

Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting

Wednesday, February 27, 2019

11:45 a.m.

MINUTES

PRESENT: William (Bill) Russell, The Lord's Kitchen
Kim Bordignon, Cochrane Temiskaming Children's Treatment Centre / Vice-Chair
Val Toner, Community Living Timmins (Alternate)
Ellen Renaud, North Eastern Ontario Family and Children's Services
Joel McCartney, Cochrane Temiskaming Resource Centre / Chair
Colleen Landers, NCDSB Vice-Chair
Katie Mundle, SAT
Billie Richer, VOICE for Hearing Impaired
Tina Lively, Canadian Mental Health Association
Daphne Brumwell, Superintendent of Education
Catherine Hoven, Special Assignment Teacher
Jean Ethier, Education Services Officer / Recorder

EXCUSED: Mark Lionello, Canadian Mental Health Association
Elizabeth King, NCDSB Trustee

1. Welcome and Prayer

Joel McCartney welcomed everyone and led the group in prayer.
Joel McCartney chaired the meeting.

2. Approval of Agenda

MOVED BY: V.Toner

SECONDED BY: W.Russell

THAT the agenda be approved as presented.

CARRIED.

3. Approval of Minutes

MOVED BY: K.Bordignon

SECONDED BY: C.Landers

THAT the minutes of December 19, 2018 be approved as presented.

CARRIED.

4. LD Class Profiles – Creating Learning Disability Class Profiles

Presentation from Catherine Hoven

- Topics covered include:

The characteristics of a Learning Disability

- The average number of students with a Learning Disability from Grade 3 to High School is 3-4 per class/course
- A persistent and significant impact on a child's ability to learn;
- Affects the ability to perceive or process verbal or non-verbal information in an accurate and effective manner despite having intellectual abilities in the average range;
- Resulting in academic achievement that is inconsistent with intellectual ability
- Results in difficulties in the use of skills in reading, writing, math or work habits
- Is associated with one or more cognitive processes;
- Can be associated with difficulties in social interaction, or with other conditions
- Not the result of: vision or hearing impairment, intellectual ability, socioeconomic factors, cultural differences, lack of instruction, lack of motivation or gaps in schooling

Learning Disabilities in NDCSB

- Most common exceptionality reported in all of our schools;
- Many schools have multiple students with a Learning Disability in each junior classroom
- Previously we have worked with the Resource Teachers to develop individual profiles that provide the teacher with the cognitive scores of each student with a Learning Disability, along with resources to help them select appropriate accommodations based on the strengths and needs of the student.

Current Initiative: Creating Class Profiles

Although it is important for the teacher to know each student, it can be very overwhelming when you have many students with a Learning Disability in one classroom.

Jeff and Wendy from Sagonaska Provincial School presented us with the Class Profile, which shows the cognitive strengths and needs of all LD students from each classroom on a single graph. This helps the teacher indicate common teaching strategies based on the scores of multiple students.

Implementation – Going Forward

- The Class LD Profile was shared with all Resource Teachers on February 13th through an hour session.
- Additional time was provided for the RTs to create a table of the psychological scores for the students with an LD in their school classrooms.
- Resource Teachers using classlists then created class profiles for each classroom in their school, or for each course (at secondary level)
- Resource Teachers will sit side by side with teachers to share the graphs, and discuss strategies to help support areas of weakness. We are anticipating this happening after principals are informed later this week.

5. Brigance Tools

Presentation from Katie Mundle

Kindergarten and First Grade Brigance testing kits were purchased for all of the Elementary schools in our board. The tool is used to flag students for possible developmental delays or giftedness. The Brigance tool assesses 3 areas - Physical development, Language Development and Academic Skills (Literacy and Mathematics). Resource Teachers were provided with training on Brigance in November. It was determined that testing would start with our 2nd year FDK students, as well as our Grade 1s, in both English and French Immersion Programming.

The assessment form comes in triplicate, and we are sharing a copy of the assessment with parents, along with a letter that explains the purpose of the testing, and an overall score out of 100 indicating if the child was above or below a specific cut off score. The letter also offers recommendations.

Educators can use this data to inform their instruction and monitor student progress. The results may also initiate a referral for special services like speech, occupational therapy or physio. Resource Teachers are entering individual student results into a Google Form, which is allowing us to capture Board Data. Catherine and I are then sharing each school's specific data back to them. Some of our Resource teachers have completed their testing already, and others are still working on it. We suggested that all assessments be completed by March Break.

6. IEP Audit Results

Catherine and Katie engaged in an IEP Review on January 22, 2019. Three IEPs were selected from each school for the review. The IEPs selected included 1 of the following:

- Non-Identified
- Learning Disability
- Other (MID, DD, ASD, Multiple)

Strengths:

- In most cases, updated BAS was provided and the old BAS was removed
- In most cases, cognitive scores were listed from the psychoeducational assessment
- The majority of IEPs included specialized equipment when a SEA claim has been submitted
- Formatting was largely consistent throughout the IEPs

Needs:

- Additional jeaSubtest scores were not consistently provided for WIAT. These are necessary as they reflect the need for the IEP.
- Accommodations listed under 'Instructional Accommodations' are to also be provided as an 'Assessment Accommodation'. Often, Google Read and Write was listed as an Assessment Accommodation, but was not listed as an Instructional Accommodation – it must be both.
- It must be clearly identified if the subject was modified or accommodated the previous school year.
- Modifications listed need to be validated with current data (beyond just BAS) For example, including the results of other school-based assessments like All About Numbers, BAT, OWA, ONAP, etc.
- If there are modifications in a subject area, the Grade Level of the modification is to be included after each expectation
- Expectations must be measurable and specific
- If the child is being seen by the RT or another staff, the IEP must clearly indicate the purpose (LLI, Empower, Math Intervention)
- The outcome of the Parent Consultation must be noted– “Talked to dad about IEP” does not explain the outcome of what was decided.
- The Holistic Learner comment should provide a snapshot of the child outside of school. This would include their hobbies and interests. This comment is not meant to include anything negative. It should not reference the child in the school environment.

7. School Year Calendar Consultation

The draft school year calendars for both elementary and secondary schools in the North/Central/South regions and for BBS in Moosonee. It was noted that both federations representing employees (OECTA and CUPE) are in agreement with proposed calendar. SEAC was asked to provide input or if there were any questions about the calendars.

8. Psychological Services Update

We have continued to use the services of Dr. Tom Bonniferro as oversight for the assessments Catherine is completing in her role. We have also engaged the firm of Bassis and Carter in Sudbury to complete assessment in the southern region of the board through psychometrist Corrie Brownlee. To date, Corrie has completed 11 assessments in the South through the Board. In the next two weeks, that number will be 15. This will mean all 5 schools in the South will have had their 3 assessments completed. We are in the process of booking additional assessments now based on our wait list using the extra funds we have received from the Ministry of Education. To date we have completed 14 assessments in Timmins region, with another scheduled for next week. All schools in Timmins have had 3-4 assessments completed. Bookings for the north have begun, with St. Anne and SPKP scheduled for March/April and BBS in May.

9. Agency Reports

NEOFACS

A program offered is Advanced Caregiving for Prevention Parenting & Mental Health Series. The program began on February 20, 2019 and includes 5 sessions. The focus of the program is

- Understand why you end up in negative patterns of relating to your child
- Avoid common parenting traps
- Manage your own emotional reactions i.e. anger, guilt and resentment
- Overall, improve your relationship with your child

No fee is required to participate in the series. To register for the group sessions contact the NEOFACS office directly.

NEOFACS is currently running a pilot program with Conseil Scolaire Public Du Nord-Est for the Triple P 6-12 Years program. The Power of Positive Parents. Parents register that night and begin the program shortly thereafter. The Triple P Parenting Group is an interactivity and peer support group. The tentative start date is March 28, 2019.

A mental health awareness program is offered to youth 13-25 to promote mental health awareness. The program will include mindfulness bottles. A mindfulness jar is a very powerful visual metaphor for being able to express one's feelings. The program is looking to adapt the 5 mental health strategies.

Children's Mental Health Week is taking place in May and NEOFACS will be asking local businesses to participate by painting storefront windows to promote mental health.

The Lord's Kitchen

There has also been an increase in the number of servings 400 plates per week. The servings have gone as high as 450. The increase varies based on the time of the month. On February 7, 2019, all the Clergy attended for the first time. The Clergy served the guests and were able to see the needs of the community.

The Breakfast program that began on February 8, 2019 is doing well. . A 5:00am breakfast is available every Friday and if the program is successful, it may be extended to include Mondays as well as Fridays.

Community Living Timmins

Community Living is looking into bringing an Autism Reality Experience session to Timmins. The experience is designed to give participants a virtual experience of living with autism. This is a very practical; hands on experience that gives participants a greater insight into autism and helps us see the world from an autistic person's perspective. As the session details become available Val will communicate them to the committee.

VOICE for Hearing Impaired

Billie Richie is attending a Voice Conference in Toronto May 3 & 4 2019.

Canadian Mental Health Association

The association is meeting with older individuals that have no records or treatment plan in place. The lack of information creates a challenge with DSO.

7. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday April 17 2019, at 11:45 a.m. at Northeastern Catholic District School Board or via videoconference.

8. Other Business

None

9. Adjournment

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