actively in the IPRC and IEP process. Page 11</p>	<p>Schools were encouraged to include students in the IPRC/IEP process. While this was already common practice for some schools, other schools took this into consideration.</p>
<p>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. Complete another audit of IEPs in November 2019 and share results with school principals and RTs in December 2019.</p> <p>Follow up with another review in March 2020 of the same IEPs that were audited in the fall to determine the degree to which recommendations have been implemented. Page 13</p>	<p>An IEP audit was completed in December/January 2020 that outlined areas of the IEP that could be improved upon. These results were shared with school teams.</p> <p>The Review for March 2020 was impacted by the current school closure.</p>
<p>Ensure all new teachers hired who have not previously done the NCDSB IEP e-Hub course, complete this by the end of September 2019.</p> <p>Page 13</p>	<p>Principals were reminded to ensure that all newly hired teachers were given an opportunity to complete the IEP online course. Furthermore, current teachers and RTs were encouraged to use this course as a resource.</p>
<p>Review the content of the Special Education page on the board website by October 31st, 2019.</p> <p>Revise the content to reflect current programs and services. Ensure parents are aware of our SEAC membership and dates for our monthly meetings through posting of information on the board website by September 30th, 2019. Minutes of SEAC meetings will also be posted on a monthly basis. Page 32</p>	<p>We continue to provide up-to-date information on our website. This includes SEAC meeting dates and minutes. We have not yet reviewed the Special Education page on the website and will attend to this before the end of the school year.</p>
<p>Continue to monitor and support the use of the Brigance Screen III for Year 2 Kindergarten and Grade 1 students. Screening will take place in December 2019 with a follow up for students at risk in June 2020. Review the impact of data analysis of the Brigance to ensure it is providing us with the necessary information to better support our youngest learners. Provide training to teachers and ECEs in January 2020 so that they can implement appropriate interventions based on the results of the Brigance. Page 41</p>	<p>Kindergarten and Grade 1 Brigance Screens were completed in December 2019. Because of job action, not all data has been entered into the Google Form. Without data from all schools available, analysis has been on hold.</p> <p>Schools were provided with Brigance Binders for K and Grade 1 classrooms for Tier 1 Intervention. RTs met with Classroom Teachers/ECE/EAs to provide training on how to use the resource. French resources were also provided.</p> <p>Follow up screening is up in the air, with current school closures.</p>

<p>Revise and implement the Early Identification Student Profile by June 20. Page 41</p>	<p>To be deferred to the 2020-2021 school year.</p>
<p>Continue to monitor the modifications being made to math programs for students with learning disabilities. Provide greater support to RTs and Classroom Teachers to identify gaps in student learning and opportunities for intervention. Support the use of the York Region suggested accommodations by psychological process and the York Waterfall to help teachers meet the needs of LD students in math. Build capacity around math content knowledge and math pedagogy with resource teachers and principals to support their work in math intervention. Page 46</p>	<p>We have continued to have further discussion with our RTs regarding math programming. All students that require a math modification must have a conversation with Catherine or Katie and permission is given from Daphne. We have continued to provide opportunities for RTs to further develop their math capacity through optional work with the Math Facilitators and through webinars that have been provided through LDAO and the Ministry. Due to job action, organized group learning did not take place.</p>
<p>Continue to focus math intervention on the early year based on the results of the Brigance and the findings from the Math Intervention teachers. In addition to the support provided in mathematics by resource teachers, additional math intervention will be provided in two focus schools - Sacred Heart and St. Jerome. Page 46</p>	<p>Math intervention continues to be a focus at each school based on assessment results. We have been able to support additional support through teaching staff at St. Jerome and Pope Francis.</p> <p>We were unable to secure a qualified teacher in Kirkland Lake, so the position was moved from Sacred Heart to Pope Francis.</p>
<p>Continue to support schools in implementing the School-Based Team model. The purpose of these meetings is to provide an opportunity for school staff to discuss the needs of students by sharing ideas about how to better support the student, and collaborate to create an action plan to support the student moving forward. A follow up is required to ensure that actions have been taken and to discuss their effectiveness. Page 46</p>	<p>This process was reviewed again with Resource Teachers, and Principals before the Christmas break in conjunction with some work that was being completed on the tiered model of intervention and Behavior Support Plans. It is functioning well in some schools and not in others. In addition, a school based team meeting became an added mandatory meeting before the child was considered for a psychological assessment.</p> <p>These meetings did not continue after educator job action began.</p>
<p>In addition to the usual 35-40 assessment completed each year, provide up to 4 psychological assessments annually for students we suspect are ASD. This will be done through our contracted psychologist. Diagnosis of ASD is becoming very challenging for families in the north. Wait-lists are long and services are scarce. Page 47</p>	<p>BBS - 1 ASD Assessment completed and 1 was scheduled to take place at St. Pat's, Kap but did not proceed due to school closure in March. This one was contracted out to a local psychologist and will be rescheduled when schools reopen.</p>

<p>Continue to work with our contracted SLP provider to ensure the provision of additional and more consistent therapy for students required language support. This funding will come from the Northern Support Initiative and is done in collaboration with our co-terminus English school board. Page 48</p>	<p>John Stark has continued to provide SLP services for the students of our school board with additional support given through several assistants. All SK students in our 9 schools with a primary division have been screened. Additional assessments will occur for those students that failed the screen. John has met with our program team involved in primary language and has reviewed his findings in detail. Our SAT responsible for supporting K has begun the process of comparing the SLP findings to the Brigrance data. Further sharing did not occur due to job action. John is currently exploring the possibility of providing Speech Therapy to students virtually.</p>
<p>Provide access to our on-line Special Education Community to all NCDSB educators by October 31st, 2019. Page 55</p>	<p>Most schools have been added with several remaining. We are looking into finding a way to add all participants by school rather than adding teachers individually.</p>
<p>Implement the use of the professional learning series at staff meetings or on snow days to help all teachers better understand the psychological processes and their impact on learning. Page 56</p>	<p>This was not a focus this year, although principals were reminded to use materials that were developed last year and not yet shared with their staff.</p>
<p>Build capacity with classroom teachers to better understand how to support students with an LD in the regular classroom. Page 56</p>	<p>In November 2019, all RTs and a classroom teacher from each school were invited to take part in LD learning sessions, “Fostering Efficacious Kids” and “Productive Classrooms - Leveraging Executive Functions with Jeff Hockett and Wendy O’Neill from Sagonaska Demonstration School.</p>

**8. Agency Reports**

**NEOFACS**

NEOFACS staff have made the transition to working virtually from home while managing home and work life balance during the Covid19 pandemic. Staff have be able to reach out to clients via email and are offering sessions through ZOOM or over the phone.

NEOFACS is offering the option to clients if they would like to proceed with the sessions or put their case on hold during the pandemic.

**Cochrane Temiskaming Children’s Treatment Centre**

Kim advised that staff have also transition to working from home. There was been success in reaching out to all of the families on the caseload list.

**Cochrane Temiskaming Resource Centre**

CTRC has been able to provide services to existing clients via video conferencing while following the tele practice guidelines in order to maintain client privacy. New eligibility assessments are not able to take place at this time as they are face to face.

**The Lord’s Kitchen**

Heather was able to provide a schedule of Community Food Programs for families who may be struggling with food security during the pandemic. The program is offered in the Timmins area. See chart below.

**9. Date of Next Meeting**

May 20, 2020 at 11:45am via WebEx/Teleconference

**10. Other Business – Nil**

**11. Adjournment**

MOVED BY: R. McInnis  
 THAT the meeting be adjourned at 1:00 p.m.  
 CARRIED.

**Community Food Programs  
 As of April 12, 2020**

<b>Weekly Programs</b>						
<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Sunday</b>
Living Space provides bagged meals at their front desk every day of the week. Meals on Wheels provides service Monday to Friday.						
<u>COVID-19 Food Project</u> Hot take-out dinner at Lord’s Kitchen 4-5:30 p.m.	<u>South Porcupine Food Bank</u> 1-3 p.m.  <u>First Baptist Church</u> Hot take-out dinner 5-6 p.m.	<u>Timmins Food Bank</u> 8:15-11:15 a.m.  <u>Salvation Army</u> Hot take-out dinner 4-5 p.m.	<u>Lord’s Kitchen/Rotary</u> Hot take-out dinner 4-5:30 p.m.	<u>First Baptist Church</u> Food bank & hot take-out lunch 12:30-2 p.m.	<u>South Porcupine Food Bank</u> 9-11 a.m.  <u>COVID-19 Food Project</u> Hot take-out dinner at Lord’s Kitchen 4-5:30 p.m.	<u>COVID-19 Food Project</u> Hot take-out dinner at Lord’s Kitchen 4-5:30 p.m.

<b>Monthly Programs</b>
Anti-Hunger Coalition Timmins: Good Food Box Orders are due by the first Thursday of every month and boxes are delivered on the third Thursday of every month.





